

# Great Demon King

(大魔王)

Chapter

001-492

Ni Cang Tian

(逆蒼天)

## Story Description:

If I don't die... I swear I will act on all my evil thoughts.

Not exactly everyone's typical thought when they're about to die. What will a cowardly young man do when reincarnated with the evil powers to redefine his destiny? Can the natural kindness of human nature triumph over evil? Will he become the cold-blooded demon king of legend, or will he forge his own path and rain down another kind of terror?

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Prologue

“You’re incredibly lucky; aside from astronauts, you’re the first person to tour the moon without spending a cent!”

An old man with facial features hooked like an eagle’s wore green robes that gave off sinister vibes. He smiled ominously as he looked at a young man enclosed in a thin, flimsy shell of purple light.

The youth looked to be in his twenties and wore flowery boxers. His lower body was of average build with a thinly built upper body, and he wore a disdainful expression as he peered around anxiously within the shell.

“Enough is enough, you old fart. What do you want now that you’ve brought me here?”

Han Shuo was filled with anger. He was just about to enjoy a cold, refreshing shower on this hot summer day when a white light flashed before his eyes. A weird, old man appeared in front of him before Han Shuo had fully undressed. The old man merely said, “The date of birth matches,” grabbed Han Shuo and jumped out the tenth story window with him, scaring Han Shuo silly.

When Han Shuo had come to, he suddenly realized it was gloomy, barren and desolate around him. The ground was pockmarked like a severe burn victim’s. That was when he was notified that he was on the moon.

Oddly enough, Han Shuo and that weird man could communicate easily, possibly due to that weird purple shell. What was stranger was that Han Shuo had no fear of suffocation, as there was enough oxygen within the shell.

“I will battle with three people in a moment in search of smashing the rules of heaven and earth. This will allow me to ascend to the apex of evil – the omen realm. Alone, these three fellows present no challenge to me. But I’m not sure what will happen if they join their forces.

To cover all my bases, I grabbed someone with the same birthdate as me – you. If I am so unlucky as to fall in battle, then I can call upon the most mysterious magic of them all and plant my consciousness within your body. I can then come back to life and use your body to revive myself!” Chu Cang Lan said evenly as he stared at Han Shuo, his tone belied by a hint of danger in his bloodshot eyes.

“Eh... when you were talking about planning your consciousness in my body, then... what will happen to me?” Han Shuo was extremely confused and hadn’t caught most of what Chu Cang Lan said, but he still instinctively seized on the critical fact and asked the important question.

Chu Cang Lan paused and cackled matter of factly, “Your body will be mine and you will be dead of course!”

“@#\$#@(...”

Han Shuo was incredibly pissed off and started cussing vigorously, despite the fact that he was at the mercy of someone else. His string of curse words touched upon eighteen generations of Chu Cang Lan’s ancestors and greeted his family in different ways.

“Use this last opportunity and get it out of your system, brat! I would have spared your life had I won, but now I’ve decided that even if I win, I’m still going to send you down to hell!” Chu Cang Lan had originally kept his composure in the face of Han Shuo’s non-stop cussing, but his face darkened upon seeing that Han Shuo hadn’t let up after half an hour, and was, in fact, becoming even nastier.

This abruptly stopped Han Shuo in his tracks. He started banging against the side of the thin purple shell with both fists after a moment and started wailing, “Hero—, savior—, I was wrong, spare my life! What you’re doing is illegal, the authorities will come after you. Technology is quite advanced now, and even escaping to the moon won’t do you any good!”

“Demon practitioners are straightforward and are never concerned with the law. I, Chu Cang Lan, have roamed the earth for many years and have killed more people than you have ever met. I am still standing here, perfectly fine!”

Chu Cang Lan said lowly. Something in his face suddenly changed as he looked ahead of him to the left, and he murmured, "Finally!"

Han Shuo and his purple shell rose up and flew far away when Chu Cang Lan pointed his right finger. After bouncing a few times, he finally came to a stop in a shallow depression, upon which Han Shuo realized he could no longer move and his lips made no noise. Apart from being able to hear, blink, and think, he could do nothing else within the confines of the purple shell.

"The three of you are late. I hope everyone can bring their best game to our battle today, and will not hate me if you die!"

"Praise Buddha." "Almighty Heavenly One."

.....

Although Han Shuo could not move, he could still hear a few words from his position, perhaps due to the purple shell. However, he couldn't make out anything after hearing "Praise Buddha" and "Almighty Heavenly One". He came to the conclusion that a monk and a Taoist priest had showed up, because that was what monks and Taoist priests always opened with on TV.

According to what Chu Cang Lan had said, Han Shuo was done for whether the former won or lost.

Han Shuo was born in YZ city, and had managed to get into a bottom tier college after high school. He hadn't interviewed for jobs after graduation like his peers did, but rather messed around randomly on the internet. He had created websites and opened small online stores, but never earned much money from it. He was an otaku from head to toe, and one with no future potential at that.

His mind had become filled with evil thoughts the more time he spent online. Because he had spent his days at home, and society was well developed, he had been self-aware enough to not actually act on his thoughts. It's not like his parents were multimillionaires or high ranking officials either.



A twenty something year old with no accomplishments to date. His parents had attempted to introduce him to someone before, but the other had looked down on Han Shuo for being undependable because he didn't have a real job. Needless to say, it hadn't worked out.

He'd succumbed to parental pressure lately, and had been preparing to submit resumes and find a real job. But who knew this would happen before he had a chance to turn his life around?

Han Shuo's brain moved sluggishly as he thought that he was about to die. For the first time in his life, he felt that his life had been a waste. Not only was his career nonexistent, he had never done anything notable and hell, he was still a virgin!

"Sigh, I'm so damned unlucky. Just when I was about to start over again. Why do I not get a chance? If I don't die this time, I swear I will act on all my evil thoughts. I will not be looked down upon, and will never be too afraid to act. Never ever..."

The only thing that he could move now were his thoughts, so Han Shuo could do nothing but think wildly. The more he reflected, the more he regretted and despaired...

An earth-shattering explosion suddenly sounded, accompanied by Chu Cang Lan's egoistical laugh.

But after a while, he suddenly yelled, "Traacherous!" and was engulfed in another series of explosions that rocked the heavens. The large tremors shook even Han Shuo's position; it was as if the earth was collapsing. The disturbances were accompanied by a loud yell, "Chu Cang Lan, you are dead this time!"

"Eh! This is the demonic technique of body stealing! He's attempting to use a demonic technique, there must be a demon seed nearby!"

"Praise Buddha, for the good of all those beneath heaven, I will not let him succeed even if I die. Praise Buddha, Chant of Desolate Destruction!"

"Monk, no...."

Another series of violent detonations ensued, and then a black ray

swiftly shot towards Han Shuo. It was as fast as a shooting star, and contained a vague something that was writhing inside, like an unholy liquid.

“In praise, in praise. Master Yuan Kong sacrificed himself to terminate the demonic technique. We can rest easy. Chu Cang Lan will never again be able to threaten the world of justice!”

The black light surged into the purple shell after Han Shuo heard the last sentence and something foreign seemed to invade his brain. A loud blast caused extreme pain as it felt like all his organs had simultaneously exploded, and then he knew no more.

# Chapter 1: From the Depths of the Grave

Han Shuo slowly opened his sore eyes after some time. His whole body ached, particularly his head. It felt as if he had a severe migraine and had had random things crammed into his brain.

Looking around, there were piles of eerily white bones messily scattered around the gloom. There was also strange black matter further inside the room that wafted a nauseous smell.

“Ah. So I’m really dead. This must be purgatory.”

Han Shuo’s heart turned to cold ashes when he realized he’d died at such a young age. Damn, he was unlucky! His past life had been a waste, better hurry and reincarnate to ensure his next life would turn out differently.

Han Shuo’s head started aching fiercely at the moment. After he clutched his head and wailed in pain for a while, he felt that he had learned many new things.

“Bryan... Bryan... Who is Bryan?”

Half an hour later...

Han Shuo was dumbfounded. He thought that reincarnation into another’s body was the stuff of movies and dramas; how could it have happened to himself? And to take it one step further, he had reincarnated into a foreigner’s body. Had that old fart Chu Cang Lan made a mistake with his magic?

Han Shuo’s eyes had slowly adjusted to the darkness by now. He loosened his limbs and brought his right arm in front of his eyes. The black mole near his wrist was gone, and in its place were long, ominous scars crawling like worms up his arms. He shuddered, a cold feeling gripping his insides.

This body really wasn’t his. A gobsmacked Han Shuo realized he had really taken over someone else’s body...

Although Bryan was already dead, Han Shuo knew Bryan’s past for some

reason. Han Shuo even knew that he had not reincarnated to the US or England, or any of the western countries. He was in a strange world named the Profound Continent, in an unfamiliar country called the Lancelot Empire. This was a strange land with swords and sorcery, one in which alien races ran rampant.

Bryan's parents had passed away when he was young, and he was only ten years old when his uncles had sold him to a slave dealer. The slave dealer had sold Bryan in turn to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, and his life had been dark ever since.

Bryan had died when he was sixteen. He had been assigned to the weakest department within the Babylon Academy – necromancy.

In those 6 years, Bryan's job was to assist the students of the necromancy major, cleaning up the skeletons, corpses and other trash after a failed magical experiment. Aside from that, he was also in charge of random administrative tasks such as making tea, serving water, sweeping the floor and killing bugs.

And another thing, students majoring in necromancy would often use him as target practice to test the battle abilities of their latest experimental skeletons or ghouls, or try out necromancy magics directly on him.

The weak and cowardly Bryan had suffered through a living hell in the past six years. His body was covered with countless scars and bruises. Necromancy students would practice on Bryan whenever they lost a magic battle against the other majors, even if he was eating indigestible food or completing one of his endless tasks.

A 16 year old youth, six years of torment. How cruel was this for a child?

Bryan constantly thought of committing suicide. However, in his cowardice, he could not even find the courage to kill himself. And so he silently endured six years of torture.

Finally, on the previous day, a little witch called Lisa summoned a ghoul and invaded his soul – killing him. Bryan felt no pain upon death, just the sad joy of release.

After moving corpses and broken skeleton bones for 6 years, another slave threw Bryan onto the same trash heap, the grave that he had constantly dumped trash into.

Han Shuo had felt his life was dark enough already, but when compared to Bryan, Han Shuo teared up a little. For the first time, he felt that he had lived a decent life.

Now that he understood what Bryan had gone through, Han Shuo's voice choked up as he sighed, "How could such an insane, cowardly youth like you exist in this world? Bryan, what can I do for you now that I've occupied your body?"

Han Shuo suddenly sensed threads of what seemed like liquid in his body. His head ached at the same time as some memories abruptly surfaced. Threads of liquid slowly circulated his body as Han Shuo became lost in his train of thought. Much more knowledge had filled his mind, courtesy of that old fart Chu Cang Lan.

There were nine different levels in demonic magic, respectively known as the solid realm, the open passages realm, the molded spirit realm, the true demon realm, the bloodsucking realm, the separate demon realm, the carnal realm, the nine changes realm and the omen realm. Demonic practitioners could do as they wish and kill who they wanted, completely disregarding all morals and ethics in the pursuit of absolute power.

Once a practitioner became a demon, he would have the abilities to move mountains and see all.

After sitting a while longer, Han Shuo felt that he had learned many things which were previously unthinkable. Of one thing he was certain, something had gone wrong with Chu Cang Lan's last piece of magic. His own soul had disappeared, but had left all his knowledge and memories of magic to Han Shuo.

The thread of liquid moving in his body was the fundamental and incredibly vital magical yuan – the foundation for training one's magical force. According to Chu Cang Lan's memories, a demonic practitioner would have to spend at least three to five years to successfully cultivate

magical yuan. Han Shuo had done nothing and knew nothing, yet he had that sliver of magical yuan floating around his body. Although it was pitifully weak, he knew that it truly was magical yuan.

Han Shuo's thoughts turned to the crazy old Chu Cang Lan. He'd wanted to use Han Shuo as a scapegoat, but had ended up sending him to a strange time and place instead. All that random knowledge of how to train one's magical force must have been left behind by that Chu Cang Lan.

Although Han Shuo had learned a bit about this strange world thanks to Bryan, his knowledge was greatly limited, as Bryan was just Babylon Academy's lowly drudge. Han Shuo's thoughts started racing as he considered the life ahead of him.

Bryan was dead, and Han Shuo was occupying his body. Han Shuo was now Bryan, and Bryan had been sold to a magical force school – this was an eternal identity brand. This strange world had cruel and harsh punishments for runaway slaves, so Han Shuo could not run. It was possible that he would not make it out and regardless, he didn't even have a single copper coin on him.

After careful consideration, Han Shuo decided to return to the academy. Only there could he change his position as a slave and do something for the pitiful Bryan.

Han Shuo ached all over (Bryan had had a lot of old injuries before his death). Pain shot through his body as he attempted to stand up, so he hastily sat down after crying out, "Ow!"

Han Shuo felt no goodwill towards the Chu Cang Lan, who had forcibly kidnapped him here. Han Shuo knew nothing of Chu Cang Lan's life or world, just that through the latter's memories, one could strengthen his own body by training his magical force. With some advancement, one could travel in a blink of an eye or move mountains and shift oceans.

Although Han Shuo thought Chu Cang Lan was a bit off his rocker, Han Shuo was convinced of the legitimacy of his memories due to the fact that Chu Chan Lan had flown the two of them directly to the moon.

Feeling that he had nothing to lose, Han Shuo recalled the complex

incantations needed to train his magical force. He concentrated according to the solid realm's first principle and sought to control that weak hint of magical yuan.

When he had built up his concentration and attempted to control the magical yuan according to solid realm's laws, the magical yuan did exactly as it was told, just like Chu Cang Lan said.

Secretly delighted, Han Shuo thought that despite Chu Cang Lan's eccentricities, the old man's memories were useful. He started meditating again and began to cycle the magical yuan around his body according to the solid realm's law.

Han Shuo only came to himself when his stomach started rumbling. He had no idea how long he'd meditated, just that his body's pains had greatly receded and he had gained some new strength. He had seen results after only meditating for a short while. That old fart Chu Cang Lan had trained for who knew how long; no wonder he even dared to go to the moon. Han Shuo could only imagine how domineering the old fart had been when he was alive.

Han Shuo noticed something odd when he took a break from training – that sliver of magical yuan no longer orbited according to the solid realm's law, but was actually circulating through the skin, muscles, bones and limbs of his entire body.

The aim of the solid realm was improvement of the physical body, an enhancement of muscles, skin and bone. Apart from slowly building up magical yuan in the solid realm, some fanatics would harm themselves in order to simultaneously build up their bodies and magical yuan. Simultaneous training yielded the fastest results.

"This method of training is basically a form of self-mutilation! Well, given that Bryan has always done similar things, maybe my progress in the solid realm will be faster when I return to the academy. Maybe it's not so bad being this Bryan!"

Han Shuo reflected with appreciation and planned to immediately leave this place. He suddenly thought that it was really stupid of him to have

stayed so long in the stink of the tomb; he could bear it no longer.

A faint light emitted from the top. According to Bryan's memories, Han Shuo knew that there was a large cavern above him in which broken skeletons and corpses were thrown in. He ached all over when he stood up, covered with scars. Six years of torment had long since worn down Bryan's body, not to mention his poor diet. As a result, he was malnourished and thin, and only one meter and sixty some centimeters.

Han Shuo stood on some moss and struggled to pull his weak body up. After a while and five or six falls, he finally emerged from the tomb. Han Shuo felt a deep joy to be alive again upon seeing the moon's beams illuminating the earth and cascading across the cemetery.

Reassured by the magical yuan still circulating through his body, Han Shuo thought positively that what hadn't killed him made him stronger. And it wasn't like he was without a hidden card. That Chu Cang Lan had left behind secret methods of training that could prove of some use, and help Han Shuo achieve dreams that he had never dared to dream before.

However, Han Shuo had no idea that the magical yuan Chu Cang Lan had left him would not only help him train, but was also a seed. This seed would change his thoughts as it changed his body. His mind was filled with evil thoughts before, but he hadn't dared act upon them. The seed could prove to be his undoing, as it would prod Han Shuo into losing control of his own self.



## Chapter 2: The Uncultured are Scary

The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force owned the most land in Lancelot Empire, and held the highest reputation within the empire. It was also one of the most important training institutions for the empire's mages and knights.

The academy was further divided into several departments, which consisted of light, dark, fire, water, wind, earth, thunder, summoning, and space. Each department had its own independent classroom building, library, laboratory, training field, and living district as if they were small cities.

Bryan was an errand slave for the necromancy major, which was a subcategory of the department of dark magic. Because necromancy majors had to work with skeletons, zombies, and the like, as well as the fact that this major had fallen off the radar for many years, it was not only the most unpopular major, but also the weakest. Even other department of dark magic students scoffed at the necromancy majors and didn't deign to form teams with necromancy students.

Bryan had belonged to the weakest and most despised major in his six years of running errands for the academy. Adding onto that, his special tasks of transporting corpses and skeletons... he had been subjected to no end of eye rolls and cold shoulders. Every day was a living hell for him.

Han Shuo followed Bryan's memories and arrived at a small path in the mountains located at the back of the academy. He entered through a small gate reserved especially for errand slaves returning in the dead of night.

Other students had long since gone to sleep, because it was midnight. Since Han Shuo was taking a secluded path, he didn't meet anyone on his way back. He observed his surroundings along the way and noted that the architectural style of Babylon Academy was similar to some of the western European countries back on Earth.

He finally made his way back to the necromancy major's designated area with some effort. Bryan lived in a warehouse, a place befitting his position.

The warehouse was filled with random items, with the majority being discarded crap or ingredients left over from experiments.

Most of these items awaited Bryan's organization and disposal. Necromancy students would often toss their unwanted items through the warehouse window for Bryan to take care of.

The warehouse was not very big to begin with. Excluding all the random crap, the only other thing present was a small wooden bed. Even this bed would sometimes be covered by a mountain of trash, as the students never paid attention to where they chucked their unwanted items.

The first thing Bryan did whenever he finished his work late at night was to clean up the trash that was on his bed. He would have to dispose of them before anyone woke up the next morning and then turned his attention to the others.

When Han Shuo took in his quarters, which resembled more of a garbage dump than anything, his eyes misted up and he felt deep pangs of sympathy for the unfortunate youth. How could he have survived those six years!

The air in the warehouse was foul beyond belief, even opening the windows had very little effect, as the smell was exuded by the mountain of trash. There were more items piled up on the small bed. It seemed that some had continued the habit of dumping trash here even after Bryan's death.

As Han Shuo shuffled his feet, he felt that even taking a few steps was an arduous task (the ground was covered with abandoned litter). He finally reached the bed and was about to clean it off, just like Bryan always did.

But, Han Shuo was not Bryan. When he was halfway through, Han Shuo felt a burst of rage. At first, this anger was only halfhearted, but the magical yuan within his body reacted to the anger and started moving rapidly, feeding his rage.

Finally, Han Shuo abruptly stopped his movements and fiercely denounced, "I'm not Bryan! I will not stand for this! Bryan oh Bryan, since I've occupied your body, let me help you punish that Lisa!"

Han Shuo was unaware that according to his original personality, he would never have impulsively acted on his thoughts, even if he'd wanted to. The him of yesteryear only had the will to think evil thoughts, but lacked the courage to take action.

He strode out from the warehouse and turned towards the female living quarters. In the silence of the night, he stealthily made his way towards the living district. Bryan had often cleaned here and was thus quite familiar with the area. Of course, he also knew where Lisa lived.

The necromancy major had much fewer students than the other majors, and thus every female student had her own room. Each room was spacious inside and had all the necessities they needed. This was heaven compared to Bryan's house of trash.

Lisa lived on the second floor, and Han Shuo could not gain admittance at night. Good thing there was a large tree next to her window. He flattened his body and scampered up the trunk like a skinny monkey. He could peer into her window if he stood on his tiptoes.

Han Shuo was secretly delighted when he saw that the window was open. He propped himself up and peeked in. The little witch Lisa had decorated her room in pink and it actually looked quite cute, especially with the furry toys hanging on the wall above the table.

A faint perfumed scent wafted into Han Shuo's nose, causing it to wrinkle. He had not anticipated that the cold hearted Lisa could decorate her room so cutely.

He couldn't hope to best her in a fight, and he knew that. He took a closer look and noticed pink gauze bed curtains in one corner of the room – that should be Lisa's bed.

He withdrew a small bottle from his bag and smeared some blood (typically used in experiments) around the edges of his eyes and mouth. He mussed up his brown hair after checking his face in a broken mirror (that Bryan had picked up). When he looked into the mirror again, a terrifying face covered with bloodstains looked back out.

“Heh heh, if I can't beat you, then I'm going to scare the crap out of

you!”

Han Shuo was quite satisfied with his current makeup and nodded with a low cackle. When everything was ready, he stepped on a branch and swung himself close to Lisa’s window, swaying back and forth with the branch. He reached out his bone thin hand and knocked on Lisa’s window.

Don... Don...

Lisa was fast asleep when she was woken up by the “don don” sounds coming from the window. She groggily opened the pink gauze curtains and walked out barefoot.

Little feet as white as jade padded over a carpet that was also pink. Under the peaceful rays of the moon, the five pink toes on each foot were actually quite adorable.

Lisa was a bit younger than Bryan, and was the young lady of a noble household. Disregarding what she had done to Bryan, Lisa was quite a beauty with a head full of long, soft, blond hair, a height of 162 cm that made her just a tad taller than Bryan, delicately arched eyebrows, an elegantly long nose, and endearing red lips.

Dressed in pink pajamas, Lisa didn’t seem fully awake. After she walked out from the pink bed, she instinctively looked over at the source of the sound.

A familiar face covered in blood, petrifying traces of blood dripping from the eyes and nose, and a thin body swaying back and forth at the window, stared emptily back at her with no sign of life.

“Wahhhhh....”

A horrorstruck scream filled the hallways of the female living district.

Han Shuo inwardly grinned evilly and thought, I’m going to scare you unconscious this time, if not scare you to death. His expression grew more and more chilling as his thoughts grew. After a while of staring emptily ahead, he rolled his eyes backwards and swayed even more strongly.

He could no longer see Lisa because he’d rolled his eyes back. There was

a sudden lack of sound from Lisa after that initial horrorstruck scream and continued through Han Shuo's gradual facial progression.

She probably fainted. Han Shuo thought as sounds of the other necromancy major girls' cussing floated within hearing. Better to leave while he could, otherwise he'd be in for a world of hurt if he was caught.

An incredible pain spread from the bridge of his nose just as he was about to reverse his eye roll. Another intense pain appeared from the top of his head, which caused him to fall off the tree. The fall awoke all his aches and pains and made him see stars.

Attacks fell on him like rain shortly thereafter, with a voice yelling as the hits landed, "Bryan, looks like you finally grew a backbone! You escaped death last time, but your brain rotted instead! I major in necromancy and spend my days with skeletons and corpses. You idiot tried to scare me by pretending to be a corpse; I have to really give it to you. Would the future great mage Lisa be unable to determine if a body even has a soul?!"

Although his body hurt, his heart was in even greater pain. That dumb Bryan spent six years as an errand slave for the necromancy major, but hadn't even picked up this bit of common sense. This was hardly the outcome he expected for the first time he'd gathered up his courage to do something bad.

Necromancy? This wondrous necromancy could determine even this? There was definitely some value in it. It looks like I have a lot to learn if I'm to survive in this world, otherwise the unfortunate events from today will most likely happen again.

As the agony on his body increased, Han Shuo continued to think rapidly while howling in pain. The magic of Chu Cang Lan's dark path encompassed the word "demon", whereas necromancy didn't sound like a great path either. What if he were to train in both of these, would there be conflict between the two or would they – become stronger together?

# Chapter 3: From Idiot to Crazy

Han Shuo's thoughts spun madly as the little witch, Lisa, beat him hysterically, adding to the aches and pains he already felt all over his body. Poor Han Shuo was already quite weak to begin with. That initial blow to his nose had caused tears to leak out, and the resulting fall from the tree made him dizzy with pain. He could only curl into a tight ball on the ground and present a vulnerable target for Lisa's attentions – his butt.

Han Shuo realized something marvelous after a while. That little bit of magical yuan began to circulate past his butt and relieved some of the pain. When Lisa pulverized his butt, it didn't hurt as much, thanks to the magical yuan.

In fact, any place that cried out in pain was greatly relieved after the magical yuan passed through it, and it actually felt a bit... comfortable.

Han Shuo was taken aback and inwardly thought, the solid realm in demonic magic is seriously masochistic! The magic yuan travelled to his right buttcheek as Lisa's foot came smashing down and landed right where the magical yuan happened to be.

“Ah!” “Wah!”

A high pitched yell and a low grunt sounded from Han Shuo and Lisa respectively. Lisa suddenly felt that Han Shuo's right buttcheek was harder than iron. Her foot cramped up immediately and she hopped around yelling.

On the other hand, Han Shuo felt that it had only not hurt when Lisa kicked him, but it felt exceedingly comfortable. This was in stark contrast to the pain that he was feeling all over and had led to his involuntary yell. Truth be told, his yell had sounded slightly obscene – as if...

“Bryan, did you put rocks in your pants, you idiot?”

Lisa complained loudly as she massaged her delicate foot. Several other necromancy major girls suddenly appeared around Han Shuo and Lisa, each staring at him with sleepy, cold eyes.

His nose had stopped hurting and his tears were finally under control. Han Shuo shook himself and sat up on the grass. When he looked around, he discovered the angry stares from apprentices Amy and Athena, as well as novice mage Bella and of course, Lisa.

The thrum of danger was in the air...

Amy, Athena, and Bella paled in comparison when they stood next to Lisa. They were all sixteen or seventeen years old, but were not very pretty. They were also in extremely bad moods as their beauty sleep had been interrupted.

“Idiot, what are you looking at! Why are there rocks in your pants! You gave my beautiful foot a huge bruise! Ooh ooh.. it hurts.”

Lisa put her hands on her hips and spoke arrogantly while staring coldly at Han Shuo. The effect was somewhat spoiled, as she had to hop around on her left foot.

“Idiot heh...” Han Shuo cackled inside and put on an innocent expression. He gave a dumb sounding “heh, heh” after he pulled himself up with some difficulty and said, “Nuh uh, I don’t have any rocks in my pants!”

He turned around so his butt was facing the four necromancy major girls and started undoing his pants as he spoke. Four panicked screams split the air before he’d pulled his pants down, and the frantic sound of running feet followed shortly thereafter.

“Bryan, you idiot! Pull your pants up immediately or I’m going to kill you!” Lisa yelled hurriedly, but one could hear a note of panic in her voice.

“Oh.” Han Shuo answered dumbly, but continued to chuckle sinisterly on the inside. A bunch of naive little daisies, see how I’m going to take care of you.

After he put his pants back on. Lisa took a close look at Han Shuo. As the four girls now stood in front of him again, she said fiercely, “I can forget the fact that you hid rocks in your pants, but what were you planning to do on the tree outside my window in the dead of night?”

“Heh heh,” came two dumb sounding laughs in response to her question. Han Shuo pointed at a ragged bag on one of the tree’s branches. “To get that down!”

“Why are you chasing after a trash bag in the middle – of – the – night?!” Lisa yelled angrily as she thought, about to pop from anger.

At the moment, novice mage Bella sighed lightly and said to Lisa, “Hey Lisa, can’t you see that Bryan has gone mad? Looks like instead of killing him, your ghoul drove him insane instead. What’s the point of getting mad at a crazy person?”

Athena seemed to be quite sleepy as she covered a yawn, “Oh... there’s still class tomorrow. I’m going back to bed, senior Lisa you can handle this!”

Amy appeared to pity Han Shuo as she minutely shook her head, sighing softly after staring at him briefly. She didn’t say much and turned to leave like Bella.

If Han Shuo hadn’t acted like the village idiot, he would’ve faced the wrath of these three girls, in addition to Lisa’s, but since he had “lost his mind”, the three girls naturally wouldn’t bother with a madman. Thus, they left him alone and returned to their warm beds.

When the three female students left, it was only Lisa and Han Shuo again. Lisa glared ferociously at Han Shuo and bit off her words, “Go back to your business, I’ll come find you in two days. I’m tired today; if you dare disturb my sleep again, I’ll drive you crazy with magic for a second time, not just beat you black and blue!”

Lisa delivered a final glare after she finished and left, walking a bit unnaturally. A soft exclamation of “Ouch, this hurts! I can’t believe that idiot put rocks in his pants, he was definitely driven crazy by my ghoul” floated out when she walked through the door.

Silence descended again as Lisa went in. Han Shuo felt a belated shiver of apprehension as he watched her walk in. Good thing this Lisa hadn’t used necromancy magic, otherwise with her rank as a novice mage, another ghoul would have actually driven him crazy.



The party was over and Han Shuo took his leave as well. He cursed under his breath as he tiredly dragged his frail, battered body back to the warehouse.

After he returned to his warehouse, he haphazardly swept all the trash off his bed and fell into a deep sleep.

The next day.

Han Shuo was sleeping soundly when the warehouse door was suddenly pushed open and a loud “Wah...” sounded.

Han Shuo opened his sleepy eyes and twisted his body to see a short fatty wearing an errand boy’s uniform . He had short blond hair, a dark green left eye, and was pointing at Han Shuo with an aghast expression, “You... You...” He couldn’t finish his sentences.

“Oh, it’s Jack. What are you doing in my room?”

Little fatty Jack was the same age as Bryan. Jack was one of the few people in the necromancy major that treated Bryan nicely, possibly due to a sense of shared misery. Little fatty Jack came from a destitute family and his dad had sent Jack to the Babylon Academy of Magical Force two years ago to earn a few silvers every month.

Although Jack was an errand boy like Bryan, he had not been sold to Babylon Academy. He was a free person, unlike Bryan, who had been sold to the school by slave dealers.

Although Jack was also an errand boy and victim of constant bullying, the necromancy students did not treat him like they treated Bryan, simply because Jack was not a slave. They might hit and yell at him, and even conduct some small experiments on him, but they would never torment him to death like they would a slave.

Bryan had actually always envied little fatty Jack because Jack could eat his fill at every meal and not be subject to inhumane bullying. As for little fatty Jack, it was only with Bryan that Jack was able to find that littlest bit of self confidence, so the two got along fabulously.

“Hoo... hoo... Scared me to death. Bryan, you’re not dead, that’s

wonderful!”

“What bloody wonderful, I’m starving. Jack do you have anything to eat? Give it to me if you do, I’ll return it later!”

Han Shuo realized little fatty Jack did not respond after he’d stopped speaking, and was in fact staring at him dumbfoundedly. Two small, yellow, bean-like eyes stared out curiously from fleshy face. Han Shuo frowned and asked impatiently, “What, am I that good looking?”

Jack started and looked even more strangely at Han Shuo, “You’ve never asked me for food in all these years. You would only eat if I gave you food. You’ve also never talked to me like that. Bryan, you’re a little different!”

A bit startled, Han Shuo reflected that Lisa and co. had been unable to see what was different about him, but Jack, that silly fatty, had sussed it out with Han Shuo’s first sentence.

Han Shuo rummaged through Bryan’s memories after a while, and discovered that Bryan basically never spoke to the necromancy students. He did whatever people told him to do with no interaction whatsoever, but Bryan and Jack would occasionally talk to each other. Granted, most of the time it was Jack talking and Bryan listening. The two had spent a long time together, no wonder Jack had quickly discovered the differences.

Han Shuo glossed over the moment with a smile and said, “I was hit by Lisa’s ghoul and almost died. After that incident, I felt that the way I was living before was wrong and wanted to make a change.”

Jack breathed a sigh of relief at Han Shuo’s explanation and nodded, “I see. I thought the ghoul hit you and turned you into an idiot!”

Han Shuo, “.....”

“Here, this is some black bread that I’ve stashed away. Go ahead and eat it. It’s such a good thing that you didn’t die. When everyone thought you were dead, they gave me your tasks because we haven’t found a new errand boy yet. Because of that I’ve had to come here super early this morning. I was in a rush and accidentally bumped into Bach. He beat me up, I even have a bruise on my left eye!”

Little fatty Jack relayed happily as he passed a piece of gray bread to Han Shuo. It would seem that he was delighted to not have to do Bryan's work.

Han Shuo violently bit off a piece of bread as he looked at the green bruise circling Jack's left eye. He spoke furiously, "Bach hit you again. He's too full of himself. Come, let's go get revenge!"

Jack hurriedly jumped up in fright and restrained Han Shuo using his body weight. He exclaimed, "Bryan, are you crazy? Aren't we used to this by now? Bach is an apprentice in necromancy! It's not the first time we've been beat up, it's good enough when he leaves us alone. What revenge can we get?"

Han Shuo laughed coldly, "Don't worry, I've got my ways. Yes, I am crazy, by now all of the necromancy students know I'm crazy. Yeah I'm damn crazy, who am I afraid of!"

Han Shuo bellowed as he proudly dragged Jack out of the warehouse. The magical yuan within his body seemed to churn faster!

# Chapter 4: Chest as flat as bread

On a whole, necromancy major students tended to wake up early in the morning and would rush to get ready, hurrying to the department of dark magic's classroom building. Jack was about to lose it and was completely unwilling to participate, but his fears dissipated when he listened to Han Shuo's plan. In the end, Jack finally agreed, as he remembered that Han Shuo was doing this for him. After all, was he less of a man than Bryan?

Many statues of Babylon Academy valedictorians and notables were erected on the sides of a path made of rocks. These faithfully reproduced statues were larger than life and were the pride of the academy.

One of Bryan's tasks was to dust these statues everyday. He had been doing this since he was ten, and had to use a small ladder when he was shorter. Only after the completion of this arduous task was he allowed to take a break for food.

As they worked the dust out of the crevices of a bushy-mustached statue of an archmage, Han Shuo turned to Jack and said, "I say Jack, wouldn't it be nice if our statues could be erected here some day?"

"Bryan, don't be silly. We're just errand boys! It's enough that we get a full meal and not get beaten up everyday. How could we possibly become mages? Oh... Bryan, you are definitely different. You would never have had such crazy thoughts before and wouldn't share such a bad idea!"

"Why not?"

"We have to have the potential and pay a lot of gold coins for tuition to a magic school in order to become a mage. We have to pass through countless levels of training and tests, even kids from noble families need to have lots of potential if they want to become a mage. This is impossible for us commoners. Oh, I forgot. You're also a slave without freedom, that's even worse, there's no hope for you at all!"

"We're at a magic school right now and don't even have to pay tuition. Heh heh, this is a huge stroke of luck! If we don't learn some magic now, in the future, how would we dare say that we're from the Babylon

Academy of Magic and Force!”

“Bryan, don’t act so confident. We’re not students, we’re only errand boys. Eh.. and at least I can leave the school in the future, but you – you can never leave!”

Jack was absentmindedly wiping the statue of archmage Claire, with none of his usual attention to detail and a face full of ambition. Little fatty Jack thought Bryan was being rather odd and thus spoke candidly.

“Hah, let’s not talk about that. Look, that witch Lisa is walking this way, let’s get back to work!” Han Shuo eyed Lisa limping towards them from afar, and thought that at least Bryan had something to show for his six year of running errands for the academy – he knew the daily routines of some of the people.

Lisa usually woke up later, and most of the time, slowly plodded to the classrooms alone. Today was no exception. She was dressed in a black wizard’s robe today, with her long, soft, blond hair strewn carelessly across her shoulders. It seemed that she hadn’t gotten much sleep the previous night, as she kept yawning as she walked.

Lisa was quite pretty, but maybe because she hadn’t completely finished developing yet. Since she was only 16, her chest area was not as well rounded. Rumor had it that Lisa was also very displeased with her flat chest and had recently been searching for solutions.

Han Shuo and Jack surreptitiously watched Lisa approach as they continued to dust off the statue of archmage Claire with all seriousness. They muttered to each other as they worked, seemingly oblivious to her presence.

“No way, Bryan you must have misheard. How could Bach have said that about Lisa?”

The two had been murmuring quietly when Jack suddenly raised his voice and exclaimed in surprise.

Lisa had been walking along absentmindedly when she heard someone mention her name. Her attention immediately zeroed in on that statement

as she looked warily in front of her.

All girls wanted to know what people said about them behind their backs and Lisa was no exception. She even went so far as to hide behind another statue, so that the two wouldn't see her and become too afraid to talk. Her ears perked up as she sneakily snuck glances at the two.

It was that half-crazy, half-idiot Bryan! Lisa was still mad and wanted to put him in his place, but first, she wanted to hear what Bach had said about her.

Han Shuo smiled vacantly and said, "No I didn't mishear, on their way to class, Bach was telling the other students that Lisa's chest was as flat as stomped bread!"

Jack had to hold back his laughter with all his might as soon as he heard this. His face grew red and his body kept shaking.

On the other side of the statue, Lisa's face darkened with rage. Her pretty eyes shot out glares of wrath as her cute lips convulsed and her pearly teeth ground audibly. She trembled with rage for a few seconds and quickly stomped off in a huff towards the classroom building. She'd completely forgotten that she'd wanted to put Bryan in his place.

Jack could no longer hold in his laughter as he watched Lisa hurry off in the opposite direction, her face purple with anger and out for blood. "Hahahaha...." he expelled all his frustrations with an explosive bout of laughter. He laughed as he said, "Bryan, you're too evil! Even us errand boys know that Bach likes Lisa and that Lisa hates people making fun of her chest. Looking at how she was just now, Bach is totally screwed!"

Han Shuo gave a sinister cackle as he immediately put his brushes away. "Forget about dusting off Claire! Let's go watch the show!"

Little fatty Jack tucked his brushes, with a grand gesture, into the cloth bag at his waist as he took Han Shuo's advice. He laughed, "Let's go, I want to see Lisa beat Bach up. Serves him right for hitting me this morning!"

The two necromancy errand boys followed Lisa in high spirits, running swiftly to the classroom building. The students they passed along the way

were puzzled by their behavior, thinking the two cowardly errand boys had woken up on the wrong side of bed that morning.

At the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, the necromancy major was a subcategory of the department of dark magic. Necromancy students used the same classrooms as those majoring in dark magic, and studied everyday under the tutelage of the teachers.

One had to admire Lisa's efficiency, by the time Han Shuo and Jack had gotten there, she had already vented her spleen and was giving Bach a beating.

"Lisa, even the major's errand boys know how I feel about you, how could I have possibly said anything bad about you? Who did you hear this from?"

Bach already had a spectacular bruise around his left eye as he ducked a "bone arrow" attack. He took advantage of the respite to quickly protest his innocence and looked quite bedraggled indeed.

Bach had beaten Jack severely when the latter had bumped into him. Bryan had suffered even more at Bach's hands.

Bach was the seventeen year old son of a small noble family, but he held the lowest rank of magic apprentice. He was outclassed against a higher ranked novice mage, not to mention that he was pulling his blows because he liked Lisa. No wonder he was quickly hit when facing a wrathful Lisa.

"Huh, that's none of your business. They didn't even mean for me to hear them, so it must be true. Since you are so mean, feel my wrath!"

Indeed, Han Shuo and Jack hadn't "meant for" Lisa to hear them. Han Shuo was also half mad and half village idiot. There was no way someone like that could make up such a lie. He was also an errand slave, he wouldn't dare to lie!

Since it had to do with one of Lisa's taboos, she would never say what she overheard when other people were around. She brought her best efforts to teaching Bach a lesson so that no one would make fun of her again.

“Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald’s call and reveal your existence!”

Lisa raised her slim, white arm towards the sky and chanted an incantation. When she was finished, two starkly-white, skeletal warriors wielding bone knives appeared in front of her. They creakily rushed at Bach with their knives held high when she pointed at him.

Han Shuo was gobsmacked as he watched on the sidelines. This was the first time he had seen the mysterious necromancy magic in play with his own eyes. His body about to burst in curiosity, he focused his eyes and attention on the action.

“Lisa’s focus isn’t that bad to be able to summon two skeletal warriors!”

“Huh, the necromancy major is weak as hell to begin with and its students are not united. No wonder necromancy is one of the weakest majors in the academy. What a stain on the department of dark magic!”

...

Students from the department of dark magic started chattering after Lisa had summoned the two skeletal warriors. From their conversations, Han Shuo learned that the same magic could be divided into five different levels based on the level of concentration. If a necromancer archmage with great focus used the chant to summon skeletons, he would be able to summon even more skeletal warriors.

Bach was extremely depressed and inwardly cursed the rumor starter a couple hundred times. If Bach had practiced dark magic incantations and had enough focus, then Han Shuo and Jack wouldn’t be able to enjoy the show they were currently watching.

The skeletal warriors chased him frantically all over the place. Bach finally had to use the same magic to summon a small skeleton. One man and one skeleton started fighting against the two other skeletons.

Other students from the department of dark magic laughed loudly when they saw Bach in such a mess. Bach was affected by the jeers and lost his focus, resulting in one of Lisa’s skeletal warriors stomping him in the gut.



His face grew purple with pain and he slowly sank to the ground.

Lisa hurriedly stopped her skeletons when she saw that Bach had been hit and the skeleton was raising its knife to finish the job. She sent the skeletons back to another dimension.

After all, it wasn't a fight to the death, and the academy prohibited such fights anyways. Lisa did not dare to really hurt Bach, and the bulk of her anger had been appeased by Bach's injury.

Bach stood up and sent his skeleton back to another dimension. He swept his gaze around and saw that in front of him, Han Shuo and Jack were also laughing loudly at him. Bach was already feeling quite infuriated and so stomped over angrily, cursing, "You two low level errand servants dare to laugh at me?"

Bach didn't dare to vent his anger on Lisa, and even less so on his seniors from the department of dark magic around him. He could only vent some of his wrath on the two errand boys, and the sight of them laughing at him only set him off even further.

Lisa had just about satisfied her anger when she saw Bach ignore her and focus on something else. This roused her rage all over again as she chanted coldly, "Oh eternal darkness, grant me the power of death, inflict the pain of the soul on his body. Agony of the Soul!"

A dark cloud of gas formed as Lisa finished and flew towards Bach. The gas kept shifting as it floated through the air and finally materialized as a pulsing black flame.

Bach's expression shifted as he turned to see the magical flame from the "Agony of the Soul" shooting towards him after he heard Lisa chant the incantation. He then suddenly turned and ran towards Han Shuo and Jack as if he'd thought of something. Just as the "Agony of the Soul" was about to hit him, he ducked and rolled on the floor.

Bach's plan worked. The merrily laughing and utterly defenseless Han Shuo watched as Bach suddenly tucked into a roll in front of him and the "Agony of the Soul" crashed onto Han Shuo's body.

Han Shuo's eyes rolled backwards as his head suddenly hurt, and he fell backwards straight to the ground.

# Chapter 5: How is that called stealing?

.....

When Han Shuo woke up, he found himself lying on the small wooden bed in the warehouse, covered in ice cold water. In front of him, little fatty Jack had a wooden pail in one hand and was climbing onto a stool with great effort. He intended to dump the ice cold water right on top of Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was already freezing his butt off as it was a bit chilly that day. He gave a great yell as he saw Jack about to tip the pail over, “Jack, what are you doing?!”

Little fatty Jack was stepping onto a stool that had been trashed. It wasn't the sturdiest to begin with, and his legs wobbled in surprise when he heard Han Shuo's yell. His hand jerked, and all the contents of the pail came crashing down on Han Shuo's head as the pail flew and smashed into Han Shuo's chest.

“Ugh... I say Jack, are you trying to kill me?”

Han Shuo started shuddering uncontrollably after the second pail of ice cold water. Not only that, but it hurt like hell when the pail itself hit him. He immediately starting cursing loudly.

“Sorry Bryan, I thought the first pail wasn't enough to wake you up. This stool of yours was wobbly to begin with, and I was surprised when you yelled, that's why my hand slipped and I dumped the water all over you!”

Little fatty Jack was extremely apologetic and started wiping off Han Shuo's neck with a random rag that he had found on the ground.

Who knew that it would provoke a scream from Han Shuo like a pig being slaughtered? He hastily scrambled away and said, “Uh Jack, that rag in your hand is covered in bone dust that metamorphosed during necromancy experiments. It feels like little needles are prickling me, are you trying to stab me to death?”

“Ah.... sorry Bryan, I didn't mean to, I really didn't mean to!”

Jack was dismayed as he quickly threw the rag far, far away. He was thankful that there was no bone dust on the side that he had been holding.

“Achoo... Achoo... ah forget it. Jack why am I here? Didn’t I get hit by Lisa’s Agony of the Soul because that dickhead Bach used me as a scapegoat?”

His neck breaking out in red patches, Han Shuo kept sneezing as he rushed to peel off his sopping wet clothes. He quickly groped for the black towel that Bryan used and dried himself off.

“Bryan, you have so many scars over your body!”

Han Shuo took a good look at his new body, for the first time, upon hearing Jack’s words. There wasn’t a single inch of unmarked skin on his body as far as his eyes could see. He heaved an inward sigh and once again felt pity for Bryan’s circumstances.

“Scars are a man’s memories and medals of honor, what the hell do you know about them. Hurry and tell me, what happened after I fainted?”

“Classes happened to start after you passed out from the Agony of the Soul. Lisa said a few words and ran off to class. I yelled for Uncle Saru and the two of us carried you back!”

“So Uncle Saru had been by... Oh yes, what did Lisa say before she left?”

Han Shuo nodded as he continued to wipe himself off. Uncle Saru was the necromancy major’s oldest errand runner, he was fifty some years old and quite kind to Bryan and Jack. When Bryan had arrived at the academy, Saru had already been an errand runner for more than ten years.

“Lisa said it was too bad for you. If the Agony of the Soul had landed on Bach, he would have been fine after suffering for three days since he’s a magic apprentice. But you’re not a necromancy student and have no mental strength at all. You’ll probably suffer for a month. She said you bothered her when she was sleeping last night, and hurt her foot because you put rocks in your pants, so she won’t dismiss the Agony of the Soul!”

“Damnit, how dare Lisa treat me this way! I’ll take care of her one day!”

Han Shuo's face darkened as he listened to Jack's words and started cussing. His actions startled Jack as the latter thought, this isn't the first time Lisa's been this way to you, I've never seen you do anything to get back at her.

When Han Shuo was done venting his spleen, he thought briefly, "Bach has mental strength because he's a magic apprentice. He only has to suffer for three days, and I have to endure this for a month? Heh heh, my potential is great. If I learn some necromancy, maybe I can get better in three days."

"Bryan, you're an errand slave, how could you learn magic?"

"Then how do the students learn magic?"

"They first have to meditate and learn to sense the magical elements. When they've cultivated their mental strength, then they need to study the knowledge contained within the books of magic and practice the magic incantations. They ask the teacher if they have any questions!" Jack said matter of factly, after he thought for a short while.

"There we go, I can meditate. When I've cultivated mental strength, can't I look within the books of magic to learn the incantations written there?"

"But you don't have a book of magic?"

At this point in the conversation, Han Shuo had sidled around to Jack and suddenly threw a friendly arm around him, smiling winningly at him, "But I have you, don't you clean the library?"

Jack was shocked and promptly created some space between the two of them. He said with a panicked expression, "Bryan, you want me to steal books for you?"

"How vulgar! How can that be stealing? I'm just asking you to borrow some books for me. You can put them back when I'm done with them. No one reads those foundational books anyways, who would know? Jack, I'm in dire straits today because I was trying to help you. Now shouldn't you help me too?" Han Shuo said earnestly to little fatty Jack.

Jack wavered upon hearing Han Shuo's words, but finally agreed to

“borrow” magic books for Han Shuo after Han Shuo gave him a puppy-eyed look.

Later that night, Jack stealthily crept up to Han Shuo and took out copies of “The Foundations of Necromancy” and “A Magical Dictionary” to hand over to Han Shuo. He exhorted Han Shuo to be careful and cautious at all costs before finally surreptitiously sneaking away.

As an errand slave, Bryan had no right to learn how to read. However, as an errand slave, who had to do anything and everything in the course of his job, he had picked up quite a few words over the past six years. All of this knowledge had been left to Han Shuo, and he was able to read the words in the two books.

Han Shuo shut the warehouse door after Jack had left, flipped to the first yellowed page of “The Foundations of Magic”, and started reading with every bit of interest.

Magic was a method of communicating with the magical elements of the world by using mental strength. There were four ways to use magic, through incantations, magic scrolls (or objects), hand seals, and magic matrixes.

Necromancy had once been an extremely prosperous branch of magic. At the height of its popularity, all dark magic had been categorized under necromancy. It was a pity that after its fall from grace, necromancy had become a subcategory of dark magic instead.

Necromancy was a field of magic that had started by simply controlling souls and skeletons. As it progressed and forebearers continuously experimented, its repertoire of spells had continuously grown. It slowly formed into a school of thought and became the representative of dark magic.

Mental strength was the foundation of all magic. The only way to cultivate mental strength was to sense the magical elements, through meditation, that regular people could not perceive. One was only considered a magic apprentice if they cultivated mental strength through meditation.

Thus, the first thing Han Shuo did after studying “The Foundations of Necromancy” was to meditate and try to get a grasp on mental strength. However, he came up empty handed after meditating for seven days. There wasn’t a trace of mental strength to be found.

Han Shuo could only meditate at night during those seven days, he had to be the diligent and bumbling Bryan during the day. He had to continue to perform an errand boy’s daily chores of cleaning, sanitizing, bug killing, and trash dumping, otherwise he would have no place at the academy.

Thanks to the Agony of the Soul, Han Shuo’s brain would suddenly spasm with pain a few times every day. He fainted dead away the first two times, but possibly acclimated after that and managed to stay on his feet.

Han Shuo’s half mad, half village idiot reputation also spread during this time. However, although he looked like a blundering madman, he still finished his assigned duties everyday. Thus, Babylon Academy did not kick him out upon seeing that his work was still completed.

As for what the necromancy students thought about Han Shuo’s crazy eccentricities, they were of one mind. Han Shuo had formed a habit of running errands after working for six years. Although he was a bit crazy, some habits were difficult to break and thus he still finished his duties everyday.

Except for one thing. Han Shuo would always somehow have a “headache” whenever the students approached him for experiments these days. He became even more out of control when his head hurt, and sometimes completely wrecked the lab. There was nothing the students could do as they knew that he had been hit by Lisa’s Agony of the Soul, and had gone a bit mental.

Even now, no one knew why Lisa had given Bach such a beating, but Bach was depressed nonetheless. He often thrashed Han Shuo on the basis of a flimsy excuse. Bach was a magic apprentice and stronger than Han Shuo, so the latter always ended up in much worse shape, even when he pretended to be crazy and hit back.

Han Shuo would break out into loud curses every night when he

returned to the warehouse. “Bach you scum, just you wait. One day I’ll beat you so bad that even your mom and dad won’t recognize you.”

He’d been thrashed by Bach again today, and the latter had a small skeleton as backup. Han Shuo was naturally not a match for the two, and even now was covered in black and blue bruises. The difference was, Han Shuo felt that his strength was growing stronger these days, along with his appetite. Whenever he was still hungry after his rations, he would ask Jack for some more food.

Although it hurt like no other every time Bach beat him up, Han Shuo would train according to the principles of the solid realm when he returned to the warehouse. All his aches and pains would disappear during the night, and he would be in fine spirits the morning after. The next time he got into a fight with Bach, he noticed that Bach’s hits hurt less and less.

Han Shuo would immediately return to the warehouse after each beating and started training. That little bit of magical yuan within his body unknowingly grew bigger during this time as well.

It seemed that his body was slowly reforging itself after each cycle of beating and training, and the magical yuan slowly changed from the size of a thumbnail to the mass of a thumb.

This both excited and scared Han Shuo. He was excited that the magical yuan was growing stronger, and that his body and spirit were improving. He was scared that seemingly because of the magical yuan becoming stronger, he found it harder and harder to control his temper. Han Shuo would easily commit actions that he would later regret.

He retrieved “The Foundations of Necromancy” from underneath the small, wooden bed and started meditating habitually after a short perusal of the book. He circulated the magical yuan randomly throughout his body. Places that had aches and pains were greatly relieved after the magical yuan had travelled past them.

That sliver of magical yuan slowly traveled from his neck to his brain as Han Shuo was meditating. It was at this moment that a familiar pain



started emanating from his brain. Han Shuo knew immediately that Lisa's Agony of the Soul was about to strike again.

Suddenly, just as Han Shuo's brain was hurting, the magical yuan slipped into the center of the pain. This was the first time that the magical yuan had moved into his brain when the Agony of the Soul was also flaring up. Han Shuo felt as if a cannon had gone off inside his brain, and fainted again after another round of intense pain.

# Chapter 6: I'll get her one day

It was already midnight when Han Shuo woke up. The magical yuan was back to circulating in an irregular pattern, but there seemed to be something extra in his brain. Everything seemed much clearer now, compared to before, when he looked around.

A sudden thought struck Han Shuo and he resettled into meditation. He carefully extended his senses according to the instructions in “The Foundations of Necromancy”, and finally confirmed that because the magical yuan had traveled to his brain when the Agony of the Soul had hit, he had bafflingly trained some mental strength into existence.

“Hahaha... I am definitely a genius. I meditated and gained some mental strength in such a short amount of time. Heh heh, perhaps it's time to try out the lowest level of necromancy magic. Let's see if I can summon a skeletal warrior!”

He hastily hauled out “The Foundations of Necromancy” and flipped through the pages. He still couldn't find the incantation to summon a skeletal warrior after searching for a while. It was only then that Han Shuo realized “The Foundations of Necromancy” was a reference for only basic necromancy knowledge, and didn't contain any incantations or spells.

Han Shuo furrowed his brow in thought and recalled Lisa's incantation with some effort. He immediately raised his hands up high, concentrated his mental strength, and started chanting, “Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald's call and reveal your existence!”

When he finished chanting, he felt the insubstantial amount of mental strength in his mind rapidly fade away. It seemed that he also perceived something in that moment, but then his head suddenly started to hurt and he sat wearily on the bed, panting heavily and completely drained.

When Han Shuo slumped over his bed, a black shadow flashed through his little warehouse, and a starkly-white skeleton, half the height of the one Lisa had summoned, appeared afterwards.

Han Shuo felt sheer elation when he saw the snow-white skeleton

holding a bone dirk and staring back at him with two empty, hollowed out eye sockets. Despite the difference in size, this was still a skeleton and was proof that his necromancy spell had succeeded.

His body felt completely drained and his mind was woozy. Upon referring to “The Foundations of Necromancy”, Han Shuo surmised that his mental strength was too weak, and thus had his mental strength completely depleted when he had summoned the small skeleton.

Han Shuo felt a strange connection with the small skeleton standing in front of him, but his mental strength was so weak, that he couldn't even issue an order, much less send it back to another dimension.

Thus, a human and skeleton stared blankly at each other for a while. No one would come to Han Shuo's warehouse anyway, and it made no difference if the skeleton was here, since it wouldn't do anything without his orders.

It was already well past midnight by the time Han Shuo was done with everything. He was exhausted beyond belief, and once the surprise had worn off, Han Shuo fell into a weary, befuddled sleep.

The next day, not yet daybreak.

Han Shuo had already woken up and was planning on clearing out the trash as usual before anyone else had gotten up. He was just about go through the same routine when his eyes landed on the small skeleton standing next to the trash heap.

His mental strength seemed to have recovered a bit after a night's sleep, but it was still definitely not enough to send the little skeleton back to another dimension. However, it seemed to be enough to give it a single command – throw away the trash.

The little skeleton immediately stretched its legs out when the order was given, and slowly extended its five bone fingers to pick up the heap of trash next to it. It pushed the door open and walked outside.

“Heh heh, no wonder everyone wants to learn magic. Everything is so much easier with magic. In the future, this small skeleton can throw away

trash for me early in the morning!”

Han Shuo noted that it was still quite early and flung himself back onto the little bed to resume chasing sheep. Over the past few days, this was the first morning he’d been able to sleep in.

When Han Shuo opened his eyes again after going back to sleep again, he discovered that the skeleton had returned and appeared to dispose of the trash according to his commands.

As Han Shuo washed his face after getting up from bed, he noticed that the black and blue bruising had miraculously disappeared, and even some of the scars on his arms seemed to have faded away. Aside from feeling a bit lightheaded from expending all of his mental strength yesterday, his body seemed to be in fairly good shape.

The solid realm of demonic magic was a process of reforming the practitioner’s body. Ascension beyond the solid realm was marked by erasure of all the scars on the practitioner’s body and vastly increased bodily strength and resilience. Either Bach or Lisa would suffer a quick loss if they tried to beat up Han Shuo with skeletal warriors then.

Han Shuo remained deep in thought as he washed up and watched the necromancy students hurry to class again. He grabbed his tools as well before running to dust off the statues of Babylon Academy notables.

“Athena, I went to the restroom before the sun rose today and saw a small skeleton carrying two bags of trash. It was walking slowly towards the trash dump, what an odd sight!” Magic apprentice Amy chatted with Athena as they walked towards the department of dark magic’s classroom building.

“Weirdo, who would be so bored as to summon a skeleton to pick up trash. Doesn’t that half mad, half village idiot Bryan do all that?”

“It’s true, I really saw a very small skeleton carrying two garbage bags. And also, I feel so bad for Bryan. It was bad enough for him already, now he’s suffering from Lisa’s aftereffects and gets beaten up by Bach every day!”

“You must have been half asleep and saw incorrectly. Bryan is an errand boy, and a slave in fact. It’s good enough that he can survive. You’re way too kindhearted, worrying about Bryan!”

The two girls had walked far enough and Han Shuo could no longer hear their conversation. Jack swung back after a while and dusted the same statute with Han Shuo. After Jack had busily wiped for a while, he looked at Han Shuo a bit dazedly, “Han Shuo, I think you’ve gained a bit of weight. And didn’t Bach beat you up yesterday? Your face was still bruised yesterday, why does it look fine now?”

“Bach must have over exercised recently. You can see that dull look in his eyes and how weak he looks. He doesn’t have any strength! At this rate, he won’t be able to beat me up anymore!” Han Shuo felt that his stomach was particularly empty after that declaration and said to Jack, “My appetite is bigger these days, give me some more of that food that you’re hiding.”

“Eh? How did you know I was hiding bread on me?”

“The entire major’s errand boys know about your habit of hiding food. You’re the only one who thinks it’s still a secret. Quit wasting time and give me some bread. I’ll return it to you in the future!”

Jack reluctantly took out a piece of bread after listening to Han Shuo, took a careful look, and broke off a piece for Han Shuo.

As Han Shuo sat aside his work and hungrily devoured the bread, Jack suddenly said, “Sh... Bach’s coming, eh?! Lisa’s with him!”

Bach held two exquisite, white boxes in his hand and was following behind Lisa with a fawning smile on his face. He kept trying to win her over, “Lisa, these are special snacks from my family and they are fabulously delicious. You haven’t had breakfast yet, right? Please have some.”

When Bach was beating Han Shuo up yesterday, Bach’s face accidentally connected with the latter’s fist. Even now there was some bruising on his right cheek, with it spasming every time he tried to smile, turning the grin into a grimace.

“Humph. I’m not hungry. Don’t you try that act with me, I hate people like you – people who flatter me to my face and then talk trash about me behind my back!”

Lisa stalked off without even glancing at Bach. When she passed Bryan and Jack, she glared coldly at Bryan, “Bryan, I’ll come find you for target practice again in a month when the Agony of the Soul ends!”

It wasn’t until Lisa brought this up that Han Shuo remembered that he hadn’t suffered from the Agony of the Soul since this morning. He guessed that the magic from the Agony of the Soul had been cancelled out when he successfully cultivated mental strength last night, otherwise he should have suffered an attack by now.

Lisa was about to walk away, while Bach, on the other hand, exclaimed in surprise after he saw at Bryan, “Eh? How is that possible? I remember I pounded tons of bruises into your face yesterday, why is that there are none there today?”

Damnit, you remember that well. Han Shuo looked at Bach stupidly and then gave a mad giggle, “Hehe, I have a good skincare routine!”

Lisa gave a small splutter of laughter when she heard Han Shuo’s words and halted her footsteps, not in a hurry to leave anymore. Her beautiful eyes creased into half moons with her smile. It was quite adorable actually. That idiot Bryan had gotten much more interesting after he went mad, Lisa thought. He doesn’t just stand there in silence anymore.

Jack knew Han Shuo wasn’t crazy, and that he’d said that to make fun of Bach. He tried to hold in his laughter, but just couldn’t and gave a light, “Haha.” By the time he realized he did something wrong, it was already too late.

Bach was already pissed off, thinking the bruise on my right cheek hasn’t healed, but that idiot’s has already faded. He hadn’t dare say anything when Lisa laughed, but Jack’s laughter completely triggered Bach. He sprinted towards Jack and cursed loudly, “You pathetic servant, how dare you laugh at me! I’ll beat you to death!”

Jack knew things were bad, but he didn’t dare run away. He could only

stand there limply as Bach rushed over and waited for a beating. It was then that Han Shuo suddenly clutched his head and yelled, "It hurts!" and lumbered over in front of Jack. When Bach saw that the person in front of him had changed to Han Shuo, he mentally shrugged as it didn't make a difference to him who he beat up, and swung his fist straight towards Han Shuo's face.

Don sounded out as Han Shuo took a fist to the face, but Bach's fist didn't seem to hurt as much as it had yesterday. Han Shuo even managed to keep his frail little body from swaying back and forth in response.

But he still continued to howl in pain, "That hurts!" and wildly flailed his arms in front of him as if he'd gone into a mad fit. Pilipala rang out as Bach took three hits in a row, and his left eye immediately blackened into a bruise. He clutched his stomach with both hands and jumped up and down, "Worthless slave, how dare you hit me! I'm going to kill you with necromancy today, even if that's the last thing I do!"

"Bach, you're picking on Bryan again. It's class time, hurry up and go back to the classroom."

Suddenly, a gentle voice admonished sweetly from afar as a tall, lithe beauty with a head full of light purple, wavy hair came sashaying into view.

She looked to be 24 or 25, had a firm nose, an oval face, and sexy red lips. Her lightly tanned skin looked very healthy, and she wore a slightly form fitting master's robe trimmed with gold.

The tight master's robe perfectly showed off her well rounded chest and long legs. She was talking to Bryan as she held several books of magic in her left hand and a stylish emerald staff in her right.

"Eh... Master Fanny, you forgot your glasses again. You're pointing at Bryan!" Lisa's lip curled and she spoke with some resignation.

"Glasses are the kiss of death for a beautiful woman, I'm not wearing those things everyday," Fanny smiled in return and finally located Bach, using the staff in her right hand to make a motion as if she'd tapped him on the head. She said sternly, "Go back to class immediately, or you'll face

the consequences!”

After Fanny had spoken to Bach in a bit of a temper, a mellow smile found its way to her face again and she smiled at Lisa, “Lisa, you need to hurry to class too. Frequent tardiness does not a good student make. I need to prepare for today’s lesson, I’ll see you later!”

Fanny turned her head to glare at Bach once more, then glided forward with her lean legs, striding with a grace unmatched by thousands. Her full butt swayed as she walked, creating an alluring silhouette.

“Eh... Master Fanny, that’s not the classroom building, you’re walking in the wrong direction. Oh gosh, put your glasses on!”

Lisa called out lightly and paused when she was about to leave. She turned back and raked a cold gaze across Bach, sneering contemptuously, “What a worthless guy, you can’t even beat up an errand boy!” Lisa glanced at Han Shuo again and hurried off in pursuit of Fanny.

Bach was ablaze with anger and pointed venomously at Han Shuo and Jack, “Just you wait you pathetic wretches, you’ll get what’s coming to you!” It would seem that Fanny’s threat had a great effect on him as he ran off to class in a great hurry.

Han Shuo gazed lecherously in direction that Fanny had departed in, watching until she was out of sight. He paid no mind to Bach’s threat, and muttered to himself after she had completely disappeared, “That Master Fanny is something else alright. No wonder that silly kid Bryan had a crush on her. Bryan’s taste in girls is actually quite similar to mine!”

“Bryan, stop looking. I know you’ve liked Master Fanny for a long time, and she’s also stopped some students from bullying you, but, you’re only an errand boy, and she’s a highly ranked adept mage in the academy. Do you know how powerful adepts are? Although Master Fanny is nearsighted, there are way too many people who have a crush on her in the academy. Wake up already!”

Jack waved two plump hands in front of Han Shuo as he reminded the latter to wake up and face reality.



“I’m already drunk, I can’t wake up!” Han Shuo said with a leer. He paused and added, “I’ll get her one day!”

# Chapter 7: Methods for refining demonic treasures used to refine skeletons

“Bryan, I didn’t believe them when they said you were crazy, but now, even I am a believer. You – are – seriously – crazy!” Jack twisted his fat neck, shook his head, and sighed as he saw Han Shuo wearing a zealous expression and declare his desire to get Fanny.

“Eh? Those are the snacks that Bach was using to fawn on Lisa. Haha, what a stroke of luck! I’ve never tried the delicacies that nobles always snack on!” Han Shuo spied the snacks that Bach had forgotten in his hurry to leave and immediately sprinted over. He picked up the intricately designed snack box without saying another word and started munching on the contents without even thinking twice.

He tutted in surprise as he ate, “Tsk ts. These are delicious. That fight wasn’t for nothing. Here, I borrowed half a piece of bread earlier, and now I’m returning a box of exquisite snacks. You made out like a bandit!”

“But this is Bach’s? “I beat up that punk, so now it’s mine!”

Jack, “...”

Han Shuo also felt a bit odd about this development as well. He felt that since he’d arrived on the Profound Continent and started training his magical strength, his appetite had grown larger and his personality had also become bolder. He was doing things he hadn’t dared to do before, and his desires were actually growing as well.

“Bryan and Jack! You guys should be cleaning up the labs right now, but you haven’t even finished cleaning the statues! If you get us in trouble, you’re in for it as well!”

As Han Shuo and Jack were cooing over the wonderful taste of the exquisite snacks, two older errand boys walked up from behind them. The two of them were holding mops in their hands and began badgering Han Shuo and Jack, admonishing them to hurry to the labs and start cleaning.

These two errands boys were around twenty years old and were over 170

cm in height. They were called Borg and Carey, and had gotten into the habit of bullying Han Shuo and Jack in recent years because the older boys were stronger. They even went so far as to shift some of their own duties onto Bryan and Jack. Case in point? Cleaning up the labs.

“Not going!” Han Shuo paid them no heed since he’d wanted to get out of that for the longest time. He felt stronger now and his confidence had skyrocketed since he hadn’t lost any ground in his fight with Bach. He was actually thinking that he felt a bit too full, and another fight was just the thing to aid digestion if the two kept this act up.

“Hah, not going? Bryan, you’ve really gone crazy, daring to talk back to me, the mighty Borg. Do you want me to beat some sense into you?” Borg clenched his right hand into a fist and gave a cold laugh while staring at Han Shuo.

“Ah, my head hurts!” Han Shuo’s body shook as he crouched on the ground, clutching his head. Jack had been about to head off to the labs to start cleaning, but paused and stood there unmoving when he saw Han Shuo pull the same trick again. He looked at Han Shuo expectantly.

“I don’t care if you’re real crazy or fake crazy, I’m going to beat you until you obey!” Carey had an even worse temper. He took three large steps forward and kicked in Han Shuo’s direction.

It was then that Han Shuo gave a great “Aiya!” as he suddenly jumped up, meeting Carey’s right foot with his chest. Han Shuo gave a great cry of pain and wrapped his hands around Carey’s foot, lifting it up and to the side. It was Carey’s turn to yell in pain as he stumbled to the side. His lips parted in a silent howl as he smashed into a statue.

Borg smiled faintly when he saw Carey rush towards Han Shuo, thinking Han Shuo was in for it now. Who knew that although Han Shuo had taken a foot to the chest, Carey seemed even worse for the wear.

“Yeah? How dare you fight back Bryan! Borg, let’s get him together, we’ll teach him a lesson today!” Carey climbed up, in quite some pain, as he rushed towards Han Shuo again, and called for Borg to join him.

Han Shuo continued to clutch his head and cry out in pain as he

thought, I dared to hit even Bach, much less than you two idiots. He flailed his arms and legs around wildly, and even though he took a few hits, Carey and Borg weren't much better off.

Han Shuo was already used to being beaten and had been improving his body by circulating the magical yuan according to the laws of the solid realm. He had no problem taking on Carey and Borg's fists at all. On the other hand, Carey and Borg's faces were already bruising up in some places. They looked worse off, in part due to Han Shuo's improved strength.

The three errand boys were fighting fiercely and wildly on the side of the road. Carey and Borg's bodies started to hurt more as the fight progressed, and their strength slowly waned, whereas Han Shuo only suffered from a minor bit of pain, and actually felt quite at ease. It was as if he had endless strength and he even started fighting more smoothly. In the end, it was Han Shuo who chased after Carey and Borg, pelting them with blows as they ran away with their tails between their legs.

"Hah! What a sweet fight! Jack, we're not doing Carey and Borg's duties anymore. Come tell me if they pick on you again, I'll use them as a punching bag!"

Little fatty Jack was looking at Han Shuo in admiration as he tugged on Han Shuo's arm. Jack laughed loudly and said, "Bryan, you're amazing. You beat Carey and Borg by yourself, how did you do it?"

Han Shuo pointed to himself and said cockily, "I have a brave heart!"

Han Shuo's head did not hurt even once in the next few days. For reasons unknown, Bach did not immediately seek revenge on Han Shuo either. Han Shuo and Jack refused to do Carey and Borg's work, but the two had nothing to say as they couldn't even win a fight, in which the numbers were in their favor. They silently completed the duties that they were supposed to do.

Now that the little skeleton was taking out the trash in the morning, and the lack of a need to pick up Carey and Borg's duties, Han Shuo suddenly had a lot more free time on his hands. He didn't ask Jack to "borrow" more

books of magic during this time, but turned his attention to thoroughly studying “The Foundations of Necromancy” in order to build a firm base of knowledge.

Han Shuo came to understand that his mental power was quite weak after extended studying of “The Foundations of Necromancy”. He began to concentrate and meditate every night after he returned to the warehouse. The little skeleton was the weakest, dark creature from the other dimension, and its intelligence was so low, that it could only function according to the summoner’s commands. Han Shuo had given it the command to stay in the warehouse during the day and only dispose of trash late at night.

Han Shuo was just about to settle into his regular meditation that night when he suddenly recalled the memories that the old fart, Chu Can Lang, had left in his mind. There were some related to mysterious records of refining demonic treasures. Han Shuo thought that although the demon magic he was training in was from a different world than the necromancy he was learning now, they were both dark magics and seemed to have quite a lot in common. Would it be possible to fuse the two?

As Han Shuo furrowed his brow and started to seriously rummage through the memories, he discovered that although Chu Cang Lan had left behind a trove of memories, quite a few of them were misty and vague. It was like viewing things through a thin piece of marbled paper and not everything was clear.

After a while of recollection, he suddenly remembered a method to refine demonic treasures. Han Shuo could only summon a weak skeleton due to his short period of study in necromancy. Since that was the case, he decided to experiment on the little skeleton.

Refining materials were first needed for refining demonic treasure. Since he was just experimenting for fun, Han Shuo decided to use the little skeleton as the main ingredient. There was some worthless fresh blood from low level magic creatures in the warehouse, along with other trash, such as bone powder, salamander tails, etc. They all became auxiliary materials for the demonic treasure.

Some unique demonic treasures required very complex materials that necessitated arduous trials to obtain them. It wasn't even a certain thing that they existed in this world. Han Shuo ignored all of that and instead grabbed random items to fulfill his sudden impulse. He returned to the lab to grab a small bucket that no one was using, as well as various necromancy ingredients that were leftover from student use. He had no idea what they were.

Han Shuo stealthily crept back to the warehouse under the cover of night and carefully closed the door. He first put the skeleton into the bucket, and then just randomly dumped in all the low level monster blood, bone powder, salamander tail, and other materials, following it up with a solid bucket of water. There was now an ugly riot of colors in a bucket filled with an assortment of... things. Only the skeleton's head showed above the water level, it was completely unaware of what was happening.

Han Shuo thought for a moment as he closed his eyes and slowly ran through Chu Cang Lan's knowledge of refining demonic treasure. Apart from requiring a variety of ingredients, refining demonic treasure required setting up a specialized matrix. The practitioner also needed to train his magical yuan according to special method for several days or months. Some particularly strong demonic treasures even required training for a few years.

Of course, the current Han Shuo could accomplish none of this. He identified the easiest refinement method and dug out seven starkly-white bone spurs from who-knew-what-kind-of magical creature. He stuck the spurs according to the instructions denoted by the "Magical Yin Concentration Matrix".

The "Magical Yin Concentration Matrix" was a type of demonic treasure refining matrix in Chu Cang Lan's memories. The proper method was to first refine seven natal "yin demons", and to use the seven yin demons in forming the matrix. Once the refiner poured in his own magical yuan, the seven yin demons would concentrate the magical yuan in the matrix according to the matrix instructions. The refining ingredients would slowly dissolve and seep into the main ingredient. The demonic treasure

would finally be complete after 36 days of refining with the magical yuan.

In order to refine a yin demon, one must first have a ghoul. A ghoul was an innocent who'd died wrongly and was subsequently buried in a forsaken piece of land. Only if the soul was unwilling to depart was there a possibility of a ghoul forming. Special methods were needed to refine ghouls into yin demons, and it was naturally something that Han Shuo could not accomplish at the moment.

He stuck the seven bone spurs into the bucket as a substitute for the yin demons, and then squatted beside the bucket to attempt circulating magical yuan to his right middle fingertip. He then swiftly stuck his finger in the middle of the seven erected bone spurs. Although the bone spurs were a poor substitute, they were arranged correctly and thus could absorb a bit of magical yuan.

After who knew how long, seven small swirls abruptly formed on the surface of the water, with the seven bone spurs as the center.

Han Shuo relaxed inwardly when he saw the seven swirls form. He knew that despite randomly mucking around, he had somehow succeeded. Although he couldn't fathom what the little skeleton would ultimately turn into, he was at ease and drifted off into a deep sleep after a bit of meditation.

# Chapter 8: The infallible seven winged skeleton

The next day.

Han Shuo was still quite drowsy and not fully awake when the warehouse door exploded open. Little fatty Jack rushed in and started shaking Han Shuo awake, exclaiming in excitement, "Bryan get up! You have to see this!"

Han Shuo was bleary eyed. He'd just been dreaming about commanding the small skeleton to beat up Lisa. He'd been woken up before he could finish the dream, and complained with dissatisfaction, "What's going on this early in the morning?"

Jack's eyes were the size of yellow beans and excitement twinkled in them. He laughed heartily, "I'm not sure what Lisa did, but she summoned a weird skeleton that doesn't obey her commands. No one know's what going on, but pilipala sounds have been coming from her room all morning.

The little skeleton then ran off towards the department of light magic, with Lisa chasing it from behind. Oh! I swear, I've never seen a small skeleton run so fast in all my years in the necromancy department. Oh yeah, it also had seven bone spurs as wings!"

Han Shuo had been enjoying Jack's story until that moment. His expression changed as he suddenly thought of something, and he abruptly jerked his head towards the wooden bucket. The violently colored water had changed to an inky black at some point, and the seven bone spurs had vanished, along with the skeleton.

No way. I started refining him only yesterday. He seemed to remember somewhat, through the fog of sleep, giving the skeleton a command to teach Lisa a lesson, but weren't there still 36 more days before refining a demonic treasure would be complete? What's going on? Was it because he had randomly used bone spurs instead of yin demons that had caused the



magical yuan to prematurely run out?

Han Shuo felt a foreboding chill at this thought and hastily sat up. He even ignored his morning duties of cleaning the stone statues and dashed towards the department of light magic, pulling Jack along in his wake.

Han Shuo's mind raced through his worries as he ran. He wasn't a necromancy student and couldn't find it within himself to be as indifferent to his summoned creatures as the students were. They didn't care whether the creature lived or died. The little skeleton had picked up trash for Han Shuo and saved him a lot of effort during this time. He had unknowingly developed feelings for the skeleton, and naturally didn't want anything to happen to it.

Apart from Han Shuo and Jack, the necromancy students were also rushing to the department of light magic. They had odd expressions of their faces as they chattered nonstop on the way there.

"It's so weird. It was such a small skeleton, black and with seven bone spurs on its back. I wonder how Lisa summoned it?" Amy said as she speed walked.

"I know, and the weirdest thing is that the small skeleton runs so fast. Oh. Gosh. Is it because Lisa's mental strength is stronger than ours that she can summon different skeletal warriors than we can?" Athena also wore an expression of extreme surprise, and carried a loud conversation with Amy as they hurried to the department of light magic.

The novice mage Bella creased her brow when she heard Athena say so. She snorted, "I'm also a novice mage and I've never summoned such a strange skeleton. The weirdest thing is that this skeleton doesn't obey its summoner's commands. It doesn't make sense at all."

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Han Shuo and Jack eavesdropped on conversations as they ran. From what they gleaned from the students, Han Shuo understood that his refined skeleton was quite unique indeed.

Inwardly fretting with worry, Han Shuo attempted to contact the

skeleton with his mental strength. He found out that he could establish contact, but possibly due to the fact that it had been refined as if it was a demonic treasure, the skeleton didn't seem to receive the commands he was giving. It was still running around helter skelter.

The department of light magic didn't lack students like the necromancy major did. Light magic was a popular major at the academy, and had graduated many distinguished alumni. Light major students had always hated the dark major students, perhaps because light and dark magic directly opposed each other. Light majors hated necromancy majors the most, and light magic was an especially effective restraint against dark magic.

Many light magics were particularly destructive towards the dark creatures that necromancers summoned. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that light magic was the nemesis of necromancy. Han Shuo had gained quite a bit of knowledge after returning to the necromancy major, and understood the concepts that were common knowledge to necromancy students. However, knowing all this made his heart grow heavy with worry.

Han Shuo practically flew down the road as he dragged Jack along. His speed was such that his frail body even passed by a few necromancy students. The ones left in his wake gaped in surprise, thinking when did this idiot get so strong after he went crazy?

When Han Shuo had dragged Jack all the way to the department of light magic, Jack was utterly exhausted. He planted his butt firmly on the ground and panted heavily, complaining continuously, "Bryan, you run so fast. You almost dragged me to death, and you're not even sweating."

As Han Shuo's attention was completely preoccupied by the little skeleton scampering up and down all over the department of light magic buildings, he completely ignored Jack's complaints.

A short skeleton, with a body as black as ink, seven bone spurs stuck in its spine, and wielding a faintly glowing bone dagger was dashing to and fro in the middle of the courtyard.

The black skeleton emanated a faint glow thanks to Han Shuo's refinement. The bone spurs had stuck on its back, melding completely with the spine, as if they had always belonged there. Two leg bones extended like springs when it moved, and the seven bone spurs would flap busily, aiding its movement. Although they weren't enough to help it fly, they raised its speed so that the skeleton was very nimble. Even Lisa following in hot pursuit missed several necromancy spells.

Numerous light major students and stone pillars decorated with intricate reliefs stood in the courtyard. The little skeleton adroitly weaved in and out between students and pillars with an eerily agile body, leaving Lisa helpless.

Han Shuo was also dazed upon seeing the little skeleton's speed, and then quickly gathered his concentration to order the skeleton back to the warehouse. Unfortunately, it seemed that the little skeleton was unable to receive his commands and continued to flash between students and pillars, making the light major students run around in utter disarray.

It was sheer pandemonium in the courtyard.

"Lisa, you necromancy students are becoming more and more presumptuous. How dare you loose this filthy dark creature into the midst of the department of light magic. Are you still smarting over last time's loss against me and wanted to show off how good your skeletal warrior is?" Novice light mage Irene said coldly, staring at Lisa with provocation.

Irene was 17 and had a bob of light blue, slightly messy locks. She had beautiful bangs resting against her forehead, and sky blue eyes that were akin to two brilliant sapphires. She wore the hallowed robe of light magic and had set a diamond shaped sapphire in the collar. It sparkled with a misty-blue light that matched and brought out her eyes, making her appear even more beautiful.

Another young beauty, Han Shuo glanced at Irene and started mentally comparing her against Lisa. Irene matched up to Lisa in every way, and showed a burgeoning bosom, that was much fuller than Lisa's.

"Irene, keep your nose out of my business. Don't think I'm scared of you

just because you come from the Kamplin family.” Lisa paused from chasing the little skeleton and sneered right back at Irene.

“Hmph! Filthy dark creatures are forbidden from sullyng the department of light magic. If you’re unable to take it away and dismiss it, then let me give you a hand!” Irene raised her hands with a noble expression and slowly started chanting, “Razors of light, become a sword that purifies evil, cleave this pathetic life – Radiant Slash!”

A longsword, made entirely of blinding light, appeared after Irene had finished her incantation. It swiftly flew towards the skeleton under Irene’s command.

Han Shuo’s skeleton had been playing hide and seek, and stopped dumbly when Lisa had stopped. It didn’t seem to react when Irene’s light sword rushed towards it, and the sword stabbed solidly into its ribcage.

The softly glowing black skeleton suddenly flared faintly when the longsword connected, and the longsword disappeared. A bit of smoke rose from its chest as the skeleton swayed a bit from the hit. When it regained its footing, it clutched the dagger and glanced around, as if trying to see who had hit him.

“Hoo, that dark creature didn’t immediately fall to pieces when the holy light of light magic hit it!”

“Yeah! This is so weird! Light magic is the nemesis of dark creatures. Its frame should have turned to dust under the holy light, what is going on!”

“Ah... is it possible that the necromancy major has researched a way to make dark creatures immune to the holy light of light magic? How is that possible? If this is the case, then necromancy’s dark creatures will be ridiculously strong!”

.....

Han Shuo looked around and saw that the light major students around him all wore expressions of fright. They stared incredulously at the little skeleton that was peering around.

Necromancy’s dark creatures not only took normal damage from light

magic, but additional injury would be inflicted as well. Higher level dark creatures would start to rot, but something as low levelled as a skeletal warrior should have turned into ashes immediately.

But the little skeleton that Han Shuo had refined, according to the rules of refining demonic treasures, upended the normal laws of magic, and proved an impossibly incredible thing to light and necromancy major students.

Exclamations of shock and bewilderment poured out of the light major students. Even Lisa stood there dumbly, unnerved by this infallible skeleton.

But just as everyone was reacting in surprise, the little skeleton had finally found out who had hit him after a few moments of looking around. It rushed towards Irene with its five bone fingers clutched firmly around the coldly glowing bone dagger, and the seven bone spurs flapped furiously to again give it speed beyond a normal skeletal warrior's. It arrived in front of Irene, grasped the dagger in its palm, and fiercely stabbed towards the dismayed Irene.

Irene panicked and frantically threw herself to the left, as she knew she had no time to chant again seeing that the skeleton had already arrived in front of her. A tearing noise sounded as Irene squealed in fright.

The little skeleton didn't successfully stab Irene thanks to her quick dodge. However, it had torn the robe from right shoulder down to her chest, revealing dewy, creamy skin. There was even a small piece of snow white undergarments dangling on the tip of the bone dagger. The skeleton stood there dumbly again and didn't follow up on the attack.

Damn, well done! Slash you with a light sword huh! Slash all her clothes to ribbons in return! Han Shuo exalted inwardly.

Han Shuo suddenly felt his mental strength sharpen along with those thoughts. He saw the little skeleton snap to attention, grasp the dagger again and spring towards an embarrassed Irene desperately trying to cover herself up. It was obvious to see that it wanted to execute Han Shuo's order – slash all her clothes to ribbons.

Hah, now it receives its commands, that lecherous skeleton!

# Chapter 9: He's really screwed this time

Irene's shirt had been sliced open, revealing snow-white skin, and even a hint of the top curve of her right breast. She was embarrassed and panicked, and was squealing in fright. The white expanse drew the rapturous glances of all the surrounding male, light major students.

Irene was a finely featured girl to begin with. Her beauty was further enhanced by a subtle, regal bearing that projected an awe inspiring and inviolable feeling. The male ,light major students standing closest to her happened to be going through the stage of life in which they were insatiably curious about girls, and thus forgot to put themselves forward to help her.

When everyone realized that the little skeleton was making a move again, it was too late to prevent it. The little skeleton had already raised the glowing, black, bone dagger towards Irene. No one dared to make a move for fear of hurting Irene with their light magic.

A feeling of despair and helplessness arose in Irene's heart when she looked into the skeleton's grey, hollow eye sockets. She seemed to be frozen in place with fright as she sat there, unmoving.

Irene watched the little skeleton close the distance with an upraised glowing dagger with a sad expression on her face. Who would have thought that her end would come at the hands of a despised, dark creature, and one of the weakest ones to boot! It was really quite pathetic.

Slash...

Irene felt a cool draft on her right waist and thought she had been stabbed, but as she looked down, she realized that she hadn't been hurt. Rather, the magic robe had been slashed open from right waist to calf, revealing even more skin.

A firm and smooth waist, supple and glistening strong legs, were all revealed this time. Even the teensiest bit of light green, silk undergarments could be glimpsed through the cut. Irene could hear some of the surrounding male students swallow loudly, as well as chatter from the

female students.

“Ah...”

Although it would be a terrible thing if the skeleton killed her with one strike, it was worse than death to be stripped of her clothes under the hungry eyes of her peers. A piercing scream rang out from Irene’s mouth as she scrambled away directionless, desperately trying to cover herself up.

“What’s... what’s wrong with this skeleton? Why is it focused on destroying Irene’s clothes?”

“Stop staring! Hurry up and destroy it!”

The light major students finally regained their senses in the midst of the crowd’s conversations and began to raise their arms, ready to chant spells to attack the little skeleton.

The skeleton stood there dumbly again after that attack, as if it required continuous commands from Han Shuo to know what to do. Han Shuo started to inwardly stress out as he saw the skeleton just standing there. He didn’t know what to do.

Lisa, standing to the side, had been about to say something, but said nothing after she hesitated upon seeing such a large portion of Irene’s robe destroyed.

“Damned dark creature, how dare you attack the beautiful miss Irene! Receive your punishment from me, the sergeant knight Claude!” It was at this moment that a figure ran in from afar. Because his speed was so fast, Claude had already appeared next to the little skeleton immediately after he finished speaking.

Claude shot agilely towards the little skeleton as soon as he had arrived. A beam of pale-green light shot out with his right fist and landed solidly on the unsuspecting skeleton. The skeleton flew up and out, landing with a clatter on the ground after taking this blow.

“Beautiful Miss Irene, you have suffered because I arrived late!” Claude spoke humbly and executed an urbane bow to Irene after he sent the skeleton flying.



Claude was 18 and had tied his silver hair into a ponytail, allowing it to drape carelessly on his back. He wore an all white training robe and was extraordinarily handsome. Many of the light major girls blushed upon seeing his appearance and started whispering amongst themselves.

“Wow! It’s Claude! He’s only 18, yet he’s a sergeant level knight already, and the youngest son of the Empire’s Gryphon Legion chief. He’s so amazing!”

“You’re so boycrazy, Claude likes Irene. You come from a small family and you’re not as beautiful as Irene, he’d never be interested in you.”

The light major girls started holding hushed conversations and sneaking sly glances at Claude, as if he was the man of their dreams, their prince on a white horse. On the other hand, the male students regarded him with looks that alternated between hate and fear.

As the surrounding crowd engaged in murmured conversations, the little skeleton that been sent flying stood up shakily, his rib cage trembling along with the rest of his body.

Irene was completely bedraggled and frantically protecting her upper and lower body, her face flushed bright with embarrassment. However, she heaved a sigh of relief when Claude appeared. She was about to reply to his greeting when she glanced beyond Claude’s shoulder and saw the skeleton slowly clambering back up. Her haughty face instantly changed into an expression filled with panic and disgust. Irene pointed behind Claude and hurriedly said, “Claude, I’ll consent to having a meal with you if you destroy that ugly, dark creature.”

Claude turned his head upon hearing Irene’s words, and gave a quiet, “eh?” of surprise. It would seem that he hadn’t thought the skeleton would still survive. He turned back, flashed a small, sunny smile and bowed, “I am honored to serve you.”

Claude’s demeanor changed abruptly when he turned away. The urbane grace he’d just displayed faded, replaced with a sharp look shooting out from his eyes. He punched out with his right fist again, and the pale-green light once again rapidly shot towards the little skeleton.

Who knew that a thin, frail body would suddenly rush in from the left just at this moment. It happened to stop right in front of the little skeleton. The pale-green light from Claude's fist landed solidly on the frail body.

Bam! sounded out and the thin body stumbled a few steps backwards, throwing his head back and fell to the ground.

"Eh? Who's this errand boy? Why did he suddenly rush out?" Surprised cries came from all directions.

"Damn it, Bryan are you crazy?" Jack was just was mystified and howled with a face full of tragic pain.

Lisa was also extremely taken aback as she looked at Han Shuo, who had suddenly dashed out and taken the blow for the skeleton.

What followed was an even more surprising turn of events. The pale-green light connected squarely with Han Shuo, but he didn't cough up blood and immediately die on the spot. Rather, he too stood up shakily, like the skeleton, and wore a silly, naive expression.

As for the little skeleton, it suddenly about faced. It had been swaying back and forth, but then abruptly turned, bent its legs and and sprang off towards the necromancy major's quarters before anyone could react.

As for Claude, the attacker, he tripped over his feet all of a sudden and sat on the ground for no apparent reason. He panted heavily a few times before standing up, as if he had overexerted himself just now, but after he stood up, his chiseled features wore an expression of disbelief and shock. He cast an odd glance towards Han Shuo, who was still out of his mind.

The person in question, Han Shuo, wasn't completely putting on an act with the confusion flitting across his face. When Claude's pale-green light had passed directly through his body into his chest, Han Shuo had felt a heart piercing pain. He almost thought he'd died.

Han Shuo's mental strength had been possibly affected by the circumstances in that moment, and he successfully gave another command of 'retreat with all haste' to the little skeleton. To avoid

detection, he told the skeleton to take cover in the academy's garbage dump.

But what was most incredible to Han Shuo was that he'd felt his magical yuan surround and enclose the pale-green light when the latter had travelled into his body. The magical yuan completely immobilized the light, and prevented the light from wreaking havoc internally.

"Bryan, what are you doing here?" Lisa finally found her voice and yelled towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had no idea what was going on in his body at the moment. He only felt a bit of heaviness weighing down his chest as magical yuan had enclosed the pale-green light. After the initial pain he had felt earlier, his body hadn't actually suffered much damage.

But in other people's eyes, Han Shuo was completely crazy. He couldn't even hear other people's questions. The blank expression and naive smile on his face further cemented his identity as a crazy person.

"Oh, it's the crazy errand slave from the necromancy major. No wonder he was such an idiot!"

"Yes indeed, only an idiot would have rushed out in front of Claude's attack at that moment!"

Little fatty Jack's legs were shaking like mad, but he eventually made his way towards Han Shuo and started dragging him away by the arm. He said, "Bryan, what are you doing here? It's not fun here. Come on, let's go back."

"Just a second!" Claude suddenly spoke up at this moment, his eyes fixed on Han Shuo. Setting aside the fact that the little skeleton had run away for a second, he was wondering why he suddenly felt his fighting aura (TL note: mental strength equivalent for knights) disappear. What was going on? Was he mistaken?

He'd only used his fighting aura in one hit, by all means he shouldn't have been tired. He'd even fallen, this really was too weird. Did this errand slave have some evil magic? No way, he was just an errand slave. That

would be way too crazy beyond belief. He must be wrong.

“Noble and mighty knight Claude, you wouldn’t pick a fight with an errand slave, would you? Not to mention that this errand slave is crazy, this doesn’t seem to reconcile with your distinguished self?” Curiously enough, it was Lisa who was speaking up for Han Shuo.

Claude bowed to Lisa from a distance upon hearing her words, then gave Han Shuo a deep look. He nodded, “You may leave!”

“The two errand boys can leave, but Lisa, you summoned this dirty skeletal warrior and ruined my clothes. You owe me an explanation.” Irene had found a billowy white robe at some point and had flung it over herself. She’d recovered from her panic and shock by now and leveled a cold glance at Lisa.

“What does that have to do with me? I didn’t summon that weird black skeleton, otherwise why would I be unable able to control it? It snuck into my room at night and kicked me two times. I’m also the victim here.” Lisa gave a slight snort and also responded coldly.

“How is that possible? If not you, then who? It must be someone from your necromancy major. Whoever he is, I’ll find him and make him pay!” Irene flew into a rage.

“Hoo... ah... Bach, when.... when throw away trash, saw it run... run out from Bach’s room.” Han Shuo smiled vacantly and seemed to have trouble communicating as he stammered out a few words, but it was enough for the others to understand his meaning.

“Huh. So it was him. He must be trying to get revenge for when I beat him up!” Lisa’s face darkened and she bit off her words.

On the other side, Irene’s face also wore a livid expression as she audibly ground her teeth. Bells signaling the start of class rang, just as the two were about to track down Bach and make him pay. All of the assembled gave a start when they heard the bells, with light and necromancy majors running off to their respective areas.

Only Han Shuo and Jack remained, standing there dumbly. Han Shuo

smiled “dumbly” and said to Jack, “Bach’s screwed.”

Jack nodded his head emphatically in complete agreement, “Yeah, he’s really screwed this time!”

# Chapter 10: A demon practitioner does as he wishes

The students had gone to class, but Han Shuo and Jack had yet to begin tackling their duties for the day. After everyone had left, the two also separated to complete their respective work.

Han Shuo felt the heaviness in his chest dissipate when he'd finished cleaning the statues. He found a deserted corner and undid the top of his rough, linen shirt. He looked down at his chest and saw that there was an undercurrent of pale-green specks of light being expelled from his body. It seemed that Claude's pale-green fighting aura was being handled in this manner under the influence of the magical yuan.

Breathing a small sigh of relief, Han Shuo laid his worries to rest and marvelled at how miraculous the magical yuan was. From the knowledge that he'd recently gained, knights were also divided into various levels. Their fighting auras would be different at each level, such as knight apprentice (pale-blue), companion-at-arms (dark blue), sergeant (pale-green), senior knight (dark green), earth rider (white), sky rider (silver), and divine knight (gold).

Claude's fighting aura color was pale-green, indicating that he really did have the strength of a sergeant level knight. If a sergeant level knight gathered his fighting aura and attacked a normal person, it would have dealt a fatal blow to the target with no exceptions whatsoever. The fact that he had survived without major injury was a clear testament to the fact that he had been training his magical yuan.

Han Shuo breathed a sigh of relief upon feeling the magical yuan firmly enclose the pale-green fighting aura, but didn't dare engage in more training. He was deathly afraid that if the magical yuan circulated to other parts of his body according to his wishes, then the pale-green aura would be free of its restraints and suddenly burst into action and injure his internal organs.

Thankfully, as time passed, the magical yuan was slowly expelling the

aura in the form of specks of light. This helped Han Shuo breathe a bit easier.

Due to the fact that classes had already started, no one searched the trash heap that the little skeleton had taken refuge in, but this matter wasn't about to blow over that easily. Seeing as it was broad daylight, Han Shuo didn't dare command the skeleton to return to the warehouse, for fear of inopportune discovery.

Late afternoon, within the department of dark magic's training field.

The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force had very extensive facilities. Each department had its own independent training field. The training fields were a place for students to test their magic. All sorts of mental testing rocks to test mental strength, and equipment to measure the strength of a magical blast could be found within.

The necromancy major also had a few spacious rooms reserved specially for students to conduct magic experiments. Han Shuo happened to have a mop in hand and was cleaning the necromancy training room floors when he suddenly saw a few necromancy students walk over.

One of them was someone who had not come looking for Han Shuo in quite some time – Bach. His face was mottled with bruises and he looked quite miserable. It would seem that Irene and Lisa had already found him and made him pay. Bach swiftly grew livid when he spotted Han Shuo mopping the floor. His already ugly face became even more twisted, until it was almost impossible to make out his original features.

Han Shuo was gleefully jumping up and down inside, but continued to plaster a dumb, silly smile on his face. He was even humming a few lighthearted folk songs as he clutched the mop in his hands, twirling it this way and that.

“You damned Bryan, when did you see that little black skeleton run out from my room?!” Bach's face had twisted ferociously as he roared angrily at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo lifted a completely clueless face and glanced at Bach, giving him a dumb smile. He didn't answer and rapidly walked off with the mop.

“Come back here, you’re not getting away today!”

“Bach, how many times have I told you not to bully Bryan. Do you ignore even my words now?” Fanny immediately stuck her hands on her waist and yelled sternly after she’d walked in through the door, and glimpsed Bach about to chase after Han Shuo.

“Master Fanny, look at my face! It’s all because Bryan started some rumors that Lisa and Irene beat me up. Bryan’s the bully here!”

“Oh, I’ve heard about what happened this morning. Maybe Bryan was confused and saw incorrectly. He’s already like this! Why are you creating more trouble for him? Hmph. With your magical ability, you really don’t have the ability to summon such a strange and strong skeleton.” Fanny started talking to herself after this point. “Who on earth summoned it? I am very curious as well. There are rumors flying that our necromancy major has had a major breakthrough, and has discovered a way to make our dark creatures immune to light magic attacks.”

Han Shuo had run to the corner of the room and was gazing upon the glamorous Fanny from afar. Fanny had tied her light purple hair up into a bun today, leaving only a few purple strands resting on her forehead. This added a striking charm to her looks, causing Han Shuo to silently sigh multiples times in wonder.

“Bryan, your Agony of the Soul should be over by now and can help me practice my zombies today. Come, go to training room three.” Lisa flicked her gaze to the figure in the corner and commanded arrogantly.

“Lisa, practice is fine and all, but you can’t do what you did last time and directly attack him with a ghoul.” Fanny rebuked gently, worried that something might happen to Han Shuo after hearing Lisa’s words.

“I know, Master Fanny!” Lisa tossed out a careless reply and walked towards training room three.

It was the duty of the errand servants to help students practice their magic. Han Shuo also wanted to take to chance and enact some revenge, so he docilely put down the mop and walked towards the training room.



Lisa closed the training room door with a loud clatter after Han Shuo had entered the area. This indicated that she wished to reserve the room for her own use today. She stood cockily in front of the door and stared Han Shuo down, “You can’t run away today.”

She immediately raised her hands and started chanting when she had finished speaking, “Zombie warriors of the fallen, heed the dark herald’s call and reveal your existence!”

A muscular zombie warrior with a dark green body, wielding a thick wooden club, materialized as soon as the incantation had finished.

Zombie warriors were a level higher than skeletal warriors. They weren’t necessarily rotting corpses, but rather had muscular and tough bodies. They moved faster than skeletal warriors and their strength was greater. Only novice mages were able to summon them, so therefore a mere apprentice, like Bach, would have been completely unable to do so.

Summoned dark creatures could attack enemies if the summoner gave a mental command. However, low level dark creatures usually possessed extremely low intelligence, and could only engage in the most basic attacks. A summoner would have to continuously exercise mental control if they wanted the dark creature to attack up to its full potential. Only then would the dark creature follow the summoner wishes and attack in a variety of complex ways.

However, repeated practice was needed in order to become proficient and adeptly control a dark creature’s attacks through mental strength. Therefore, the necromancy errand boys often became practice targets. Up until now, Lisa and co. had used skeletal warriors to practice on the errand boys. This time however, she had summoned a zombie warrior. It was plain to see that she was up to no good.

Han Shuo was dumbfounded when he saw that Lisa hadn’t summoned a skeletal warrior, but a stronger, higher level zombie warrior. He inwardly cursed Lisa’s name a couple dozen times and backed up, on high alert.

“Hehe, I see you’re running faster Bryan, and that your strength has grown. It seems to be a bit of an insult to practice skeletal warriors on you.

So today, you have the honor of helping the future necromancer archmage, Lisa, learn how to better control zombie warriors.”

Lisa’s pretty cheeks were tinged with pink and an unholy glee shone in her eyes. Under her commands, the zombie warrior had already started running towards Han Shuo, while she talked.

The zombie warrior was wielding a thick wooden club and thundered towards Han Shuo, according to Lisa’s instructions. Its speed was quite fast, and closed the distance quickly. The club flew directly towards Han Shuo’s head.

This club was thicker than Han Shuo’s arms, and the zombie warrior possessed great strength. Even if he didn’t die, Han Shuo would be gravely injured if he was hit.

For reasons unknown, Han Shuo wasn’t afraid at all as he watched the club descend. In fact, he felt a kind of bloodthirsty excitement. It was a very odd feeling, as if his body and soul craved battle.

His eyes narrowed slightly as the dumb look vanished from his face, replaced with a sharp glint in his eyes. He tensed his left leg and sprang off it, shifting his body to the right by a meter.

Bam went the zombie warrior’s wooden club as it smacked solidly into the floor, where Han Shuo had just been standing.

“Ee?!” Lisa gave a shocked squeal from the sidelines, where she had been controlling the zombie warrior. For the briefest of moments, the feeling she normally received from Han Shuo drastically changed, causing her heart to stutter. She had never seen the expression and the look in his eyes before this moment, and so had emitted a startled sound of bewilderment.

She forgot to give the zombie warrior further commands after that moment, and rubbed her eyes nervously. She stared closely at Han Shuo again.

Strangely, Han Shuo was wearing a silly expression again, and seemed to be instinctively fearing the zombie warrior. He cowered and trembled as he backed up, giving off the very appearance of an idiot.

I must have seen incorrectly. That damn Bryan, how is it possible... how could he have... that kind of aura, that kind of gaze? Lisa thought silently and gave a cold snort. She started to gather her mental strength again and commanded the zombie warrior to chase Han Shuo.

Although Han Shuo was chased every which way by the zombie warrior, he did not reveal it second time, the aura and look that had surprised Lisa, but he always managed to avoid the zombie warrior's club at very last second. This peaked Lisa's curiosity and competitive spirit, and so she fully concentrated on manipulating the zombie warrior as she thought, "Bryan's actually gotten a lot faster and stronger since he's gone crazy."

As the widely pursued target, Han Shuo started developing a strong desire for vengeance on Lisa at some point. Even though Han Shuo tried to reason that he couldn't and shouldn't pursue vengeance, and tried to stop the thought in its tracks, he just couldn't turn it off entirely.

And as the zombie warrior became more and more agile, and chasing after him with greater speed, Han Shuo's thirst for revenge became stronger as well. "A demon practitioner does as he wishes... A demon practitioner does as he wishes..." A memory suddenly resurfaced in Han Shuo's mind. He seemed to spontaneously understand the true meaning behind demonic magic, and the sentence "a demon practitioner does as he wishes" seemed to coalesce into a voice that echoed endlessly in his mind.

Finally, Han Shuo gave a low roar as he bent his head and arched his body. He changed his body's trajectory from avoidance and made straight for Lisa's direction.

# Chapter 11: This time, it's a club

Lisa was fully concentrating on manipulating the zombie warrior at this moment, and was stunned into dumbly standing there when Han Shuo suddenly changed direction and directly charged at her. She shook off her inaction in a panic, and hastily ordered the zombie warrior to follow Han Shuo, while she exhaled lightly and dodged to the side.

Lisa couldn't make out Han Shuo's expression as he had lowered his head and arched his back, but an aura, as sharp as keen as a sword's edge, emanated from him as he charged. This was completely unlike anything that Han Shuo had ever displayed before, and thus the source of Lisa's consternation.

Because the zombie warrior had been a step behind, its speed could not catch up to Han Shuo and thus could not help Lisa in the short run. It was hard for Lisa to maintain her previous unflappable calm and she ran madly to and fro, terror written on her face.

And so, a strange scene appeared in the training room. The zombie warrior chased after Han Shuo, whilst wielding a wooden club, whereas the latter said not a word and charged towards Lisa with his head lowered, while Lisa ran a wild, avoidance pattern around the room. She even forgot to team up with the zombie warrior and fight Han Shuo together.

"Bryan, are you crazy? How dare you chase me?" Lisa yelled as she ran, alarm evident in her voice.

As the one doing the chasing, Han Shuo's mind was foggy and not too clear at the moment. Only the voice of "a demon practitioner does as he wishes..." reverberated on and off in his mind.

Han Shuo knew that he had to avoid a confrontation with Lisa at all costs. Otherwise, not only would the academy punish him, but even Lisa's family would be out for blood. No matter who it was, either one would be enough to make him suffer greatly, as he was only an errand boy.

However, reason was reason, and logic was logic. Even though he knew he shouldn't, it was as if Han Shuo had taken the wrong medicine. He

pursued Lisa relentlessly, the complete embodiment of “a demon practitioner does as he wishes”.

All at once, Lisa gave a quiet “Ah!” as she slipped while running and fell heavily. Han Shuo had already been close behind Lisa, and took advantage of this opportunity to close the distance in one giant step.

“Ah! Bryan, what are you doing? I’ll definitely kill you if you dare bully me!” Lisa saw that Han Shuo was already standing next to her before she was able to pull herself up. She frantically blurted out a threat when she saw that he was raising his left foot readied himself to kick her.

Han Shuo wore a very odd expression on his face at this time. He frowned fiercely, as if struggling with indecision. Reason wanted to prevent him from kicking Lisa, but after that sentence of “I’ll kill you”, a hint of cruelty appeared on his face. The hovering foot descended and made straight for Lisa’s pert, round butt.

Bam sounded at as the foot connected solidly with its target. Han Shuo felt like his left leg was kicking a smooth, rubber ball due to a feeling of soft buoyancy.

“Ah....”

Lisa gave an uncontrolled scream, like a pig being slaughtered, as she cursed vehemently.

At the same time, the magical yuan, that had been enclosing Claude’s pale-green fighting aura in Han Shuo’s chest, suddenly churned madly like a whirlpool. He could clearly feel that Claude’s fighting aura was being dissolved bit by bit into the whirlpool by the magical yuan’s high speed.

The pale-green fighting aura that had lingered in Han Shuo’s body for the greater part of the day had vanished without a trace in the span of a moment. The magical yuan in Han Shuo’s body felt noticeably stronger. He felt that the pale-green aura had been completely digested by the magical yuan.

And at that moment, the magical yuan in Han Shuo’s chest started circulating aimlessly throughout his body again, but he could feel the

energy, that he had just expended, come back. Even his mental state was in the best shape, as if he had just taken some highly potent elixir.

It was then that Han Shuo fully understood the meaning of “a demon practitioner does as he wishes”. It appeared that the magical yuan would spin faster if he followed his internal desires, and could even absorb and transmute fighting aura to become nutrition for the magical yuan.

“A demon practitioner does as he wishes, and benefits himself at the expense of others. So even training should be done this way!” Han Shuo’s facial expressions flickered oddly as he thought to himself.

“Wah... that hurts so much! Damn you Bryan, I’m going to kill you. You hurt me!” Lisa clutched the butt, that was still under Han Shuo’s foot, as she loudly gave voice to threats. There were already hints of tears forming in her eyes. It would seem that Han Shuo had delivered quite a strong kick just now.

His thoughts interrupted, Han Shuo gave a silent cry of dismay inside when he looked at Lisa. He was well acquainted with Lisa’s temper. She was well known for getting revenge. She would not easily let him go after what he’d just done to her.

Particularly as Lisa had actually cried. It would seem that her butt had suffered more than a small injury. All would be over for Han Shuo if the school found out about this.

The club wielding zombie had arrived in front of Han Shuo at that moment, and brought its club crashing down on his head, according to Lisa’s orders.

Han Shuo’s heart gave a great leap as he turned around to see the club descending, but at the same time, he suddenly felt that the club was falling rather slowly. He picked up his feet, and somehow easily avoided the attack.

Han Shuo gave a light “eh?” as he was slightly astonished, and once again dodged easily when he saw the club descending a second time. It was then that he realized that it wasn’t the zombie warrior that had gotten slower, it was that his speed and reflexes that had improved.

“Hehe, still didn’t get me!” He gave a weird cackle as he laid his worries to rest. He continued to evade all of the zombie warrior’s attacks. As he moved, he could feel his body become more and more agile, and even had the spare time to verbally ridicule Lisa.

Lisa had wanted to use the zombie warrior to get revenge for her, but who knew that the damned Bryan would suddenly become as limber as a monkey. He avoided the zombie warrior’s club attacks with a hop here, and a jump there, and even catcalled shamelessly, as if mocking her incompetence.

“Damned Bryan, you’re not going to get off this easily!” Lisa grew a bit distracted thanks to the pain coming from her butt. Upon seeing that the zombie warrior not able to get a bead on Han Shuo, she made a shrill threat, and dismissed the zombie warrior back to another dimension.

She tried to get up from the floor at the same time, but her butt was in too much pain after Han Shuo’s kick, and she cried out “aiyo!” as her legs gave way and she collapsed into a sitting position on the floor again.

Han Shuo was under no more pressure now that the zombie warrior had disappeared, but rather smiled foolishly and made his way to Lisa’s side. He dumbly extended a malnourished hand and said, “Let me take you to the infirmary.”

“None of your business, you damned idiot.” Tear tracks still streaked her face as she replied viciously to Han Shuo. She could still feel the pain radiating from her butt.

Han Shuo seemed to be flabbergasted after hearing her words, and a mischievous, evil glint slowly blossomed in his eyes. He extended his left hand and made as if to touch Lisa’s smooth, pert butt and said dumbly, “Then, let me rub it for you!”

Although Lisa had a vile temper, she was still a beauty. Although her chest wasn’t fully rounded out, her butt was uncommonly perky. His heart lurched immediately when he touched her butt, it felt exceedingly tender, yet firm, and was a delightful handful.

“Ah, go to hell Bryan! Don’t come near me!” Tears still sparkling on

Lisa's face, she immediately lost her head and screamed loudly when she felt her butt being touched by Han Shuo. She found strength from somewhere and pilipala beat Han Shuo with both arms and legs.

One of her feet in particular connected solidly with Han Shuo's ankle. He lost his balance and came crashing down on Lisa, with his left hand still on her butt.

A delicate fragrance from Lisa wafted into his nose, and his heart lurched again. Lisa's body felt soft beneath him, and his left hand was still cushioned by her butt. He could clearly feel how soft it was.

It was as if a thunderbolt had struck Lisa in that moment, and she froze there dumbly, staring back at Han Shuo.

But it lasted only a moment, and she didn't continue to scream, but rather lifted both hands and started chanting with a cold face, "Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will..."

Han Shuo was horrified and agitated as he knew that that was the beginning of the necromancy spell bone arrow chant. He would be completely unable to dodge if the bone arrows shot at him from such close quarters. Perhaps even some parts of his body would be impaled by the bone arrows. That would not be fun, to say the least. And given that Lisa's expression was icily cold, it was obvious that she wasn't kidding. She really did want to kill Han Shuo.

A thought flashed like lightning through his mind as he decided to not wait for Lisa to finish the chant. He abruptly shot out his arms, pinned down Lisa's slender arms and held her tightly. He followed that up with moving his face closed to her, and frantically smashing his open mouth against her cherry red lips.

"Destroy the... mmph mmph..." Lisa's incantation was thus halted and wasn't completed.

The two mouths met and a smooth, wet feeling flowed into Han Shuo's heart. His entire mind felt out of it, as if he had ascended to the clouds in a split second. His entire being was drifting away, and he had no idea what



was going on.

Even before he had landed in Bryan's body, Han Shuo had never kissed a girl before. The feeling of kissing a girl had only existed in his theoretical musings before. Now that it had happened, his immediate reaction was to be dazed with astoundment. He only thought, this feeling – was much more wondrous than he had imagined.

Lisa's face blushed hotly red as her breath came out unevenly. Her eyes were a haze of confusion and she was just as dazed as Han Shuo. She had no realization that she was being violated by Han Shuo at that very moment.

Lisa forcefully pushed Han Shuo away after a while and suddenly pointed at him, her little face flaming red, "Stupid Bryan, why do you always carry a bunch of weird things in your pants. Last time it was rocks, this time it's a club."

Han Shuo, "..."

## Chapter 12: Poking one's nose into other people's business

"I..." Han Shuo opened his mouth, but didn't have the time to get a word out before Lisa landed a pilipala wave of hits with her girly fists. She cursed as she hit him, "Damn you Bryan, how dare you kiss me. My first kiss was taken from me by a crazy person! Oh my gosh, this is too scary. I'm going to kill you!"

Han Shuo's mind was also in a jumble in the heat of the moment, since he'd just kissed Lisa. It was Lisa's first time, who's to say it wasn't also Han Shuo's first time as well?

Fear showed on Lisa's face, and her butt was injured, so there was no strength at all behind her girly fists. Han Shuo did not feel any pain, and wasn't even tickled by her hits. He didn't resist, and furiously racked his brain for a way to prevent Lisa from further pursuing this matter.

Lisa seemed to grow tired from hitting him after a while. Her eyes were a bit red and puffy, and she glared viciously at Han Shuo. After she'd stared at him for a moment, Lisa frowned and said coldly, "Bryan, I will let you go if you tell me just one thing."

Momentarily stunned, Han Shuo asked dumbly, "Tell you what?"

"Why has your strength grown during this period? You couldn't avoid even skeletal warriors before, but now, even zombie warriors can't catch up to you. Even that idiot Bach suffered a beating at your hands last time. Claude's fighting aura obviously entered your body this morning, but why didn't you die immediately? Why is all this?" Lisa stared at Han Shuo closely during her interrogation.

Han Shuo inwardly thought, "uh oh" as his heart lurched. His body had indeed become stronger thanks to training his magical yuan, but who would've thought that Lisa would pick up on it so quickly.

He hurriedly considered a few options and then dumbly replied with a silly smile, "I, I don't know... Just that I've eaten a few things recently that

have made me feel stronger.”

Lisa’s eyes flashed noticeably after Han Shuo had finished speaking, and she put her face next to his with every bit of interest. She focused her eyes on him and said, “What did you eat? I won’t pursue the matters of today as long as you tell me.”

“Use magical reagents to mix lizard tail and aardwolf teeth... submerge it in warm water for a day and then drink both of them down. That will improve your strength.” Han Shuo contracted his eyebrows and thought deeply for a moment, then delivered those lines with a naive smile.

Lisa’s face wore a serious expression and concentrated wholly on Han Shuo’s words. She repeated his words and then murmured to herself. “Eh? These disgusting things have this effect when mixed together?”

Han Shuo did not respond and only looked at Lisa with a dumb smile.

“Hmph. I’ll let you go today, and will come grab you for magic practice next time.” Lisa thought for a moment, and picked herself up from the ground to leave, but then went “aiyo!” and cursed angrily, “Damned Bryan, your kick was too strong. Why am I always so unlucky around you?!”

Lisa left the training room madly cursing, with one hand rubbing her butt. Han Shuo swiftly followed as soon as she’d left, quickly making his getaway as well, before anyone noticed.

Later that evening, Han Shuo stealthily crept over to the trash dump in the middle of the night. He first tried to use mental strength to command the small skeleton to show itself, but couldn’t reach the skeleton again. He unwillingly bore the stench of trash and rifled through the entire trash dump, finally finding the skeleton at the bottom of all the trash.

The little skeleton had crumpled underneath the trash as if it was asleep, with no outward sign of life. Several bones were scattered from his rib cage, and he appeared to be heavily injured. Due to his connection with the skeleton, Han Shuo knew that the little skeleton had not been junked. Han Shuo felt a wave of pity and guilt looking at the skeleton’s condition, knowing that it had ended up this way because it had received his command to get revenge on Lisa.

“Claude, oh Claude, just you wait. I’ll get my revenge on you some day!”

He grabbed the skeleton and cradled it, once more sneaking back to the warehouse under the cover of night. The skeleton’s loose rib cage bones clattered against each other as he ran, making his heart wring in pity again.

Han Shuo carefully closed the door when they were back in the warehouse, and thought for a moment. He placed the little skeleton in the wooden bucket again and found seven pieces of broken bone after some scavenging. He stuck them in the bucket, and channeled his magical yuan into them, reforming the “Magical Yin Concentration Matrix”. He was attempting to fix the small skeleton’s body with the method used to repair demonic treasures.

In contrast to last time’s severe weakness, Han Shuo felt much better off this time after he had injected his magical yuan into the bucket. It would seem that the magical yuan had increased in amount after digesting Claude’s fighting aura that morning. This set off another line of reasoning in Han Shuo’s mind.

He securely put aside the skeleton and brought out “The Foundations of Magic” from beneath his bed for further study. He had maintained his nightly studies these days, and not even thunder or lightning could sway him from his reading.

Even though this was just a foundations book, and had no record of any major necromancy magics within its pages, for a complete magical rookie like Han Shuo, this book was still much too complex for him.

Tonight, he cross referenced “The Foundations of Magic” alongside the “A Magical Dictionary”, and gradually lost himself in the books. However, despite the aid of “A Magical Dictionary” in this process, he was still unable to understand some of the technical terms within their covers.

He gave a long sigh and put down the two books in his hand, thinking to himself that he’d only started building his understanding of magic over the past ten days. If he could fully comprehend all the material in the books, then there was no point in the continued existence of the Babylon

Academy of Magic and Force. After some thought, he decided to take full advantage of the convenience of his position and eavesdrop on the necromancy classrooms that were currently in session.

Han Shuo settled back into meditation after he had calmed and cleared his mind. He wanted to make the best use of any scrap of spare time to meditate and increase his mental strength. Before he knew it, he had meditated well into the night and then went to sleep peacefully.

Han Shuo was full of vitality when he got up the next day at daybreak, as if his body was full of boundless energy. The little skeleton in the wooden tub next to his bed was still and showed no signs of life. There were seven small swirls next to the seven broken pieces of bone, with subtle hints of black light flowing in the water.

Upon closer inspection, he saw that unbeknownst to anyone, the scattered rib cage bones had reordered themselves. The skeleton's two empty eye hollows also seemed to have black light sparkling in them and appeared quite eerie.

Han Shuo contacted the skeleton with his magical yuan and immediately sensed that the skeleton seemed to be delighting in its newfound life. Also feeling the same, Han Shuo gave a slight smile and said to himself, "Oh little skeleton, you're extremely lucky to be following me. I can keep refining you as long as I have enough magical yuan, and you'll become stronger as a result. One of these days, that Claude will get what's coming to him."

Because the little skeleton was still being refined in the wooden bucket, Han Shuo had to get up himself and dispose of yesterday's trash. Once he had washed his face with briskly cold water, Han Shuo vigorously dusted off all the statues. He completed his duties afterwards, received a piece of black bread, and ran off towards the necromancy classrooms in high spirits, a broom in hand.

"In order to perfectly release magic, both incantations and hand seals are key. If the chant is incorrect, or the gesture incorrect, then you will be unable to perform magic. Magic is a mysterious power, the art of

borrowing strength from the elements found on earth and in the heavens by employing mental strength, along with mysterious incantations. Magic then finds its target through hand seals...”

The necromancy students were either attentively or lackadaisically listening to Master Gene. A few windows down, Han Shuo listened with all his concentration and unconsciously waved the broom in his hand.

Gene was the same as Fanny, a necromancy adept mage, as well as a teacher for the major. Gene mainly instructed the basics and foundations of magic, and was in charge of helping students through the more difficult parts of the material. Fanny on the other hand, taught students how to supplement attacks with necromancy magics and led the students in experimenting with necromancy magic.

For all the other majors at the academy, not only did they have adept mages for teachers, but they also had even more knowledgeable, more powerful magi (plural of magus) holding down the fort. But due to the lack of students in the necromancy major, Gene and Fanny were the only two teachers, and only adept class at that. On one hand, it was true that there was no need to dedicate too many resources to the tiny necromancy major; but on the other, it was also due to the fact that necromancy had become unpopular, resulting in a corresponding decrease in the number of necromancy magi.

At the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, students could graduate as long as they passed through a gauntlet of exams. Of course, if students wanted to continue their journey with the academy, they were free to stay and study within the school grounds. Many majors would separate students according to apprentice, novice, and journeyman classes, but because there were too few necromancy students, all the students were lumped into one class.

At this moment, Han Shuo was concentrating with all his might, and a trace of joyous glee could be seen in the smile on his lowered head. It had been just a few moments, but Han Shuo had already thought through some of the theories that had perplexed him endlessly, thanks to Gene’s explanations. His tepid, old-fashioned tone was the soothing music of

angels to Han Shuo's ears, and he lost himself in it.

Bam sounded out as a student, wearing magician's robes, suddenly fell down in front of Han Shuo. His butt stuck up in the air as his face became intimately acquainted with the white marble floors. He grimaced in pain as he picked himself up, turned to glare at Han Shuo, and said angrily, "Bryan, how dare you trip me with the broom handle."

"Ah... I was only sweeping!" Han Shuo immediately responded with a panicked, upraised voice when he saw that the person was Fitch.

Fitch was 176 cm tall and had light blue hair. His thin frame combined with a billowy magician's robe, made him look like a wrapped up wooden stick. He was a journeyman mage in the necromancy major, and had long wanted to pass the tests to be promoted to adept mage. Unfortunately, he had failed multiple times, and rumor had it that he'd made another attempt. It would seem that he'd just returned.

Han Shuo had been enthralled by Gene's lecture on foundational magic and had paid no heed to the broom in his hand. No wonder Fitch had been tripped.

"Eh? Fitch has come back. Heh heh, did you fail again? Looks like you need to try much harder if you want to become an adept mage. I welcome your return. Bryan must not have done it on purpose just now, don't mind him!" Gene have a light laugh in the classroom, and spoke with concealed banter.

Han Shuo was not in the least grateful for Gene speaking up for him, but rather cursed him for poking his nose in other people's business.

Fitch had a bad temper to begin with, but wasn't really a bad sort. Even though he had failed on countless occasions to pass the adept mage exams, he still experimented tirelessly due to his great love for necromancy. Fitch was the leader of Bach and a few others, but normally wouldn't pick on Bryan and other errand boys.

However, both Fitch and Gene had a crush on Fanny. Fitch tried so hard to advance to adept class in large part due to something Fanny had said before, "I will only consider you if you become an adept mage."

Because of this, this teacher and student pair disliked each other intensely. If it wasn't for Gene's words, Han Shuo might have escaped further retribution, but now that Gene had spoken, it was bound to have the opposite effect.



# Chapter 13: Mystical Glacial Spellfire

Indeed, Fitch's face twisted sinisterly as soon as Gene had finished speaking, almost as if someone had stepped on his face with a dirty shoe. He quickly glanced at the dumbly smiling Han Shuo, but proceeded to speak to Gene, "Master Gene, this outrageous errand slave dared to trip me. How can I not teach him a lesson?!"

Fitch rolled up his sleeves as he spoke, and hit Han Shuo on the head with his grey magic staff. Han Shuo actually breathed a sigh of relief when he saw that Fitch wasn't using magic, but merely his staff instead. Although Fitch was tall, he didn't have much strength. Han Shuo saw that the blow was descending without too much force, and decided to ignore it entirely. He stood there and made no attempt to dodge, just continued to smile in a silly, honest way.

Pow!

Han Shuo suddenly experienced acute pain when the magic staff knocked against his forehead. He gave a bloodcurdling "aiyo!" and grimaced in pain from the magic staff in Fitch's hands. Who would've thought that although the staff looked like it was made of wood, it had the heft and hardness of metal. Han Shuo could only feel that his brain was buzzing with agony, and that a huge lump had already formed on his forehead.

"Damnit, why is this magic staff so hard and so heavy? I've miscalculated this time!" Han Shuo thought as his forehead was bashed again, before his brain had had a chance to recover from the first hit. He felt his head grow heavy, and he stiffly fainted dead away onto the ground.

When Han Shuo came to, he found himself on a large, soft bed. Faint medicinal scents floated in the air. He noticed that the two big lumps on his head had already faded, and there seemed to be some type of ointment applied to them. It had a cooling effect and felt very comfortable.

"You're awake?" A face suddenly came near him. Light purple, wavy, long hair, sparkling clear eyes, fresh white teeth, and sexy red lips blew out

a breath of slight fragrance onto Han Shuo's face.

"Eh, Fan... Master Fanny!" Han Shuo's gave a soft gasp at the sight of the pretty face in front him, and his heart began pounding. He pulled himself up into a sitting position on the bed and glanced around, taking in his surroundings.

The room was 20 square meters, and a large upright drawer was nearby. It contained a variety of medicinal vials, as well as some bones from magical creatures on the side. The walls were filled with magical drawings and text. In the middle was a pedestal made of darkly colored rocks, with a simple magic matrix formed on top of it. One glance was enough to tell Han Shuo that this was Fanny's laboratory.

As Han Shuo was observing his surroundings, Fanny was also scrutinizing him with a great deal of surprise. It wasn't until Han Shuo's sight had made a full circle and looked towards her, that Fanny extended a slender finger and lightly tapped his forehead. A small exclamation of bewilderment followed shortly thereafter, "Eh? The bumps went down so quickly? There wasn't even any bleeding under such a heavy staff thumping... How is this possible?"

Han Shuo's heart lurched when Fanny's finger touched him, and his nose greedily took in a deep breath. His lips curved up slightly in satisfaction as a whiff of fragrance drifted towards him.

Fanny, on the other hand, was stunned by Han Shuo's behavior. His actions just now bore a few obvious hints of wanton seduction, and was a marked difference from Bryan's typical timid and cowardly behavior. This made her pause in incomprehension, but a low sigh of understanding followed thereafter. She murmured lightly, "I didn't believe them before, but it does seem that Bryan has gone a little crazy. I can't believe an Agony of the Soul has turned him into this, sigh!"

Although Fanny had murmured in an exceedingly low voice, Han Shuo clearly heard everything. He laughed wryly inside, and thought that here was yet another person who truly believed that he had gone mad.

Suddenly, an expression of heightened curiosity appeared on Fanny's

face and she said earnestly, “Bryan, the bruises and bumps on your forehead healed so quickly; there’s nothing there now. Is this an aftereffect of the Agony of the Soul? Aiya, this is really too incredible. I have something to research further again. Necromancy magic is truly wondrous indeed!”

Han Shuo could only smile wryly with some resignation, as he watched Fanny ‘pilipala’ rifle wildly through her things with great excitement. Han Shuo was just a crazy person to her right now. He naturally couldn’t explain that training magical yuan was the reason behind his body’s oddities.

Fanny was not wearing her glasses again today, and was exuberantly rummaging through magical items on all sides. After a while, she sashayed towards Han Shuo, holding a light green ball the size of her palm. The light green ball lit up with a soft, green glow, and after she abruptly said an incantation, she placed the ball on top of Han Shuo’s forehead.

Strong magical undulations rippled out from the ball. It was like a magnet, firmly glued to Han Shuo’s forehead as the light green ball sucked out the last bit of mental strength from his mind. The light green ball suddenly flickered like a broken green light bulb.

“Oh... this is too inconceivable! Bryan, you have mental strength in your mind! Oh my gosh, what’s going on? Can it be that the Agony of the Soul has the ability to bestow ordinary people with mental strength, after they have been baptized by magic? This is too unbelievable!” Fanny suddenly hollered, astonishment and fright written all over her face. It seemed that discovering that Han Shuo’s mind had mental strength was more than a small shock to her.

“I’ve decided, this will be my future research topic. If the Agony of the Soul doesn’t turn someone crazy and can leave traces mental strength within a body, then even an ordinary person can become a mage. Oh... this is too unimaginable!”

Gurgle.

It was at this moment that Han Shuo's stomach protested with hunger. The excitement still had not receded from Fanny's face as she breathlessly told Han Shuo. "It's getting late today, go back and rest first. I'll come find you often in the future. I'll go discuss with the school authorities to lighten your workload appropriately and increase your rations, until I've finished studying this topic."

Joy blossomed in Han Shuo's heart as he heard Fanny's words. Evil thoughts kept crossing his mind as he watched the glamorous Fanny. He thought that good luck was unstoppable when it came; not only did his workload suddenly lighten and food rations increase, but he had an excuse to get closer to Fanny. It looked like Fitch had actually helped him a great deal with this beating.

When he left Fanny's lab, Han Shuo lifted his head and saw that it was dusk when he noticed the fading light in the sky. He rubbed his forehead and discovered that apart from a bit of light pain, there wasn't much else wrong with him now.

He completed his afternoon duties with lightning speed, and bumped into Jack at the place where bread was given out. Jack was extremely surprised to see Han Shuo, and cast weird glances at him. He asked doubtfully, "Bryan, I heard that you had two huge bumps on your head and fainted because of Fitch's magic staff? How come there isn't a trace of that now?"

"Master Fanny smeared magical reagents on me, the bumps naturally faded away quite quickly. Heh heh, Master Fanny is beautiful and gentle!" Han Shuo laughed happily at Jack.

"Bryan, this is your food for the day!" A voice called out from the dining hall window. Han Shuo swiftly ran over and received a piece of white bread, a small cup of milk and a fried egg.

"Eh? Brother Gotha did you make a mistake? Bryan should get the same food as us, and even a smaller piece of bread than mine!" The boy who Han Shuo had beaten up last time – Carey, waved a piece of black bread in his hand and yelled loudly at the fatty who was in charge of dispensing

errand boy rations – Gotha.

Gotha cast a cold glance at Carey and lightly snorted, “This is correct, it came straight from the school authorities. This will also be Bryan’s rations in the future. Go talk to the school authorities if you have opinions about it. Hmph. But you’re just a small errand boy, you’d be making life difficult for yourself if you said anything.”

Han Shuo gave a large shout of laughter as he saw Carey and Borg’s angry expressions while holding his white bread, milk, and egg. He purposely smacked his lips loudly when eating the bread, and kept up a long litany of praises. “Mm-mm, this white bread definitely tastes different from black bread. Ah, There’s even milk and eggs. Oh goodness, this is such a happy day.”

“Eh... Bryan, can I drink some milk? That milk looks so delicious!” Little fatty Jack licked his lips and looked enviously at Han Shuo.

“There’s still half a cup left, take it!” Han Shuo generously passed it to Jack and pulled him away, smiling merrily as the two walked away, leaving Carey and Borg behind casting disgruntled looks.

Han Shuo took a look at the small skeleton later that night, back at the warehouse. He noticed that the small skeleton was still laying in the wooden bucket, but that the seven swirls in the bucket had stopped moving. He understood with a glance that this was because the magical yuan had run out, and extended a hand to coalesce more magical yuan into the seven bone fragments. It was only when the seven swirls had reformed around the bone fragments that he stopped and went to bed.

The “Yin Magical Concentration Matrix” was just one method in refining demonic treasures. According to instructions, one infusion of magical yuan should have been enough to maintain the matrix for a full 36 days. However, this expected result hadn’t been achieved partially due to the weaknesses of Han Shuo’s magical yuan, and also because he had randomly scavenged various ingredients together.

Han Shuo felt that the magical yuan within his body had become much stronger after a bit of meditation and training on the bed. A sudden

thought struck him, and he wondered if he could use the magical yuan to practice the combative magics that Chu Cang Lan had left behind in his mind.

Han Shuo's eyebrows knit together in deep thought as he started down this path of thought. He could vaguely feel that there were numerous training methods in his mind, but that many of these secret demonic techniques were a bit fuzzy, as if a thin layer of opaque paper prevented clear understanding.

His brows furrowed as he slowly searched through his memories. He realized that the memories in his mind seemed to be in great disarray, and that he could not fully recall all of them. He could only fully remember three topics, one of which was the basics of training magical yuan, and the other was the "Yin Magical Concentration Matrix" for refining demonic treasures. Apart from this two, there was another cantrap called the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire".

The "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" was a way of using magical yuan, and its power would increase according to the practitioner's level. The practitioner would be able to create red and purple spellfire on his palm if he circulated his magical yuan in a particular fashion amongst the meridians. The red flame was searingly hot, and the purple glacially cold. If the magical yuan and practitioner level was high enough, then he would be able to coalesce his magical yuan into two huge red and purple spellfires on his palms. This attack would be both searingly hot and glacially cold.

It was as if Han Shuo had received a precious treasure after he had fully understood all this. He decided to ignore all the indeterminate, obstructed memories and started circulating his magical yuan according to the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" method. He slowly concentrated his magical yuan into his right hand, but his right hand meridian felt like it was on fire as the magical yuan flowed through it during this process. His right arm became sore, numb and stiff as that thin, wispy meridian felt like it had been electrocuted.

The magical yuan would be able to easily and quickly flow to the hand if

he hadn't been circulating it according to the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" method. But each time he circulated the magical yuan according to the spellfire's instructions, it was as if the magical yuan had met significant obstacles. Each tiny bit of progress was accompanied by almost unbearable pain and discomfort. It wasn't until midnight that Han Shuo was able to finally circulate some magical yuan from shoulder into wrist, but his entire arm prickled in pain and was useless.

He understood that only by guiding all the magical yuan into his palm and fingertips would he be able to truly make use of the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" method. It hurt so much now because he was clearing miniscule meridians, acclimating them to magical yuan. Short term pain was inevitable, and it would all go away once all the meridians were cleared.

Han Shuo's eyelids grew heavy, as he was uncommonly tired, and he decided to flop onto the bed and sleep when he thought about his duties tomorrow. He wouldn't be able to finish magic training in one night either.

Han Shuo had a strange dream that night, one in which the little skeleton obeyed his commands, and beat up that Fitch who had knocked him on his forehead, getting revenge for Han Shuo.

# Chapter 14: Took care of it in advance

The next day, Han Shuo was rudely awakened by a heavy trash bag being dumped on him.

He had been sweetly dreaming when he felt a heavy mountain toppling down on him. He alertly scrambled up from the bed, and rubbed his eyes to see that there was an extra heavy bag of trash on the bed. He immediately understood that someone must've thrown their trash in through the warehouse window.

He nagged and cursed randomly, kicking the bag of trash off the bed. The bag landed with a thump and rolled towards the door. Han Shuo was about to go back to sleep, when he realized that the time must've been late if someone had thrown a bag of trash in.

The sun had indeed risen high into the sky when Han Shuo pushed open the windows to take in the view. He sighed in turn, thinking that he had overexerted himself with training last night. He had definitely overslept today, and was about to hurry out the door, when he suddenly recalled last night's dream. He seemed to remember that the little skeleton had gotten revenge on Fitch for him. Han Shuo's heart leapt in fright when he remembered that last time he had a similar dream, the events had actually happened. His gaze quickly searched towards the wooden bucket.

He was greeted with the sight of the skeleton resting two bony, black hands on the sides of the bucket, and its left leg bone crossed on top of its right leg bone, swinging lazily to and fro, as if it was enjoying a sauna. It looked very comfortable and looked every bit a dapper rogue.

Han Shuo breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing it still in the wooden bucket and mused silently for a moment. He got up and shoved the bucket underneath the bed, and only left the warehouse to tackle his day's duties after he'd grabbed a trash bag to plug the space underneath the bed.

"Hi Bryan, what took you so long today?" Jack was dusting off the statues as he greeted Han Shuo from afar with a smile.

Han Shuo glanced around him and knew that he was late because no



students were passing by on this path. Classes must already be in session.

“Oh, my mind’s groggy after Fitch’s two taps yesterday. That’s why I overslept.”

“Heh heh!” Jack suddenly gave a light, gloating laugh and put his head confidentially next to Han Shuo’s. He said lowly, “Bryan, you don’t need to be mad. I heard the students talking on the way to class today. That the black, seven-winged skeleton, that appeared last time, beat Fitch up last night. His face is bruised and puffy!”

Han Shuo, “....”

So the dream really had taken place, with a few marked differences from what he’d imagined. This time, the little skeleton was noticeably much faster and had already finished executing its commands. No wonder the little skeleton had been lying in the bucket in a different position from the night when he checked the bucket this morning.

“Eh, Bryan. Why aren’t you saying anything? Are you too happy? Haha, that must be the case. That black skeleton is really something. When Fitch had been beaten awake, he only saw the flapping of the seven wings. The skeleton leapt straight down from the window and escaped that way. Oh! Fitch lives on the fourth floor. It’s amazing that the skeleton didn’t land in pieces of broken bones!”

Han Shuo gave two dry coughs and was feeling quite gratified. He glossed over the topic and said, “Well done! I wonder who summoned that little skeleton and got revenge for me. I’ve been so lucky lately!”

No more unlucky things happened to Han Shuo in the next few days, and no one came looking for him to practice magic. In these days, Han Shuo took advantage of the rare quiet to stand outside the necromancy classrooms early in the morning, and eavesdrop on Gene’s lectures with a broom in hand.

Maybe it was due to his beating at the hands of the skeleton, but Fitch didn’t show up to class in those few days. Han Shuo eavesdropped on Gene’s explanations of magical knowledge everyday, and was enlightened on many theories that he simply did not understand prior.

At night, Han Shuo practiced the “Mystical Glacial Spellfire”, and bit by bit, circulated the magical yuan towards his right palm and fingertips according to the spellfire’s prescribed method. It burned with pain each time, but over the course of these few days, Han Shuo had almost circulated the magical yuan to his wrist.

He continued to study “The Foundations of Necromancy”, and would mentally note the portions he didn’t understand to see if Gene, by chance, mentioned any of those topics when Han Shuo was eavesdropping on his classes.

Now that Han Shuo’s rations had increased and his body was receiving more nutrition, not to mention him training his magical yuan, Han Shuo’s originally delicate body unconsciously underwent some fundamental changes. He started to form muscles, and even seemed to grow a bit taller, while his temperament changed as well.

The necromancy students all relegated Han Shuo’s changes as the aftermath of him going crazy. Han Shuo basked in the ease of no one paying him much attention, and continued to work and covertly practice magic. He was happy to witness the changes in his body.

“Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will, bone arrows!” A length of cuttngly sharp bone arrow materialized out of thin air when the incantation was completed, and flew towards a straw figure in front of Han Shuo with a flick of his finger. However, it suddenly shuddered halfway through.

Pa!

The bone arrow suddenly exploded halfway to its target, and from the look of its direction, it had veered greatly off course. It wasn’t aimed towards the straw stuffed figure at all.

Han Shuo gave a low sigh as he shook his head, thinking that understanding theory was one matter, actually using it was another. Han Shuo had been practicing this lowest level bone arrow magic near the cemetery these days, and he’d never been able to successfully cast it. Either he wasn’t able to summon the arrow, or its direction was greatly off

course and would explode mid-flight.

Han Shuo understood that repeated practice was necessary in order to successfully cast necromancy magic. Only through constant practice would he be able to fully grasp the particulars of a spell, and be able to successfully cast it without any errors or flaws.

These days, Han Shuo would always train his magical yuan for a while whenever night fell, then sneak over to the cemetery, where he had once been dumped as a corpse, to practice necromancy in the dead of night. The little skeleton would stand there unmoving once it had hauled over two bags of trash and thrown them away.

Just as Han Shuo was reflecting on the incantation and hand seals he had used just now, and was trying to figure out where he had gone wrong with employing his mental strength, he suddenly heard rushed footsteps in the distance. He started and quickly hid in the randomly scattered rock outcroppings next to the cemetery.

The cemetery was expansive and completely quiet at night. Few visited apart from Han Shuo stopping by to throw away discarded magical ingredients. He furtively practiced magic here because he didn't want to be discovered, and naturally hid out of sight when he heard footsteps sound.

After a while, a tall, solidly built, blue-haired, middle aged man, with his clothes dyed crimson from blood and bloody froth at his mouth, came into Han Shuo's line of sight. He wielded a broadsword and staggered forward with an anxious look. He stumbled directionless, and kept checking behind his back.

His body shuddered when he reached the area where Han Shuo had been practicing before, and his footsteps swayed as he fell to the ground. He fished out a grey handbag from an inner chest pocket, randomly pawed at the earth twice and stuck the bag into the dirt. He got up and continued running after he had smoothed over the earth.

"Dylan, where can you run to now!" A benevolent voice carried from afar as a black light flashed and materialized into a thin, frail, old man behind the middle aged man. He wore a compassionate smile on his face and his

master's robes were rimmed with gold. He carried an obviously precious staff that was embedded with a ruby, sapphire, and topaz.

A ball of dark green light swiftly flew in from afar after the frail, old kindly mage had appeared. When it reached the clearing, the dark green light abruptly disappeared and a strongly built, muscular looking swordsman equipped with a longsword appeared.

"Master Duke, how should we handle Dylan?" The swordsman stood politely next to the mage and asked humbly after he had arrived.

The compassionate old mage, Duke, wrinkled his sparse eyebrows and looked at the figure collapsed on the ground with blood coming out of his mouth. "Poor Dylan... he's probably at the end of his tether. He should not suffer this kind of pain. Erick, send him on his way!"

"The master is too kind!" Swordsman Erick praised with an odd expression on his face, and suddenly flashed like lightning towards the still running Dylan. Han Shuo caught a fleeting glance of a ball of dark green light as blood splattered from Dylan's back, and he finally fell to the ground, unmoving.

Erick sheathed his longsword and immediately bent down to search Dylan's body. His facial expression became uglier and uglier, he finally stood up and said resignedly, "Master Duke, it isn't on him!"

"How is that possible!" Duke was shocked and his expression shifted. He summoned Dylan's corpse with a wave of his staff, chanted a wind magic incantation, and several sharp blades of wind appeared to shred the corpse's clothing to pieces.

Han Shou clearly saw it all while hiding behind the outcrop of rock. The dark green light blossoming from Erick's longsword indicated that he was a senior knight.

That such a senior knight was so respectful to that Duke meant that the identity, or ability of this person, was even higher. It was the first time that Han Shuo had seen a murder committed, and his heart pounded as it raced with panic.

“It really isn’t on him!” Duke muttered to himself and tossed Dylan’s naked body to the ground like trash with another wave of his staff.

Duke shook his staff again, and a strong pulse of mental strength gushed towards Han Shuo. Han Shuo’s body flew up against his will and landed in front of Duke.

“Eh? How did you know I was there?” Not only was Han Shuo panicking internally, but his mouth was panicking as well. He flailed around with his limbs in mid air and yelled with disbelief.

“Heh, what a cute, innocent little fellow! Judging from your clothes, you’re from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force?” Duke gazed kindly upon Han Shuo and dumped him on the ground after delivering these lines.

“Yeah, I’m an errand boy from the Babylon Academy. I was here to throw away magical trash. I didn’t see anything just now. Eh, it’s getting late. You guys keep chatting, I’m going back now.”

Han Shuo stood up from the ground and responded with a face full of naivete. He took two measured steps towards the academy’s grounds, then increased his speed and ran away with all his might. These two weird guys might do something detrimental to me, best get away as soon as possible.

“Heh, this fellow is a bit shrewd. Erick, why don’t you send him on his way!” Duke spoke benevolently and laughed lightly behind Han Shuo’s back.

Han Shuo felt a strong current of air rapidly approach as soon as Duke had finished speaking.

# Chapter 15: I'm rich, I'm rich

Han Shuo understood that Erick must have increased his speed and was rushing towards him to kill him, just like Erick had killed Dylan, because he could feel the killing intent gradually approaching from behind.

At this time, Han Shuo concentrated his focus for the first time in his life. Maybe it was because he had been training, but Han Shuo, now, not only had an extremely agile body, but was also much more bold than before. There would have been nothing but fear left in his heart right now if he was still his old self.

The magical yuan within Han Shuo's body was swirling much faster than normal at this very moment. As he was running, he felt that his body had inexhaustible energy. Add to the fact that he was exceedingly familiar with the terrain, he actually widened the gap between him and Erick as he darted left and right while running.

"Eh!" Erick was surprised as he hadn't counted on Han Shuo being able to run so fast. Not only was he a fast runner, but his direction kept changing without warning. Erick's face grew hard as Han Shuo was about to disappear from sight, and the longsword in his hand began to glow with a dark green sheen. He forcefully plucked up some large rocks that were nearby.

As Han Shuo ran further away, he felt that he was sprinting smoothly and in fine shape. When he realized that he was leaving Erick's aura behind him, the joy of surviving a cataclysm rose in his heart.

It was at that moment that two sound waves boomed in the air. Han Shuo only knew that his two legs were heavily hit a few times. He immediately sank to his knees and fell flat on his face while he was running away. His face became intimately associated with the dirt, and his entire body fell to the floor.

"Little fella, sorry about this!"

Erick lightly called apologetically as he flicked the longsword in his hand. A ball of dark green light materialized and swiftly flew towards Han

Shuo.

His mind clearer than ever before, Han Shuo felt the magical yuan within his body churning madly. His legs, that had been sore beyond belief moments ago, no longer ached as badly. As he faced the lethal blow, Han Shuo pushed off from the ground with both hands and feet and rolled to the left.

Clang!

The ball of dark green light from Erick's longsword landed where Han Shuo had been laying on the ground. Multiple fractures crisscrossed over the hard ground like a chessboard. Each crack was several meters deep. If Han Shuo had still been there, he would have likely been torn to pieces.

"I really didn't see anything, don't kill me!" Han Shuo was scared witless after he dodged that blow and took in the ground's condition. He spoke with twisted expression as he hurriedly scrambled up, preparing to run for his life again.

"Little fella, you're quite nimble for someone so skinny, but you saw something today that you shouldn't have seen. My apologies, I have to kill you!" Erick shrugged his shoulder and smiled with resignation.

A few rocks, the size of a person's head, flew up as he flicked his sword, and came hurtling towards Han Shuo. Han Shuo freaked out a bit, and anxiously dodged from side to side. As he was dodging, Erick soundlessly appeared behind Han Shuo, and a ball of dark green light sank into his body with a flick of Erick's longsword.

All of a sudden, Han Shuo flew out and once again kissed the ground, with all his limbs flung out. The pain from his spine was intensely bone deep, and the magical yuan within his body furiously congregated in his back, firmly enclosing the dark green aura that had landed in Han Shuo's body.

"Hoo... why do I feel like I've lost a bit of fighting aura? This is a bit strange. Have I overexerted myself? Hmm. Yes, that must be it. This kid runs fast, good thing it's finally taken care of!"

Han Shuo had been ready to run again when he heard Erick mutter to himself. Han Shuo's current body condition was the same as the time when Claude's fighting aura had attacked his body, but the only difference was, Erick's dark green aura was even stronger. The magical yuan couldn't fully enclose it, so Han Shuo's back was a mess of blood and flesh, and looked quite terrifying.

Han Shuo held his breath as a thought struck him, and lay there, afraid to move a single muscle. But at this time, the little skeleton seemed to sense Han Shuo's danger and seemed to be on its way to defend its master. Maybe due to the extraordinary amount of pain he was in, Han Shuo's mental strength seemed to be more concentrated than it had ever been, and so he gave an order in the nick of time for the little skeleton to remain where it was.

The tomb that the little skeleton was in was a bit far from Duke. But if it crawled out of the tomb to hurry here, Duke would definitely discover it. Although he didn't know Duke's rank, Han Shuo could tell from previous events that he was extremely powerful, and didn't want the little skeleton to come rushing to its death.

Erick panted a few times, muttered to himself a bit more, then picked Han Shuo up by the collar and brought him to a crumbling tomb nearby. He didn't bother to check Han Shuo's condition as he confidently threw his body down into the tomb, behaving as if Han Shuo had naturally died already.

That was understandable, given that Han Shuo was just an ordinary errand boy. He would naturally be dead after taking a hit from a senior knight, how could there be any exceptions?

Erick did not tarry after he threw Han Shuo into the tomb, and immediately followed his original route back. There was no more movement in this area after a while.

Han Shuo's back hurt like hell and he was busy mentally cursing all of Erick and Duke's families. He didn't dare climb out of the tomb until an hour later, when he gritted his teeth against the pain from his back and



slowly, arduously crawled out of the tomb.

He expended some effort in touching his back and felt that it was a bit sticky. When he saw the blood on his hand, he silently noted this incident. If there was a chance in the future, he would pay it all back with interest. Grimacing against the pain, he cautiously walked towards the previous clearing. He crept surreptitiously the whole way, deeply afraid that the two would still be there.

Han Shuo discovered that even Dylan's corpse had disappeared when he finally made it back. Looks like they've randomly thrown it into one of the tombs nearby. He summoned the little skeleton out from its hiding place and left, cursing loudly as he did. He kept thinking damn I'm unlucky. Looks like I should avoid practicing here for the next few days.

He suddenly stopped upon reaching a certain place, and glanced at the dirt beneath his feet. Han Shuo remembered that Dylan had fallen here when he was running for his life, and buried a grey bag beneath his feet. Duke and Erick seemed to have discussed searching Dylan for something, could it be the bag that Dylan had just buried?

He clenched his teeth with pain and bent down, carefully pawing away the soft dirt on the ground and picked up the grey handbag. It weighed heavily in the hand, and clinked when shook. The material and style of this bag was so much better than the one he was using. He yanked at the drawstrings, shoved his hand inside and brought out a few silver coins.

"I'm rich, I'm rich!" Han Shuo knew that silver coins were the currency of this world. Bryan had never even held a single silver coin in his years as an errand slave. Now looking at the coins in his hand, Han Shuo couldn't hold back his laughter. Even the pain from his back wasn't as severe as before.

Swoosh!

He dumped out the contents of the bag onto the ground, revealing a dark green jade box the size of a palm. It was quite heavy and cool to the touch. There was a depression that seemed to be a keyhole, and actually a green key next to the box as well.

However, this wasn't the center of Han Shuo's attention. His eyes were glued to the coins in front of him and he smiled dumbly and repeated, "I'm rich, rich!"

Three gold coins, 12 silver coins and 56 bronze coins. That was the money contents of the bag. One gold coin could be exchanged for 100 silver coins, and one silver coin for 100 bronze coins. Even with Han Shuo's improved rations, a day's worth of bread, milk and fried eggs were less than ten silvers. If this money was exchanged for food, it would be enough for two years of his rations.

Bryan had originally been sold for five golds to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. The money here was enough for half of his life.

After a bout of extreme joy, Han Shuo was all smiles as he put the money back into the bag. His eyes then landed on the dark green jade box and green key. He frowned as he recalled Duke and Erick's clothing. It was apparent that the two were persons of some stature, Duke's robes and staff were in particular priceless items.

Although these coins were a great fortune to him, they would be nothing to Duke. They wouldn't have hunted Dylan for this money, and to kill even Han Shuo over it.

Were they after the contents of this jade box?

Han Shuo's gaze focused on the dark green jade box sitting still on the ground as his thoughts traveled down this path. Under the moonbeams, the jade box sparkled with a faint green glow indiscernible to a careless eye. The hazy green glow was extremely faint, and had an unearthly beauty to it.

As Han Shuo was silently gazing upon the jade box, concentrating his mental strength with unusual clarity, he suddenly felt a sinisterly cold presence emanate from the box. The box flowed up Han Shuo's mental strength and almost traveled right into his bones. Han Shuo shuddered uncontrollably and closed his eyes tightly.

This box was a bit strange!

He took a deep breath in, calmed himself, and then looked around in paranoia. He swiftly stashed the jade box and key back into the grey handbag, and staggered back to the warehouse.

Back in the warehouse, Han Shuo did not study the jade box further, and even temporarily left the money alone. He hid the handbag underneath the bed with a bit of a fear, commanded the little skeleton to wash and dress his back, then sank into a deep sleep.

# Chapter 16: A lot of people are hitting me

Noon, the training fields for the necromancy major.

Han Shuo was absentmindedly cleaning as he ran through Master Gene's morning lecture in his mind. Han Shuo's eyebrows were slightly as he was deep in thought.

A fat figure sprinted in from the door and came to a stop in front of Han Shuo. Jack panted heavily as he said hurriedly, "Bad news Bryan! Carey and Borg are coming to get revenge on you!"

Han Shuo was a bit unhappy that his thoughts had been interrupted. He frowned upon seeing Jack's panicked face and asked, "What going on? Didn't I beat up those two idiots last time? What do they want with me again?"

"I don't know, I'm not sure either. I only heard that they're in pain because they ate something this morning. Their faces are all green! They're yelling about getting revenge on you, even Lisa's looking for you!"

Han Shuo still felt a bit of pain when he touched his back, but it felt a lot better than it had last night. The magical yuan had eventually fully enclosed the dark green fighting aura within his spine, and seemed to be shrinking slowly. This gave Han Shuo a small bit of comfort.

"Don't blame me since you've come looking for death!" Han Shuo coldly snorted and tightly grasped the broom in his hand as he looked towards the door.

Jack still wore an anxious expression on his face as he wringed his hands, "Bryan, it's different this time. Carey and Borg got a few helpers and they don't seem to be errand boys from the necromancy major. They're all really tall and strong! Hurry and run!"

"Damned Bryan, how dare you plot against us! I'll make you pay today!" Carey's voice had already traveled in from outside as Jack was urgently trying to convince Han Shuo to run. A crowd of people had already blocked the training field doors by the time he'd finished speaking.

Carey and Borg really did have green faces, and Borg “eurped” as soon as they had walked in through the doors. He clutched his stomach and his body spasmed for a while. He vomited a black and gooey liquid, and his breath immediately smelled of a bitter sourness.

Carey’s already green face looked even worse after seeing Borg spit something out. His stomach also seemed to be in pain as he coughed into his hand, but couldn’t vomit anything despite wanting to.

“Bryan, what did you tell Lisa to refine?! She fed it to us and we’re like this now! It’s my death or yours today!” He clutched his stomach with one hand and pointed an accusing finger with the other as he spoke bitterly. Borg’s body felt a bit weak after vomiting, and leaned on the door to keep himself upright.

He smiled inwardly as Han Shuo felt silly. He had randomly made up some disgusting things to fob off Lisa last time she’d asked him why he suddenly became so agile and vigorous, but who knew that she’d take it for real and actually refine the revolting things. It looks like she’d experimented on Borg and Carey, no wonder the two looked worse than death.

“No, no I didn’t!” Han Shuo shook his head and said with an expression of ignorance. He looked dumb and quite innocent.

“Lisa told us everything. How dare you still say you didn’t! I’m not leaving until I teach you a lesson today!” Carey bellowed angrily and made a gesture at those he’d brought with him. There were six errand boys, including Borg. They rolled up their sleeves and walked menacingly towards Han Shuo.

Apart from Carey and Borg, the other errand boys were from the department of dark magic, but they didn’t quite measure up to Jack’s description of being tall and strong. They were tall alright, but the tall ones were stick thin. There were strong ones alright, but they weren’t as tall as Han Shuo. On a whole, the tall ones weren’t strong, and the strong ones weren’t tall. Their fighting ability probably didn’t amount to much.

He flexed his hands, but still wore a dull expression on his face. An

uncontrollable desire to rage and vent grew in his heart, and seemed that it would only be appeased by beating all of these people into the ground.

This desire came swiftly and unexpectedly, and it filled Han Shuo's mind within the blink of an eye, like an incantation spurring him to action. Han Shuo's personality had always been rather passive, and very rarely took the initiative to offend someone. He hadn't dare get into trouble by being too cocky, but with his strength and speed now, it was very likely that the fallout would be severe if they fought. Han Shuo wasn't willing for such a development to occur, but he didn't seem to have rational control over his faculties at the moment.

This feeling was the same as the situation when he'd faced Lisa in the training fields last time. All rational thoughts had been abandoned, and he took action according to his heart's inner desires. It was then that Claude's fighting aura had finally been digested by the magical yuan.

The situation was the same today. The magical yuan had enclosed Claude's fighting aura, and his inner desires were strong beyond belief.

He turned to see a cowering and shaking Jack. There were no more traces of honest dumbness on Han Shuo's face, the look from his eyes was as sharp as twin knives, with a streak of a gambler's fervor. He handed Jack the broom handle and said coldly, "Hold this. Stick anyone who dares hit you!"

He paused, pointed towards the sharp end of the metal broom, and said lightly, "Use the sharp edge!"

Jack was frightened by Han Shuo's current attitude, and stared at him dully with both legs trembling. The current Han Shuo of now was cool, calm, and collected, without a single trace of Bryan's cowardice and timidity!

Han Shuo shoved the broom handle into Jack's hands and turned with the familiar honest, silly look on his face. He instinctively cowered and wailed, "No, don't hit me!"

"We're going to do just that!" The six people all rushed in together, punching, and kicking with force, attacking Han Shuo's entire body.

He held his head with both hands and backed up fearfully at first. When he had taken three steps backwards and arrived next to Jack, it was as if he'd suddenly lost his mind and he barked out a few howls. He rushed towards the six people, like a bull gone wild.

Carey was out in front, and his upraised right foot halted in midair as he didn't dare complete his stomp. His heart skipped a beat as he was reminded of what had happened the last time Han Shuo lost his mind.

Although, just because Carey didn't kick him didn't mean that Han Shuo would let him off that easily. Han Shuo felt the magical yuan churn with increased speed as he ran. It looked like the same thing was happening again, as the magical yuan started to digest the dark green fighting aura that Erick had left behind.

At that moment, Han Shuo only had one uncontained thought, and that was to mercilessly beat everyone in front of him into the ground – regardless if they were still breathing or not!

He spread both hands and caught Carey's upraised foot like lightning. He lifted it up and sent Carey flipping backwards, landing with a huge thump and grimace of pain. His teeth made close contact with the ground and blood was already forming at the edges of his mouth.

The four who had come to help Carey and Borg were dumbfounded by Han Shuo's about face. Their leering faces froze, and their expressions became a bit odd.

"Don't be afraid, he's just one person. We've got six on our side and can beat him to death, even if we hit him randomly!" Borg lifted his chin and said suddenly as he brought a wooden stool out of nowhere. He gave a great yell and came crashing towards Han Shuo.

The four's flagging confidence was renewed upon hearing Borg's words, and their expressions shifted back again. They slowly took out short wooden staves from behind them and followed Borg's lead in rushing towards Han Shuo's head.

They'd even prepared weapons! Han Shuo narrowed his eyes, sprang off both legs and dodged to the side as he saw that Borg's stool was about to

hit him.

Crash!

The stool hit the stone floor and its legs wobbled from the impact. It didn't look that sturdy anymore. Borg gave a light "eh?" as a shocked expression made its way onto his face. He hadn't anticipated that Han Shuo would be able to dodge and make his strike land on empty air.

Pow! A quick fist smashed into the bridge of Borg's nose and a bloody flower formed. Borg's head drooped as he staggered backwards, the stool slipping from his limp hands in his pain.

His head lowered with a low laugh, Han Shuo grabbed the stool that Borg had dropped and turned to be ambushed by a short and stocky red-haired boy. The wooden stave whistled through the air, and the wooden stool was suddenly raised to catch the stave, just as it was about to hit Han Shuo's head.

One stool leg in each hand, Han Shuo felt the magical yuan in his spine churn increasingly faster. He could clearly feel the enclosed fighting aura continue to disappear, resulting in limitless strength entering his hands. He grasped the stool legs firmly and all of a sudden tore it apart.

The entire stool was torn into half, and Han Shuo kicked out with his right foot as he held the two halves in his hands. He connected solidly with the guy's lower abdomen, with the latter's face immediately turning white as he stooped on the ground in pain.

Han Shuo wasn't about to let him off that easily – the former was reveling in his bloodthirsty feelings and only wanted to full vent it out. Both of his hands started working at the same time, crashing the halves of the stool down onto the red-haired guy's face. Blood splurged out from his forehead at once as it dyed the stool halves red.

"Hurry and stop him! That damned crazy kid will kill Alva!" Borg screamed in terror as blood streamed out from his nose, like two worms, thanks to being flattened by Han Shuo's fist.

Even Carey was struggling to pull himself up. Despite being struck with



terror, he still shakily raised the pre-concealed wooden stave and rushed towards Han Shuo with the others.

Pilipala.

A violent series of collisions rang out. Watching from the sidelines with bent legs quivering in fear, Jack watched Han Shuo incredulously. He only saw Han Shuo raise the halves of the stool and bring them down on people's noses. Blood trickled down their faces and the tops of their heads after only a moment.

At this moment, Jack was stunned silly, completely floored by Han Shuo's coldly cruel methods. He never would have thought that the typically timid and accepting Bryan would one day display such a violent and savage side of himself.

Just as Jack was stupefied, Erick's fighting aura had finally been digested by the magical yuan during the fight, in which Han Shuo had indulged his every whim. It was then that Han Shuo came to himself and abruptly realized what he was doing. He couldn't help but feel a bit afraid.

"There's sounds of fighting, what's going on? Go check out the training fields!" Han Shuo suddenly heard Fanny's voice sound from afar, with rapidly approaching footsteps following her words.

He turned back to see Carey, Borg and co. look at him with faces full of fear and dismay, each scared out of their minds. They all wielded wooden staves, but not one dared take one step closer.

Han Shuo knew that things were grave indeed, and madly ran through different scenarios in his mind. A sudden thought struck him, and he unexpectedly ran towards the training field doors. He smeared the blood from the stool onto his face and head as he ran, then threw the two blood stained halves away. He grabbed his back, where Erick's sword had injured him, and gave a mighty yank along with a great roar of pain. The injury hadn't fully scabbed over yet and it ripped open immediately, fresh blood staining his back red.

At the door, Han Shuo abruptly switched from a sprint to a full stop and fell to the ground, "arduously" crawling towards the door. He stuck out

two bloodstained hands when he saw that Fanny and co. had appeared, and said with a face full of terror and blood, “A, a lot of people are hitting me. Help... help me!”

# Chapter 17: An evil, honest grin

Fanny panicked upon seeing Han Shuo's pathetic condition, and her beautiful, athletic, long legs quickly sprinted towards Han Shuo.

"Ah...."

Han Shuo gave an anguished cry as the blood drained out of his face. He stared at Fanny and stammered with pain, "Master Fanny, you... you're stepping on my hand!"

Fanny was nearsighted to begin with, and had run too quickly in her haste, without paying attention to what was underfoot. Add to that, Han Shuo's outstretched hands were on the ground in his desire to present a convincing front, and it all resulted in this current situation.

Fanny was wearing knee high boots with skinny, high stiletto heels. She had been sprinting with a certain rush of speed when she stepped firmly on Han Shuo's left hand. The pain on his face was not feigned in the slightest, it truly was pain that cut deep into the bone marrow.

Han Shuo hadn't suffered any major injuries in his prolonged fight with Carey and co., but now he was suffering from agony deep within his bones.

"Ooh... sorry Bryan, I didn't see that your hand was stretched out this far!" Fanny was horrified and hastily apologized. The boot, that had been stepping on Han Shuo's left hand, was swiftly retracted in shock, and rapidly shunted to the left – but Han Shuo's outstretched right hand was precisely where her foot would land.

Han Shuo was scared out of his mind upon seeing that the sharp spike was about to wreak havoc on his right hand. He withdrew his hand with lightning-like speed and wiped at the "blood traces" on his face. He pointed at the gobsmacked crew behind him and sent up a wail proclaiming his grievances, "They, they hit me!"

Fanny's face darkened as soon as she heard these words. Although there were multiple injuries to Carey and co.'s faces, they had long since wiped

off all traces of blood when they heard someone approaching. They were afraid of being questioned, and in the confusion wiped off all the blood on the weapons that they then carelessly discarded.

They had been planning to keep their mouths shut and just chalk the afternoon's events up to bad luck. Who knew that Han Shuo would be so evil as to pin the blame on them after he'd beaten them up.

Fanny's beautiful eyes were astute. She threw a glance towards Carey and co. and realized that although their clothes were in disarray, there were no traces of blood on their face. There were, however, traces of blood on some far flung wooden staves.

She had merely cast one glance, lowered her head to gaze at the blood on Han Shuo's back and face, and "wisely deduced" what had happened here. Carey and co. had ganged up to beat up Han Shuo, the blood on the wooden staves was proof!

"I will inform the school authorities of this matter. All of you can await your punishment. I feel disgusted by so many bullying a thin, weak Bryan!" Fanny looked at Carey and co. coldly and said with a shrill voice.

"Master Fanny, that's not what happened. He beat us! Jack, you saw it all, wasn't Bryan the one hitting us?" Carey was dismayed and yelled in a panic.

Little fatty Jack's legs were still trembling on the side, he had been completely frightened and was in awe of Han Shuo's actions. Jack cast a far glance upon hearing Carey's words and discovered that Han Shuo was winking at him and gesturing with his head as he lay on the ground.

His confidence bolstered, Jack stuck out his stomach and pointed a chubby hand at the group, speaking with an air of self righteousness. "Stop lying Carey, I'm not afraid of you now that Master Fanny is here. You guys hit Bryan and want me to lie for you! Honest Jack won't do that!"

Carey and his crew still wanted to say something, but was stopped by Fanny's upraised hand and cold snort. "Stop disseminating and wait to be punished!"

She looked at the “pathetic” Han Shuo as she turned, and picked him up by the collar of his shirt. She said tenderly, “Come, let me tend to your wounds. You’re my research topic and I can’t allow you to get injured so often!”

The fresh smell of her breath wafted towards Han Shuo’s nose as Fanny spoke, making him suddenly feel that the part of his hand that had been stepped on wasn’t in so much pain after all. His back to Fanny, Han Shuo signaled with his eyes for Jack to leave, and then smiled an honest, dumb smile at Carey and his group.

However, these guys had just been badly beaten by Han Shuo and then had all the blame pinned on them. The honest smile he was flashing them now only appeared to be the most evil, terrifying smile on this earth!

Ten minutes later, Fanny’s lab.

Apart from Fanny, Lisa had also come to Fanny’s lab under the pretext of having some questions. Along the way, her gaze when looking at Han Shuo was quite strange, making him feel ill at ease.

Fanny bade Han Shuo to lie down on the bed upon reaching her lab, and found a bottle of medicinal solution. Just as she was about to apply it to Han Shuo, Lisa gave a light laugh and grabbed the bottle from her, smiling merrily, “Master Fanny, you’re not wearing your glasses. Let me do it for you.”

Fanny didn’t think too much of Lisa’s words and nodded, “Hmm. Okay, clean his wounds while I find some gauze. I don’t know where I’ve put it.”

Fanny talked to herself as she rummaged throughout the lab, whereas Lisa held the bottle in her left hand and applied the solution onto Han Shuo’s back with her right. She peered closely at his body and said lowly, “Eh? This injury doesn’t look like it was just formed. Why has it scabbed over on the top?”

Greatly startled, Han Shuo gave an internal cry of dismay. It looked like he’d underestimated the peculiarities of his own body. His body’s restoration abilities had been enhanced since he’d started training his magical yuan. The injury he’d suffered at dawn had already started to scab

over after a short while, to be unfortunately witnessed by Lisa.

He didn't make a sound as he knew there was no point in saying anything now. He might as well pretend to be a fool to the end, as if he hadn't heard Lisa say anything. He kept making noises of pain with his mouth, as if the wound greatly pained him.

It was at this moment that a surge of pain traveled from him back. He immediately howled in agony and swiftly turned his head to glare at Lisa, only to be met with the glee of uncovering a secret in her eyes. He gave a silent uh oh and laughed dumbly, facing forward again after saying, "Hurts".

"Bryan, what's going on?" Fanny inquired after hearing his tormented scream. She was still looking for gauze on the other side.

"Oh, Master Fanny. I accidentally touched his wound just now. No big deal, I'll be more careful this time!"

"Then be more careful!" Fanny paid no attention to what was going on after her response.

An alluring scent made its way to his nostrils followed by hot air puffing by his ear. Lisa kept her voice low, "Damned Bryan, do you think I don't know that you're pretending? Huh. You scared me by pretending to be dead, and then gave me the wrong method for refining medicine. If I hadn't been smart enough to experiment on Carey and Borg, I would have suffered to death because of you.

I'll be frank, I got to the lab before Carey and heard your conversation with Jack through a ghou. I even saw the entire process of you beating up Carey. You're really something now aren't you. You even know how to scheme against others! Hehe, not bad, not bad!"

Lisa continued to apply the solution as she spoke, but obviously wanted to get some revenge as she frequently pressed down hard on Han Shuo's wound. Han Shuo had been made by Lisa and his heart was feeling topsy turvey. He had no idea what Lisa was planning, so even though the injury hurt like hell, he didn't dare complain loudly. He could only grind his teeth in pain as he muffled his cries.

With her plump lips lowered to his ears and fragrance wafting over Han Shuo's face, Lisa saw that he refused to make a sound. She said fiercely, "Last time at the training fields, damn, you even kissed me. And... and touched me there. I'm not letting you off that easily. I'll be waiting for you at the fake mountains behind the classroom building tonight. You're a dead man if you don't show up!"

She pressed down hard one last time on his wound after delivering her lines, smiling in proud vindication when Han Shuo grimaced with a low moan of pain. She then walked to Fanny and handed over the bottle of solution, saying "Master Fanny, I've finished applying the solution to him. I've suddenly remembered that I have something to do, so I'm going to go now. I'll ask you that question tomorrow!"

"Oh, sure go ahead." Fanny responded diffidently, then exclaimed in astonishment. "Eh! I've finally found it, so this is where I put it."

Fanny's beautiful legs walked her over to Han Shuo after her surprise, and was about to dress his wounds when she took a closer look. She wondered in bemusement, "Eh, how come the outside of the wound has scabbed over!"

Han Shuo's head was facing down into the bed and was worrying over Lisa's actions. He didn't know how to face her that night. His heart leapt in shock again when he heard Fanny's words, thinking that not Fanny too!

Fanny frowned but then quickly smoothed her brow, sighing in knowing wonder, "Ah, the bruise on your head faded quickly when Fitch hit you last time. Is this all because you were hit with the Agony of the Soul? Oh this is simply too amazing!"

Han Shuo, "....."

Han Shuo was speechless at the sight of Fanny's self-satisfying thoughts. How can her imagination be so creative as to find a reasonable explanation for something obviously incredibly odd?

Fanny became absorbed in a round of wonder and thought for a while, then started dressing Han Shuo's wounds. Her movements were extremely gentle, as if afraid of hurting Han Shuo.

Han Shuo reflected that Fanny's movements were so much better than Lisa's, and was about to turn his head to thank Fanny when he noticed something by the opened lab door behind Fanny. He glimpsed a tall, thin figure staring at him enviously. It disappeared upon realizing that his attentions had been noticed – Fitch.



# Chapter 18: Please let us off the hook

Fanny did not intend to run Han Shuo through a gauntlet, due to his injuries. She let him go back after she'd cleaned, dressed his wounds, and saw that he wasn't suffering anywhere else.

Han Shuo's walk back was filled with silent frustrations and worry. He hadn't thought that Lisa would cotton on to him playing the fool that quickly.

He'd played quite a few nasty tricks on her recently, and she'd originally let it all go because she thought he was crazy, but now that she knew it was all an act, she was bound to be out for his blood.

He'd unknowingly made it back to his warehouse, while deep in the midst of furrowed, scattered thought. Just as he was about to open the door and step inside, he discovered the two cowering figures of Carey and Borg by his doorway.

Han Shuo had beaten these two the most at the training fields earlier because they were the ringleaders. Their faces were now bruised and battered, and the sides of their faces were even a bit misshapen.

Han Shuo's thoughts churned as he saw the two of them waiting there. He cautiously checked his surroundings, wondering how many more they had hidden on the sides waiting to ambush him, since they were already here to exact revenge.

He surveyed the vicinity and squinted, staring at the two of them without saying a word. He walked slowly to the side, where he usually washed and scrubbed things, and chose a hard rock. He smiled dumbly and said, "Do you still want to fight?"

Carey and Borg both shuddered when they saw Han Shuo come back with a rock. Carey hastily said, "Bryan, please let us off the hook. It was our fault for offending you before, we'll never do it again. Please forgive us!"

On the side, Borg was also staring at Han Shuo, with a face full of fear,

as he shakily fumbled out two silver coins from his pocket. He cowered in front of Han Shuo and offered them to him, “Bryan, this is a token of our sincerity. Can you please talk to Master Fanny for us? Otherwise the academy will fire both of us. Our families are poor and completely depend on the silvers we earn from doing errands at the academy. Please let us off the hook!”

So, they’d come to beg and plead. Han Shuo threw the rock, that was in his hand, to the side. The honest, dumb look in his eyes faded away as he rested his two hands on his shoulders, lazily sizing up the two.

Han Shuo smiled after a moment. “I don’t want those two silvers!”

Borg and Carey eyed each other, then looked at the completely unruffled Han Shuo. They both bent down, putting one knee on the ground and implored, “Bryan, please forgive us. We won’t dare do anything again.”

“Stand up and talk, stand up and talk!” Han Shuo hurriedly raised the two from the ground while smiling. He then responded, “I don’t want your silver, but I’ll talk to Master Fanny and leave you two alone in the future if you agree on one condition!”

At this point, how could Borg and Carey not know that Han Shuo had always been putting on an act. Han Shuo’s coldly cruel methods in the training fields had stunned and frightened all thoughts of revenge out of their heads. The current Han Shuo had completely exceeded all of their expectations!

“We agree to whatever condition you want!” Borg speedily replied, fervently looking at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo looked at the two in a measured, unflappable manner and nodded. He said, “In the future, the two of you need to hop to it on all my errand duties, and finish them quickly. I’ll talk to Master Fanny, as long as you two agree to this.”

“No problem, Bryan we’ve got this. We know what to do, we’ll carry out your work in the future.” Carey almost tripped over his words in rapid agreement, as if he was afraid that Han Shuo would regret his words.

There were four errand boys in the necromancy major. If the school authorities really did sweep Carey and Borg out the door, they wouldn't be able to immediately find replacements. This way, the two's original jobs would undoubtedly fall onto Han Shuo and Jack's shoulders. Han Shuo would no longer have any free time, and was naturally something he didn't want to see.

Now that Carey and Borg had agreed to handle Han Shuo's business for him, he would have a lot more energy to do other things. What a change in fortunes. It used to be that Bryan was the one receiving a whole heck of extra work from these guys, now the situation was reversed, and he had indirectly gotten revenge for that unlucky Bryan.

He noted that the sky was darkening, and remembered that the proposed time with Lisa was quickly approaching. He said with some degree of impatience, "Alright, alright. I need to make a trip to behind the classroom building. You should go back if there's nothing else. Be careful in the future, keep pretending that I'm that crazy village idiot. If you dare breathe a word of what happened today, I'll beat you two so badly that you wouldn't even recognize each other if you stood face to face!"

Carey and Borg cravenly nodded in quick agreement upon hearing Han Shuo's chilly threat. Han Shuo's brutally cold-blooded methods in the training fields had branded a deep mark on their hearts. They didn't dare think of revenge even deep within their hearts.

Just as Han Shuo was about to leave, Borg suddenly thought of something and called out, "Bryan, don't walk towards the back of the classroom building from the direction of the fake mountains. Lisa just directed Carey and I to set up three holes with nets and tripwires. She said she wanted to test the intelligence of summoned creatures. Don't walk into them by accident!"

Han Shuo was taken aback, but quickly marshalled his thoughts in understanding. It looked like Lisa had made her preparations early. What intelligence testing of summoned creatures? It's just something she's prepared for me!

“Where did you set up the traps? Tell me in detail, otherwise I just may fall into them in the dark!” Han Shuo frowned as he asked Borg and Carey.

There was no way those two could have known that Lisa had set those traps in order to deal with Han Shuo. Add to that their current need for a favor from Han Shuo, and their genuine fear of him, the two quickly elaborated on the locations of the three traps in great detail.

“Okay. See you tomorrow. Remember to thoroughly wipe and dust off the statues on the path to the classroom buildings. I’m going to sleep in tomorrow.” Han Shuo showily gave an order to the two and walked off without a care in the world, towards the fake mountains behind the classroom building.

Department of dark magic classroom building, around a bend in one of the fake mountains.

Lisa was hidden behind the fake mountain, a corner of her mouth lifted into a snicker with evil intent. Her two eyes sparkled with life as she eagerly peered at Han Shuo slowly emerging in the distance.

Damned Bryan, how dare you pretend to be crazy and embarrass me. Not only did you scare me by pretending to be a corpse, but you kicked my butt in the training field and you gave me a disgusting refining recipe. See if I don’t torment you to death. Lisa thought viciously and her fingers tightened on the rope wrapped around her hand.

The other end of the rope was wrapped in a circular loop, laid on the path that Han Shuo would have to take on his way to the fake mountain. Lisa would give a mighty pull as soon as he set both feet into the loop, immediately tripping him to the ground. A big, outstretched net had already been laid out on a protruding rock further up ahead, just waiting to entangle Han Shuo as soon as his legs were tied up.

Lisa laughed a silent, cruel laugh as she watched the unassuming Han Shuo approach. She observed him looking all around, calling out as he slowly shuffled forward, “Lisa, where are you? Come on out.”

“I’m here, come over here. I have something to tell you. You’re dead if you don’t come over here!”

Lisa snorted lightly as she stayed behind the fake mountain.

Han Shuo glanced to his left and right again and walked towards the area with the rope lying in wait, as if he was completely oblivious. Lisa's heart swelled in joy and she flexed her hands around the rope in her hands, focusing her concentration on the second that both of Han Shuo's legs stepped into the trap.

Just as one of his feet landed in the trap, Han Shuo's body suddenly froze as he called out again, "Lisa, where are you hiding?"

The loop was just a few inches in front of Han Shuo's foot. Lisa had almost lost control and sprang the trap when she saw that Han Shuo was about to fall right into it. Her heart skipped a beat when she saw that she'd miscalculated.

Just as Lisa relaxed and was about to respond, Han Shuo's still body quickly strode out, evading the trap in the blink of an eye. He continued walking, murmuring in confusion, "Lisa, what game are you trying to play?"

Thus, Lisa's carefully laid out rope loop and net trap was seemingly carelessly dodged by Han Shuo with his sudden stop and start. A wave of dejection rose in Lisa's heart and she cursed in a low voice, hating Han Shuo for his good luck, but never once thinking it was because he was keenly aware of what was going on.

"I'm here, what took you so long!" Lisa was gritting her teeth in complaint, as her lithe body emerged from a crevice in the fake mountain.

"Oh, nothing much. Just that my back was still hurting so I went back and rested for a bit. Thanks for dressing my wounds today." Han Shuo said without expression and walked towards Lisa.

A sudden crack rang out, as if fragile wooden raft had been snapped. Han Shuo's body vanished from where he stood, accompanied with his panicked yell. Agony filled moans followed shortly thereafter from a deep hole that had suddenly appeared.

"Haha, damned Bryan, you finally fell for it. See if I won't torment you to

death today! How dare you play a fool and embarrass the future archmage of necromancy!” Lisa’s woebegone expression just a split second ago, was replaced a wave of hysterical joy from her heart when she saw Han Shuo fall into the trap. She hollered excitedly and quickly ran out from behind the fake mountain and made straight for the trap that Han Shuo had triggered.

Lisa laughed in proud, high pitched laughter as she walked to the edge of the trap. She brought out a stone as she cussed loudly at Han Shuo, intending to stone him where he’d fallen to take revenge for her latest humiliation at his hands.

All of a sudden, a hand wrapped around Lisa’s right ankle. Scared witless, she looked down and finally noticed that Han Shuo’s left hand was grasping the edge of the trap, while his right hand was latched onto her ankle. He hadn’t fallen into the hole at all, and was in fact looking at her with an evil grin on his face.

“Come on down!” He guffawed evilly and yanked with his hand, taking advantage of Lisa’s consternation. The carefully scheming Lisa pitched forward, flailing her limbs wildly, while screaming in sheer terror, as she shot straight down into the hole.

# Chapter 19: I like you

Lisa wildly reached out in her panic, and by sheer coincidence, grabbed Han Shuo's pant leg, while falling through the air. She immediately gave a strong tug, violently swinging Han Shuo's body, causing him to fall down into the depths of the trap with her.

Han Shuo had already quickly checked out the bottom of the trap earlier. Thanks to the moonlight, he could see that there weren't any sharp knives planted at the bottom of the trap, just a few protruding rocks, but those protruding rocks would still cause great discomfort if one fell onto them.

Han Shuo's heart was curiously calm with the sounds of Lisa's screams filling his ears. He didn't know if it was because he'd been training his magical yuan, but recently whenever he'd faced danger, Han Shuo's first reaction was not to panic. Rather, he swiftly thought about how to resolve the crisis he was in, and this time was no exception.

The trap had been hastily laid, and thus was only three meters deep, but during the split seconds of the fall, Han Shuo surprisingly still had the mental capacity to think of other things. While listening to Lisa's screams, Han Shuo circulated the magical yuan that had just digested the fighting aura at a speed many times faster than normal.

Han Shuo made his move just as the two were about to violently crash into the protruding rocks. He snatched Lisa out of thin air, catching the girl who had completely lost her head and was screaming every which way, around the waist. He whirled himself around and sacrificed his butt and back, smashing right onto the protruding rocks at the bottom of the pit.

"Aiyo...." Han Shuo grimaced in pain as the wound, that had been dressed not too long ago, split open again. Fresh blood oozed out instantaneously. As the primary point of contact, his buttocks also hurt tremendously.

Lisa hadn't suffered too much damage while being cradled in Han Shuo's arms. Seeing that she was unharmed and listening to Han Shuo's

distressed moans, she started raking a suspicious glance over Han Shuo's body, asking in extreme surprise, "Why did you save me?"

Han Shuo's anguished cries were silenced by Lisa's question. His face wore a sudden expression of dejection as he shook his head with a low sigh, "Because I like you!"

It was as if lightning had struck Lisa as soon as she heard those words. She stared at Han Shuo dumbly, completely shellshocked. It took her a long while to react as she pointed at Han Shuo and stammered, "You... you... I... I... what did you say?"

"I said I like you Lisa!" Han Shuo gazed upon Lisa with a face full of sincerity, speaking wholeheartedly, "I've actually liked you all these years, and so have never begrudged you for experimenting on me. Even when you almost tormented me to death with the Agony of the Soul, I still never hated you.

Except, I understand that I'm just an errand slave. There's too much of a gap between my status and yours, so I just bury these thoughts deep in my heart and never dare to express them. I could only act crazy in hopes of soliciting more attention from you. Lisa, was I a fool to do so?"

I am so mean, such an asshole. Han Shuo sprouted off lies with an earnest face on one hand, and with the other inwardly marveled that he could use such low methods after arriving in a strange world. He didn't know whether it was due to training his magical yuan, or the fact that he had been evil to begin with and it had only begun to show itself after shrugging off all constraints in this strange world.

Lisa was completely dumbfounded by Han Shuo, staring at him dumbly and forgetting to speak. She only shook off her stupor and hurriedly stood up when her agitated hands randomly roamed over a strip of naked thigh. When she looked at Han Shuo, an astounding blush actually stole across her face for the first time. She seemed to be a bit embarrassed.

Han Shuo started and then lowered his head for a look. That was when he noticed that Lisa had ripped his pants when they landed. Apart from his boxers, his entire lower body was completely exposed. Lisa had



actually been sitting on his naked lap just now.

Frantically whipping her head to the side, Lisa's voice heaved as she pouted, "I don't care if you're speaking the truth or not, there's no way that I could like you. You're just an errand slave for the necromancy major. I will never have anything to do with you."

"I understand Lisa, I just hope to stay in the necromancy major and gaze upon you from afar. I won't have any other fancies. Now that I've said all the words I've held in for years, I feel much more at ease." Han Shuo said with a low voice and a face full of genuity.

"I, I'm leaving. We can forget about what happened before, I won't pursue it further, but don't you dare daydream. You're only an errand slave, the two of us being together is impossible!" Lisa turned her back against Han Shuo and hurriedly responded as she listened to his heartfelt confession. She immediately started an incantation and summoned a skeletal warrior, commanding it to throw down the rope that she had planned to use on Han Shuo.

Han Shuo knew that once girls knew that someone had a secret crush on them, they would be unable to do anything to that person, no matter how much they had hated the person before. Lisa was the same.

Lisa wouldn't like Han Shuo just because of his words, but would forgive Han Shuo for his past deeds because of them. She would even help him in the future, because she thought that Han Shuo liked her. Even if she never liked Han Shuo, she would be touched and thus her future actions and judgment would be affected.

Seeing that Lisa was about to leave, Han Shuo turned his back on Lisa and smiled an evil smile of a plot succeeding. He then lowered his voice, "Lisa, I can do anything for you. I have done everything possible to learn that if you want your breasts to develop fully, then you must drink lots of papaya milk and do lots of swimming. When showering after swimming, you should massage the sides of your breasts. They say that doing this will ensure that breasts develop fully."

"Damned Bryan, where did you hear all this?" Lisa kept her head averted,

throwing down a huffy response as she grasped the rope. After a pause, Lisa spoke again, "What's papaya milk?"

"Eh, milk will do. Two cups a day!" Han Shuo suddenly remembered that this world didn't seem to have papayas and hurriedly explained.

Swiftly turning her head, Lisa flung a fierce gaze at Han Shuo, speaking angrily, "Shut up. Don't tell anyone about what happened today, and don't tell others that you like me, or I'll kill you."

After delivering this line, she issued an order to the skeletal warrior waiting aboveground and it pulled her up. Some scuffling noises traveled down afterwards, and all became peaceful again.

Han Shuo lightly laughed heartily after exhaling a breath, thinking that he was really become more and more evil to lie so seamlessly and flawlessly. Now that Lisa had easily let him off the hook, it testified to how wondrously effective this method had been.

He snickered as he walked forward, seeing that the rope that Lisa had left behind was still there. He tugged on it and realized that the other end was most likely fastened to the fake mountain. Overjoyed, he understood that Lisa must have given him a hand out of convenience before she left. Han Shuo pulled himself up the rope and swaggered back to his warehouse.

Han Shuo practiced magic after commanding the little skeleton to redress the wounds on his back. He felt that not only had the magical yuan grown a tad bit bigger, but it spun at a higher speed than before. The Mystical Glacial Spellfire that he had been practicing for a while had finally progressed to circulating the magical yuan to his wrist. This pleased him greatly.

Was it because the magical yuan had digested Erick's fighting aura? Han Shuo creased his brow in silent thought, thinking back to resulting circumstances after Claude's fighting aura had been absorbed last time. Han Shuo was starting to slowly suspect that the magical yuan within his body could strengthen itself through assimilating fighting aura.

Why did training his magical yuan have such a peculiar effect? Han

Shuo thought for a while to no avail and did not continue his musings. He started meditating to train his mental strength.

His mind empty and clear, Han Shuo suddenly felt distracted as he was training his mental strength. He was unable to immediately settle into his meditation as he usually did, as if something was disturbing his meditation by calling out to him. It was a bizarre feeling, and Han Shuo had ignored it at first. It was only after his meditations had been interrupted a few times that he started paying attention to this phenomenon.

As Han Shuo calmed his mind and started extending his senses, he promptly sensed that the thing interrupting his meditations was underneath the bed. The only thing underneath the bed was the handbag that had belonged to Dylan.

A thought struck him as Han Shuo reached for the bag. He withdrew the uncanny, dark green, jade box, perceiving the sinister, cold air within the box. Han Shuo shuddered involuntarily and began to carefully inspect the green, jade box.

The culprit that had repeatedly disturbed Han Shuo's meditations was the dark green, jade box in front of him. To this day, he still didn't know what was inside. He hadn't been interested before, but now he had no choice but to appraise the jade box if he wanted to successfully meditate again.

He picked up the green key and stuck it into the indentation on the jade box. He felt that it was unable to turn, and an expression of bafflement appeared on his face after jiggling the key back and forth a few times.

The key can't open the jade box, Han Shuo was startled and began to grow mystified. He recalled last time's circumstances in great detail, and thought of something. He concentrated his mental strength, slowly focusing it on the jade box.

Suddenly, a breath of sinister aura emanated from the box and intruded into Han Shuo's mind, hurting his mind. Fighting back against the pain, Han Shuo concentrated his mental strength as he never had before. Even

the magical yuan within his body spun much faster than usual.

Bearing up against the invasion of the sinister aura from the jade box, Han Shuo tried a hard twist of the key again. The key turned to the right with an audible click, as the jade box abruptly sprang open, revealing the contents inside.

# Chapter 20: Don't touch the teacher's butt

A chilly wave of aura first spilled out when the jade box was opened. The temperature in the warehouse decreased rapidly, causing Han Shuo to shudder involuntarily again. He quickly refocused his concentration on the item within the green jade box.

It was a verdant ball. Its surface like an emerald, winking with ephemeral green light. There was a red dot inside, like a drop of roiling blood, oscillating randomly within the ball.

His mind suddenly hurting, Han Shuo only felt that his mental strength started draining expeditiously towards the ball. It felt a bit like when he was using necromancy magic. With the injection of Han Shuo's mental strength, the surface of the ball shone with even more green, and the blood-red dot in the center abruptly let out a small strand of red light.

Pain! A keenly honed dagger savagely stirred up Han Shuo's brains. With the loss of his mental strength, Han Shuo's mind hurt like a living hell. He had never endured such cruel agony in all his years of life.

In the midst of this extreme pain, Han Shuo should have fainted dead away, but the eerie thing was that Han Shuo's mind was clearer than it'd ever been. Han Shuo even felt that because his mind was more awake than ever, it was exacerbating and infinitely magnifying the agony.

Both of his hands clutching his head, Han Shuo was like a wild beast being slowly cut by a thousand, a million knives. He emitted a raspy, low roar that didn't sound like it could come from a human. Han Shuo's mental strength continued to slowly flow towards the round ball, along with the continuation of the inhumane pain.

At this moment, the tendons stood out on Han Shuo's forehead, neck, and exposed arms, like multiple worms wriggling in his body. His body had started filling out a bit, and his muscles were now tensed with explosive power.

As Han Shuo felt that his mental strength was about to be completely drained, the magical yuan within his body flowed from his neck to his

brain. As the magical yuan entered his brain, that was already splitting open from pain, the soul searing agony seemed to increase ten times in intensity.

The mental strength that had vanished with fleeting speed into the ball, came crashing back like a huge wave rolling onto shore, drowning Han Shuo in an instant. He could finally endure it no more and fainted.

He felt the weariness of a ten thousand kilometer march after he slowly woke up, but his brain was abnormally awake. When his eyes refocused, he took a look around and discovered that even the grain in the wooden door in front of him seemed quite clear.

He gave a light “eh?” as the changes within him stopped him in his tracks. The last time he had felt this way was when he gained mental strength after a series of coincidences. He had also felt that his senses were heightened then, and hastened to concentrate his mental strength again upon noting that this feeling had returned in force.

Exuberant joy immediately blossomed on his face, as he thought, the saying of what doesn't kill you makes you strong is true! Even that amount of danger hadn't been enough to end me just now, and now I've mysteriously benefited from that disaster. He could feel that his mental strength had increased in spades, and was much more potent than the amount of mental strength he'd labored to increase over the past two months.

These mystifying things had truly happened, shocking Han Shuo beyond belief as his gaze fell once more onto the dark green ball. The faint green luster on its surface seemed to have dimmed somewhat, but the drop of red within it was even more vibrant.

He frowned as he backed a few inches away, and made a close observation of the verdant ball. He suddenly felt that this ball was very similar to something. After a few moments of thought, he started in fright and made a sudden inspection of the ball. It was very much like an eyeball, and the more he looked at it, the more it seemed to be one.

The dot of red within the verdant ball seemed to be an eye sizing Han

Shuo up, giving him an exceedingly creeped out feeling. He shuddered rather violently as he closed the jade box with all the hair on his neck raised. A sharp click rang out as the jade box locked itself again, and the key, that had been stuck in the indentation, automatically bounced out.

Han Shuo shook his head as he banished the association between ball and eyeball from his mind. The more he contemplated the matter, the more he thought there was something strange about this ball. If it wasn't for the magical yuan circulating to his brain today, his mental strength would have surely been sucked dry by the ball, and he would have broken underneath the inhumane pain. He would have been truly driven mad and become an idiot.

But when the magical yuan had made its way to his brain, the depleted mental strength had come rushing back like a river running upstream, and had even been greatly improved and increased. This made Han Shuo feel that the ball was even more uncanny and unpredictable. He could vaguely feel that this ball was no ordinary object, otherwise Duke would have hardly killed Dylan for the jade box.

As for the verdant ball within the jade box, Han Shuo could not fathom what its purpose was, but because the ball had almost turned him into a real idiot, his heart still jumped with fear when thinking about it. He stored the jade box underneath the bed again, planning to experiment with the item inside once he had figured out what it was.

The next day.

Han Shuo woke up feeling that his body was in much better condition than it had been the day before. He caught a glimpse of Carey and Borg from afar when washing up, the two were cleaning the statues on the way to class. They seemed to have woken up a lot earlier than usual, as they kept yawning, even at this time of day.

Carey and Borg flashed eager smiles and greetings from a long ways away when they sighted Han Shuo, also reminding him to speak to Master Fanny as early as possible.

After downing his breakfast and listening to another lecture from

Master Gene on the foundations of magic as he swept the hallway for the necromancy classrooms, Han Shuo walked directly towards the training fields.

“Bryan, Fitch is in the training field asking Master Fanny some questions regarding magical knowledge. Please speak to her soon, or the two of us are really screwed!” Han Shuo bumped into Carey and Borg at the door, the two had just finished cleaning the training fields, and pleaded with Han Shuo as soon as they saw him.

Han Shuo nodded as he said lazily, “Alright alright, I’ll go find Master Fanny now.”

Fitch had some bad blood with Gene, not to mention that Fitch was already a journeyman mage. Therefore he naturally had no need to continue to listen to Gene’s foundational knowledge classes.

Fitch was gazing at Fanny on the side, completely mesmerized. Love, desire, and the light of greed mixed together and sparkled in his eyes. His eyes kept roaming over Fanny’s beautiful body, and he didn’t even notice Han Shuo’s arrival.

“Fitch, watch this. Even with my eyes covered, I can still command dark creatures to seek out the correct target based on previous memory.” Fanny’s eyes were covered as a few zombies bypassed several obstacles, using the clubs in their hands to land hard hits onto wooden targets as she spoke.

Focused on teaching, Fanny naturally had no idea that Fitch was not paying any attention to her words. Fitch’s attention was purely concentrated on her beautiful curves.

Upon seeing that Fitch completely ignoring Fanny’s explanation, and that his gaze was continuously combing over her body, Han Shuo thought silently that no wonder this kid has failed to advance to adept class even after multiple tries.

Judging from the situation, Fitch must have used additional tutoring as an excuse for some alone time with Fanny. Fanny’s covered eyes must have something to do with instructing Fitch on how to use his heart to



command dark creature attacks.

Han Shuo noted quite a few obstacles in the surroundings as he walked over, carefully avoiding all of them as he moved towards Fitch and Fanny.

Just as he was about to reach Fanny and Fitch, Fitch suddenly awoke from his idiotic stupor and turned his head slightly. When he saw that it was Han Shuo, a hint of unconcealed disgust appeared in Fitch's eyes.

Fitch followed that up with a movement of his staff, and two lines of an incantation in a low voice. Some of the obstacles on the ground suddenly seemed to be alive, as some withered, broken, white bones came hurtling towards Han Shuo's butt. Some ropes also tightened onto the bones and came flying with them, seeking to entangle Han Shuo like a snake.

Han Shuo's body was a bit weaker than normal after the events of last night. His panicked dance of evasion was a bit messy, was finally tripped by a rope that suddenly appeared and stumbled towards Fitch and Fanny.

At this moment, Fanny was still concentrating her mental strength on directing the dark creature's attacks, and her mouth kept summarizing her actions. Although her ears caught a few sounds, she paid them no heed.

Seeing that he was about to fall onto Fitch and Fanny, Han Shuo's still reached out wildly for something to stabilize himself even though his heart was calm, but at this moment, a trace of a cold smile tugged at Fitch's lips. He raised his staff slightly and aimed it towards the falling Han Shuo, obviously up to no good.

Panicking inside now as well, Han Shuo forcefully twisted his body to the left in mid air, trying to avoid Fitch's attack. When his body started falling towards Fanny, the results of Han Shuo's magic training came to bear as his body miraculously stopped after sucking in his waist and pushing out with his stomach.

But, Han Shuo didn't manage to retract his randomly flailing right arm in time, and it landed on Fanny's pert, well rounded butt. The ecstasy of supple, tender, well-filled out curve immediately traveled the point of contact between Han Shuo and Fanny, back to his brain.

In curious coincidence, Han Shuo actually gave a light pinch, before realizing what he was doing and backing up violently. He understood the insanity of his actions just now and was extremely frightened, thinking that there was no way Fanny would forgive him. Why had he pinched her butt cheek – even though it had felt wondrous!

As he practically flew in retreat, Han Shuo looked at Fitch, who glaring back at Han Shuo with eyes spitting fire and a body trembling in rage. It was as if Han Shuo had committed something terrible such as murdering Fitch's entire family. Fanny also exclaimed in shock and immediately ripped off the black cloth covering her eyes.

Fanny is never going to forgive me now. Shit. Shit. Han Shuo thought.

Pa pa! Two slaps. Fitch had been furiously staring at Han Shuo when two red palm prints appeared on his face. Fanny was enraged, and stared at Fitch with killing intent, her lofty breasts heaving and she raged, "Damned Fitch, how dare you take advantage and violate me!"

## Chapter 21: It really wasn't me

"I, I didn't! It was Bryan!" Fitch was aghast and loudly protested his innocence.

Pa pa!

Another two slaps and Fitch's cheeks were now puffed up. Fanny stared at Fitch in a towering rage as she bit off her words, "How dare you make excuses. Bryan is such an honest person. How could he have committed such a foul act? It must've been you."

Bryan was at a loss for words as he gloated inwardly. He hastily painted a picture of honest, dumb innocence on his face as he looked at Fitch and Fanny. He smiled dully, "What's wrong?"

"Master Fanny, it really wasn't me!" Fitch was suddenly the most wronged man in the world as he clutched his cheeks and protested loudly.

"Stop lying. Get out! Now!" Fanny wore an expression of exasperation that iron wouldn't improve and become steel (Chinese expression of wishing someone would improve) and replied heatedly.

Fitch's face was sore and saw that Fanny was ready to erupt with rage at any moment. He knew that any explanation would be of no use, and was deathly afraid that Fanny would strike out again if he sent her up a wall. He smiled bitterly and nodded, heading outside the training fields with a face full of dejection.

When he passed by Bryan, Fitch paused and glared at Han Shuo viciously for a few moments, gritting his teeth, and saying softly, "Bastard."

Han Shuo feigned complete innocence towards Fitch's hate and even smiled honestly at him in a friendly, kind gesture. "Eh? How come you suddenly got fat?"

Fitch was infuriated and he turned his face away in resentment, after glaring at Han Shuo one more time. He quickly bypassed the obstacles in his way and disappeared outside the door in the blink of an eye.

"Bryan, what are you doing here?" Master Fanny's anger abated as soon

as Fitch left, and she posed a question to Han Shuo.

“Cleaning.” Han Shuo went to do his own thing in the corner of the training field. He picked up a broom and prepared to clean up the area a bit to get it ready for a subsequent round of necromancy students.

“Oh I see. Oh right, how’s your back feeling? When your injuries have healed, I want to take a closer look at what’s going on with you. It’s incredible that an Agony of the Soul spell could allow you to gain mental strength.” Fanny was quite affable when faced with Han Shuo, conversing with him peacefully and helping him clean up the obstacles on the ground with no haughty attitude at all.

“Much, much better. Oh right, Master Fanny, can you not tell the school authorities what happened last night?” Han Shuo absentmindedly swept up broken bones and dust, and took a sniff of the right hand that had touched Fanny’s butt when he had a moment.

A faint, delicate fragrance emanated from the fingers of his right hand, making his heart lurch. His eyes immediately gazed strangely at Fanny’s pert butt, which happened to be not too far away. Fanny’s back was arched slightly as she bent down to clear the obstacles, further accentuating the mesmerizing curve of her butt. It was as if it contained a hypnotizing power of temptation.

Fanny was a bit startled by Han Shuo’s words and quickly straightened her lithe body. She turned to look at Han Shuo and asked in astonishment. “Why? Hmm, Bryan you’re not concentrating... you’re stepping on the broom.”

He hadn’t expected Fanny to abruptly turn around. Han Shuo had a guilty conscience and hastily moved his foot off the broom, smiling dumbly afterwards. “Carey and Borg are actually good people. If you tell the school authorities what happened, they’ll be fired. Life will be difficult if their families don’t have the silver they earn anymore.”

Fanny gazed at Han Shuo in amazement and slightly crooked a dainty eyebrow. She smiled after a moment and said, “Bryan, you’re always so kind. You speak on their behalf even after they’ve bullied you. Alright, I’ll

forget it, since even you, the victim, pleads so. I won't put them in a difficult place. You are the key to my experiments, remember to tell me if anyone bullies you in the future!"

Kind! Han Shuo was at a loss for words internally. Sure, what he was doing now was "kind", otherwise he wouldn't have the opportunity to blackmail Carey and Borg into doing his duties. If the two of them left, then everything would fall onto his and Jack's shoulders. Who would give a crap about what happened to the latter?

As Han Shuo was thinking his random thoughts, Fanny looked at Han Shuo suspiciously and spoke again. "Bryan, I don't think you're that crazy. Otherwise, how could you say what you've just said?"

Momentarily dumfounded, Han Shuo's heart skipped a beat. He hastily scratched his head and replied with some embarrassment, "Eh, I sometimes feel like my mind is dull and foggy. I don't know what I do after that!"

"I see. Looks like there are some negative aftereffects of the Agony of the Soul on your body. Hmm, don't worry. I'll give you a close inspection when your back heals. I'll definitely cure all your weird ailments. It's almost time for me to lead students in the next round of experiments. I'm going to get back and get ready. You can clean up the rest!" Fanny chanted an incantation after speaking to Han Shuo, sending the zombie warriors in the training field back to the other dimension, and then left in a whirl.

Soon after Fanny had left, Han Shuo left the ruins of the training field and left to find Carey and Borg as well. He dictated arrogantly to them, "Don't worry, I've already taken care of your business. The two of you can now go clean up the training field!"

Carey and Borg were happily astonished, and ran off willy nilly with mops and brooms, overjoyed to mop up behind Han Shuo after showering a round of gratitude on him.

Han Shuo had no pressing matters to deal with after leaving the training field. He became curious about the contents of the jade box after recalling the events of yesterday, and truly wanted to learn what the ball was. There

was no way that he could ask anyone else about this, and thus decided to head to the dark major library to see if there were any records of the ball.

Each major had its own individual library within the Babylon Academy of Magic. The range of topics contained within the books of each library were exceedingly diverse, and held all the wisdom and descriptions of the major's collective knowledge bank. Generally speaking, libraries were not open to the public, and there were strict regulations regarding access for students from other majors.

Using Jack's cleaning duties as an excuse, Han Shuo swaggered into the dark major library with a brush in hand.

"Bryan, what are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be cleaning the training field at this time?" Little fatty Jack was putting books away and was startled into a soft question when he saw Han Shuo walk in with a brush.

"Heh heh, Carey and Borg, those two idiots, will be the ones cleaning up the training field in the future. I'm here on serious business today!" Han Shuo smiled and picked up a random book in a relaxed manner. He glanced at it and put it back after realizing that it was a book on the foundational basics of dark magic.

"Carey and Borg are cleaning the training field for you. ...how is that possible? Eh, is it because they're scared of you after the beating you gave them at the training field yesterday?" Little fatty Jack had an expression of astonishment, but then remembered Han Shuo's performance yesterday and looked at him with a bit of fear. "Oh right Bryan, what happened to you yesterday? You seemed like a different person. Even though we're really close, even I was really afraid of you yesterday!"

Han Shuo laughed lightly as he put one hand on Jack's shoulder. "That depends on who. If someone is making life difficult for me, I won't let him have an easy one either. Heh heh, with our relationship, there's no way that I would beat you up. Oh right Jack, where are the books regarding magical items in the dark major library?"

"Mm, second bookcase in the back. Why do you ask?" Jack pointed

behind Han Shuo and asked in confusion.

“Nothing much, helping you clean?” Han Shuo smiled and walked towards the bookcase of magical item references.

“But Bryan, I’ve already dusted off that bookcase!” “Then I’ll dust it off again for you!”

When he reached the appropriate bookcase, Han Shuo started from the last row and started flipping through a book, carelessly throwing his brush to the side.

When he had been observing the jade box last night, Han Shuo’s mental strength flowed curiously to the ball inside. This allowed him to vaguely sense the magical currents within the ball. The Han Shuo of now wasn’t a complete rookie when it came to magical knowledge, and naturally understood that magical currents indicated that the ball was some kind of magical object. This was why he came searching for the ball’s origins within the library.

Unfortunately, Han Shuo realized after perusing most of the books on magical items, that these contained only simple descriptions of ordinary magical staffs, robes, and jewelry. It wasn’t what he wanted.

He cleaned up the bookcase with some dejection and resignation, no longer holding out hope for answers here. He then moved to the bookcases holding books on necromancy.

Since he had made his way to the library, he couldn’t very well leave empty handed. He should bring at least one book back for further study, Han Shuo mused as he started browsing through the books. The books at the top of the bookcases dealt with higher level magic, he wouldn’t understand them even he took them home. Therefore, he turned his attention to the lower level.

A book of “The Description of Dark Creatures” caught his eye. He flipped through a few pages and discovered that it recorded some of the particulars of summoning dark creatures.

Happy at heart, Han Shuo immediately went to find Jack and waved “The

Description of Dark Creatures” at Jack. He chuckled, “Jack, I’m taking this book back for further study. Cover for me, don’t let other people find out.”

He didn’t wait for Jack to respond and happily stuffed the book into his clothes, grabbed the brush he’d discarded earlier, and left the library.



# Chapter 22: Earn Some Spending Money

Time flew. Half a month had passed by in a blink of an eye.

This half of a month was one of the the most relaxing periods of time that Han Shuo had ever had. The cleaning duties that had originally belonged to him were taken care of by Borg and Carey. And because Han Shuo's back was injured, Fanny didn't come looking for him to conduct more research.

Han Shuo learned from Jack that even Fitch had gone in again to give the adept mage qualification trials another go. Therefore, this major enemy was temporarily not a threat.

Ever since Han Shuo's shameless confession of love at the bottom of the trap, Lisa's attitude towards Han Shuo had undergone a drastic change. Not only did she not pick on Han Shuo anymore, but she often protected him, forbidding other students to practice necromancy magic on him.

Given the situation, apart from eating, sleeping, drinking and showering, Han Shuo spent all the rest of his free time on practicing magic and studying "The Foundations of Necromancy" and "The Descriptions of Dark Creatures".

To be honest, the injuries on Han Shuo's back had long since healed, thanks to him practicing magic. There wasn't even a scar left anymore.

The current Han Shuo had grown another two centimeters, and was now 170 cm. Thanks to practicing magic and sufficient nutrition from rations, his previous weak-beyond-belief body had started to slowly firm up and increase in strength. There were even muscles forming on his chest and arms.

Unbeknownst to anyone else, Han Shuo's body and strength had slowly changed without anyone knowing. He had also progressed to the crucial point of training for the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire". When Han Shuo circulated his magical yuan, he could proceed according to the spell's instructions, and bring his magical yuan to the palms of his hands.

Whenever Han Shuo started up the “Mystical Glacial Spellfire” and circulated his magical yuan to his left and right palm, he could feel that the center of his palms respectively turn glacially cold and searingly hot. The surface of his skin would be tinged faint purple and red, causing the center of his hands to look quite odd.

Han Shuo didn't dare do anything rash with the weird jade box in the meantime. He was deathly afraid that last time's situation would happen again. He was temporarily unwilling to take that kind of risk again before he got a handle on what the round ball was and its purpose.

Thanks to studying “The Descriptions of Dark Creatures” over the past two weeks, Han Shuo had a much clearer understanding of the particulars of summoning specific dark creatures. He also understood how to communicate with them, and how to send them back to the other dimension.

However, even though the incantation for sending a summoned dark creature back to the other dimension was recorded in “The Description of Dark Creatures”, and Han Shuo believed that he was absolutely capable of doing so with his current level of mental strength, he didn't dare take action. This was because he wasn't sure if he could summon the little skeleton again if he sent it back to the other dimension.

The black skeleton with seven bone spurs was the result of Han Shuo's painstaking refinement according to the methods of refining a demonic treasure. Not only was it superior in all aspects to ordinary skeletons, but it had a scary immunity to light magic.

Han Shuo had spent his days and nights with the little skeleton during this time. It had also helped Han Shuo greatly, causing Han Shuo to grow attached to it. He was worried that if he sent it to the other dimension, he would lose it forever if he was unable to summon it next time.

It was because of this concern that although Han Shuo was confident he would be able to send it back to the other dimension, he still hesitated to do so. He'd rather have the little skeleton live under his bed, resolutely keeping it even when that meant running the risk of discovery by others.

The little black skeleton was lazily lying in a wooden bucket, its bones as black as ink and glowing with a faint haze. In the past two weeks, Han Shuo had often injected magical yuan into the bucket, continuing to refine it according to the Magical Yin Concentration Matrix.

Under Han Shuo's continual refinement, the little skeleton's body became more and more agile and strong. Its bone dagger was actually even stronger than ordinary knives and swords. Han Shuo had once experimented with a piece of broken bone, and discovered that the broken bone had been immediately cut in half when the bone dagger had sliced down.

As the little skeleton underwent changes, so did Han Shuo benefit from training in the solid realm. His body also received a mysterious makeover.

The only thing was, Han Shuo had still been unable to breakthrough this demonic realm level. He carefully went through old fart Chu Cang Lan's memories, adding some of his reflections on what had happened recently, and came to one conclusion – if he wanted to quickly reach perfection in the solid realm, “breaking things” was the most effective and efficient way.

Whenever Han Shuo had been severely beaten, or suffered injuries on his body, his body would quickly repair itself through magic training. And everytime after recovery, his body would be more stronger than before. His skin and bones would be more resilient. It was only after damage and injury that his progress in the solid realm would pick up.

When he thought through this point, Han Shuo gave an involuntary ironic smile. This kind of magic training was death by masochism! But since he had started on this path, he had to find a way to quickly breakthrough the solid realm in order to gain more strength and power.

On this day, Han Shuo's figure appeared at the doors of the martial arts school of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

After a few days of gathering information, Han Shuo understood that a place for cultivating warriors and knights existed within this school. However, the warriors and knights were trained separately. The ranks of the warrior students were mostly filled with commoners Their training

mostly consisted of practicing their fighting aura and being instilled with notions of loyalty to their liege.

The students within the school of knights mostly came from noble families, and was a training field for the powerful families and military forces, as well as the royal sons of the empire. These students hailed from uncommon origins and had varying degrees of influence within their families. Not only did they practice their fighting aura, but they were also here to learn the manners and graces of the nobility, strategies of war and art of command.

These students absorbed a variety of knowledge within the school of knights, all for the purpose of obtaining a good opportunity in the future, whether in their family or within the empire. The families of these knight students were all rather wealthy, and on the path of becoming a senior knight, did not bat an eye spending money to hire a few commoners for use in practicing battle and martial arts techniques.

A few commoners who felt they possessed tough bodies would take the pummeling in return for money and rich rewards. Even a few warrior students would become willing human targets in return for money.

However, it wasn't an easy task to earn this money. Knight students would sometimes miscalculate and even beat a few human targets to death. But because this was a mutually agreed, both sides willing transaction that the knight students had paid for, no one cared if the human targets were beaten to death. They were asking for it, after all.

Han Shuo had come here to become one of the human targets. But he wasn't in it for the money, he wanted to temper his body in order to breakthrough the solid realm.

Numerous human targets stood within a spacious lobby. Each was strong and fit, all wearing the grubby clothing of poor commoners. Han Shuo concentrated his attention for a moment and discovered some warrior students mixed into the crowd. Some had been drawn in by the academy's reputation, and some were students from the warrior school.

"You're an errand boy for the academy. But your body isn't very strong,

and you're not a warrior. You're asking for death coming here. Little fellow, let me advise you to avoid pursuing this pay, otherwise you could really be beaten to death!" A thin old man said to Han Shuo as he looked over from the doors at the front of the lobby.

Old man Jeff was fifty some years old, and in the same occupation as Han Shuo. He wore an errand boy's clothes and was in charge of registering the human targets. He had some misgivings about the frailty of Han Shuo's body and so tried to persuade Han Shuo out of kindness.

"No worries, Mister Jeff please register me. I'd like to try!" Han Shuo looked at Jeff and spoke sincerely.

"Since you insist, I'll register you. Ai. Do you think this is easy money? If you really are beaten to death, don't blame me for not warning you!" Upon seeing Han Shuo was still insistent after a few attempts, and that others behind in the line were impatiently calling out, Jack gave up trying to convince Han Shuo and agreed, putting down "Bryan" in the register.

A few other human targets looked at him oddly when Han Shuo walked in through the doors. The eyes of most were filled with disdain, and the kindhearted few wore expressions of pity and regret, even trying to convince Han Shuo not to try.

Although Han Shuo's body was a bit stronger than before due to practicing magic, he was still quite a ways off from the burly men whose arms were thicker than his thighs. Bryan had been all skin and bones like a skinny monkey, and Han Shuo was only marginally stronger in comparison.

"Listen to me, leave while you still can, otherwise you'll surely be beaten to death." As Han Shuo took in his surroundings, a thin, twenty some year old youth walked over to Han Shuo and tried to persuade him.

This youth wore the clothes of a warrior student. Even though his body didn't look too well built either, he was undoubtedly much stronger than those who looked strong on the outside, but hadn't practiced any martial arts techniques simply because he was a warrior student.

"Thank you, I want to try!" Han Shuo flashed a friendly smile and spoke

lightly as he nodded at the youth.

“I’m called Cal, and I come here often to earn some extra money. Even though I’m a sergeant knight, I’ve still suffered serious injuries before. I’ve seen too many who were beaten to death because they wanted to earn some money, so I hope you can take my advice. Leave while you still can, otherwise you’ll truly regret it!” Cal looked at Han Shuo with sincerity, dissuading Han Shuo with a face of genuity.

Han Shou smiled and shook his head, “I’m called Bryan. Very nice to meet you Cal. I’m grateful for your good intentions, but I must try.”

Cal gave an involuntary sigh upon seeing Han Shuo’s determination, and shook his head without saying anything. Cal’s gaze however, was full of pity, as if he felt that Han Shuo was surely dead without a doubt.

# Chapter 23: This kid's a bit strong

"Alright, our noble future knights are coming this way. Good luck!" Jeff suddenly yelled loudly as Han Shuo and Cal were talking.

More than ten colorfully dressed knight students wearing exquisite swords walked in through the lobby doors following Jeff's announcement. Most of them were teenage boys, with an exceedingly few amount of young girls.

They cast arrogant looks in judgment, sizing up the human targets in the lobby. The warriors in the lobby were the first to be noticed. These guys had much more strength than the average person, and would be the most beneficial in terms of real combat experience. They were thus naturally the first to draw attention.

The group of warriors that Cal headed up were the first to be targeted by the students. As the crowd of students haggled over an acceptable price, the group of warriors were led away for practice at the training field. Cal was one of them, and he cast a regretful glance from afar at Han Shuo as he left.

Warriors were the strongest out of all the human targets, and the most useful for knight students in terms of actual combat practice. If knight students wished to hire them, then the amount they would have to pay would naturally be far above that of ordinary, burly commoner.

After the warrior human targets, who had been mixed throughout the lobby, had been hired away as first pick, those remaining were all commoners. Of those, the ones who were brawny and stocky became the first to be selected.

Some flexed their huge muscles, showing off bodybuilding poses that screamed I'm-so-strong-my-muscles-are-awesome. They wore fawning smiles as they looked at the future knights, hoping to be selected and receive rich compensation in return.

Han Shuo's body was unremarkable to begin with, and being completely obscured by a crowd of tall and strong muscle men, he was taken even less

seriously. Han Shuo started to become secretly anxious as he saw the knight students pick their targets and leave one by one.

The three muscle men next to him were standing in three different directions, almost completely covering him. The knight students probably couldn't even see him. As Han Shuo fretted, he also tried to find a way to stand out.

"Hi, big guy, excuse me!" Han Shuo patted the two meter mountain of flesh ahead of him and flashed a friendly smile.

The brawny man's skin was copper-colored, and his back was a sturdy frame. Muscles rippled through his two meter tall height, like a bodybuilder who Han Shuo had seen before.

When he heard Han Shuo speak, the man turned around and glared at Han Shuo with a vicious look. His right bicep muscle abruptly curled and tensed, forming a small mountain of flesh. He then laughed coldly in pride, and turned his head without another word.

What the, so what if you have big muscles! Han Shuo also gave a cold laugh internally and reached out with his left hand. He placed it on the man's waist, and suddenly pushed forward hard.

Dondondon. The big muscle man stumbled and staggered forward three steps following the inrush of the force from Han Shuo's strong push.

The lobby was already extremely crowded thanks to the presence of many mountains of flesh. People around him were shoved against their will when this person suddenly came crashing in. The area in front of Han Shuo immediately became quite chaotic.

"Damnit, Daniel, do you want to break the rules?" The other mountains of flesh, that had been body slammed by the mountain of flesh called Daniel, roared furiously after steadying himself.

"It wasn't me! It was the kid behind me!" Daniel protested his innocence to the burly man beside him, and immediately glared at Han Shuo ferociously, saying coldly, "Kid, do you want to die early?"

At this moment, Han Shuo had already taken advantage of the situation



to slip out and occupy one of the better positions on the other side of the lobby. Upon hearing Daniel's words, Han Shuo gave a cold laugh and also stretched out his right hand, making the same bodybuilding pose that Daniel had just made. He flexed his biceps and made an I'm-so-strong gesture, cocking an eyebrow and gazing at Daniel provocatively.

A few additional knight students walked in suddenly and was about to pick the human targets in the back. They all halted their motions of hiring and looked over in interest, when they realized that there seemed to be something interesting going on.

Han Shuo had arrogantly struck such an outrageous pose because he had seen these new knight students walk in. Based on Han Shuo's body condition, it would be a bit difficult to be chosen out of the crowd. Trying to gain attention with his body and self boasting would also most likely not amount to much. The fastest shortcut was to use tyrannical strength to rout a mountain of flesh. Only then would the knight students change their minds about him.

Except, even though Han Shuo had struck a cocky, provocative pose, he was still an idiot in the eyes of others. If a mountain of flesh like Daniel had made such a gesture, it would have naturally been quite intimidating.

But, when a 170 cm tall and thin Han Shuo strutted arrogantly amongst so many mountains of flesh, one could only say – ridiculous, courting death!

“Ha, kid since you seek death, I'll send you on your way!” Daniel did not immediately erupt into a full blown rage when faced with Han Shuo's provocation, but was rather delighted. He laughed loudly, raised an arm thicker than Han Shuo's thigh and grabbed for Han Shuo.

In the lobby, fights often broke out between human targets seeking to distinguish themselves and attract the attentions of a rich and powerful knight student. This was a common sight. Daniel was naturally happy instead of angry when he saw that Han Shuo's reckless provocation was playing right into his plans. He would be able to use this kid to prove his aggressiveness and ferocity in front of the knight students.

Except, muscular and fierce people were usually all brawn and no brains. Daniel had given no thought to how much strength Han Shuo would've needed, with his body condition, in order to push Daniel forcefully from the piles of flesh and even cause those he'd crashed into to stagger as well.

The errand boy in charge of registering names, Jeff, couldn't bear to see Daniel reach towards Han Shuo and called out involuntarily, "Daniel, he's an errand boy for the students. You can't harm him seriously."

"I will!" Daniel smiled in response and didn't slow his right hand, still going towards Han Shuo.

A few human targets with good intentions and some of the kinder knight students winced in anticipation. Some of the young female knight students even screamed in fear.

Just as Daniel's meaty hand was about to fall upon Han Shuo's head, Han Shuo's body suddenly shifted from the position he had been standing in, causing Daniel's incoming hand to grasp at this air.

Han Shuo also laughed weirdly at this moment, as if mocking Daniel's incompetence. He stuck out his left arm again, and curled his left bicep with the same posture. His right finger pointed at the small muscle that had flexed on his bicep and nodded towards Daniel. His meaning was apparently even though he hadn't said a word. "See, I'm strong!"

"Ah, this kid is really cocky!"

"Provocation, absolute provocation!"

"Hah, interesting fellow!"

"..."

A stream of exclamations came out of mouths of the human targets and knight students. When they saw that Han Shuo hadn't been caught, they took things one step further and struck ridiculous poses themselves, further heightening general interest. Even a few knight students, who had been negotiating prices with some other human targets, temporarily halted their conversations and focused their attention on Han Shuo.

“Kid, how dare you insult me. I’m gonna get you today!” Daniel’s face burned bright red, like a spontaneously enraged bull. The knight students standing around him were his sources of fortune. Daniel’s fury was utterly inflamed by such naked humiliation. Judging from the way he looked, he had most likely long forgotten Jeff’s words of caution.

As Daniel spoke, his eyes spat out fire and his hands formed fists of iron as he glared vehemently at Han Shuo. He brought them crashing down towards Han Shuo, wanting to violently damage Han Shuo’s body instead of grabbing him.

To outsiders, this punch was worlds apart from Daniel’s previous action, whether in terms of speed or strength. This indicated that Daniel was truly furious this time. If Han Shuo was really hit, he would be gravely injured, if not dead outright.

Those who had previously paid attention to the proceedings out of the kindness of their heart started to worry for Han Shuo again.

Seeing that the attack was about to reach him, Han Shuo pushed off his heels and twisted his body, somehow miraculously dodging Daniel’s iron fists attack. When Daniel struck empty air, his body followed through the action and stumbled forward a good distance. The human targets in his path, who had been watching the show, all scrambled backwards in panic, fearful of being embroiled in the mess.

Han Shuo on the other hand had created circles in front of his chest with his two arms, pointing his fists upwards and puffing out his chest. With a trace of a disdainful smile at the corner of his lips, he had once again struck a provocative bodybuilder pose.

A string of astounded noises suddenly emitted from the onlookers. The knight students originally had the attitude of watching a good show started unconsciously treating Han Shuo seriously. The first evasion could perhaps be explained as a fluke, but Han Shuo still successfully dodged Daniel’s attacks after the latter had increased the speed and strength of his iron fists. This could no longer be explained by luck.

As everyone was marveling in astonishment, Daniel was like a crazy

violent beast. His eyes bloodshot, his body shot forward again, like the wind accompanied by a roar of rage, reaching out with both hands and seeking to smash Han Shuo into pulp.

Miracles kept materializing as Han Shuo kept avoiding Daniel's attacks. He was as cunning as a fish, and his speed exceedingly swift as well. He even had the breathing space to continuously strike all sorts of bizarre and unique bodybuilding poses.

Han Shuo's actions were absolutely a naked provocation, an outrageous flaunting!

"Wow, he's so strong. Those insulting poses never repeat, I've never seen anything like it!" A female knight exclaimed in surprise.

"This kid's a bit strong!" A male knight student exclaimed in surprise.

"Daniel's in a spot of trouble this time!" A mountain of flesh exclaimed in surprise.

"....."

The entire lobby was in an uproar!

# Chapter 24: First bucket of gold

“Damnit, I’m going to kill you!” Daniel roared explosively. He was thoroughly crazed, and began to attack Han Shuo fiercely, as if he was going to drag Han Shuo down to hell with him.

But Han Shuo was like a sturdy canoe in the middle of a furious ocean. It seemed like it would capsize at any moment, but it somehow resolutely clung on unharmed.

By now, everyone fully acknowledged Han Shuo’s evasion speed. No one thought that Han Shuo’s previous dodges had been out of luck now. Those who had been worried about him now wore carefree smiles. Even Jeff crossed his arms and was laughing merrily as he looked over.

Finally, Daniel ran out of energy and stopped automatically, panting heavily. He angrily glared at Han Shuo, with sweat dripping down like rain, roaring, “Kid, take one of my hits if you have the guts to. What’s the use in only dodging?”

Daniel had only meant to vent an angry complaint, even he didn’t think that Han Shuo would take a hit, but surprisingly, Han Shuo stopped his various bodybuilding poses and had the presence of mind to nod at Daniel, smiling, “No problem.”

Everyone revisited their opinions of Han Shuo after this response, with many displaying perplexed expressions. Han Shuo’s body was thin and small, so it was understandable that he was nimble and agile, but no one believed that the frail Han Shuo, with no fighting aura, could hold his own in terms of strength against Daniel, an obvious muscle man.

Even Daniel himself was gobsmacked by Han Shuo’s response. He swiftly recovered and laughed wildly, “Good, good. You’re the one who wants to die. You can’t blame me!”

Daniel had always been proud of his strong body and ferocious strength. This had formed the basis of his earned power. Although it rankled his pride, Daniel could grudgingly accept that his speed and nimbleness didn’t measure up to Han Shuo’s. Now that a chance to display his awesome

strength was in front of him, it was up to him to see if he could wipe away the previous humiliation with one blow. Daniel was naturally going to take full advantage of this opportunity.

Gathering up his strength, Daniel propelled his right fist forward. The veins on his arm popped out as he increased his speed and strength to the limit, bring his fist crashing down on Han Shuo.

Han Shuo squinted his eyes a bit, a sinister coldness sparkling in their depths. They were like those of a viper, lying in wait for it's prey, giving the feeling of poised cruelty.

As Daniel's fist came flying towards his face, Han Shuo concentrated his magical yuan into his tightly-clenched, right fist and punched outwards in a head-on collision course with Daniel's iron fist.

Pa!

Daniel emitted a devastating scream, like a pig being slaughtered, as a crisp sound rang out. His entire right arm drooped, and the right fist, that had being tightly clenched moments earlier, was now curled in the shape of a chicken's claw, shaking madly with his right arm.

The severeness within Han Shuo's eyes faded away, and a harmless smile reappeared on his face. He retracted the right fist that he'd just thrust out and shook his right arm slightly, looking at his fist in shock. He muttered to himself, "Eh? I really took the hit?"

Daniel had put all his strength into that hit despite seeing Han Shuo's weak body. This wasn't simply teaching Han Shuo a lesson, but wanting to give him a death sentence, but the current Han Shuo was no longer a timid coward who dumbly accepted everything that flew his way. Although he sometimes played dumb, he naturally wouldn't be kind to someone who wanted to actually kill him.

The bizarre outcome of their two fists meeting had completely stunned the lobby full of knight students and human targets. A few of the nearby commoner human targets looked at Han Shuo now with just a trace of fear in their gazes. The people next to him automatically shied away, leaving the prime spot for him.

All the knight students were extremely excited and put their heads together in discussion. Some even suspected that Han Shuo was one of the rare barbarians on the Continent, or an orc that had taken human form.

Daniel was still wailing in pain as his right arm trembled continuously. Everyone understood what that crisp crack just now had meant: Daniel's right arm was most likely destroyed and useless.

The old errand boy Jeff looked at Daniel regretfully and spoke soft words of comfort, "Daniel, I'm sorry that this happened, but I'm afraid that your current body condition has disqualified you from staying here."

Daniel involuntarily looked at Han Shuo in resentment upon hearing Jeff's words. He then brushed past Han Shuo and walked out of the lobby. Too many previous injuries had resulted from fights, thus a few rules had been laid down. Daniel understood his place and position. Add to that his clear understanding that he was no match for Han Shuo, his only option was to leave early.

When Daniel had left, Jeff gave a great yell. "Alright alright, everyone can continue your negotiations!"

Multiple knight students walked towards Han Shuo as soon as Jeff called out. All of them had fixed their gazes on him and were shouting, "One gold coin!" "Two gold coins!" "Three gold coins!"

Under normal circumstances, according to their respective strength, a commoner human target could be hired for student practice for ten to fifty silvers. Warriors with high potential could be hired for one to five gold coins depending on their level.

The two or three gold coins that these people were offering were amazingly high amounts. Although Han Shuo had displayed his power just now, he still wasn't a warrior. A stronger warrior would have been able to use his fighting aura to deal a single, fatal blow to Daniel in the fight just now. Therefore, a price of two or three golds was an incredible price for a commoner human target.

Han Shuo had been ready to accept when the first student had called out one gold coin, but when the subsequent price of two gold coins had

appeared, Han Shuo shut his mouth with an audible click and awaited higher offers.

Although he wasn't here for money, Han Shuo fully understood that money was just as important in this world as it was on Earth. He would definitely not settle for earning only one gold coin when he could earn two.

The knight students all walked up to Han Shuo and called out increasingly higher bids. However, Han Shuo was still a commoner and not a warrior with surpassing strength. Therefore, these people mostly stopped after two or three gold coins.

"Five gold coins!"

Han Shuo's patience had won a large sum for him. A handsome Sergeant Knight with golden curls, one who looked kind and humble, offered a price higher than the others.

Most stopped bidding as soon as his offer of five gold coins appeared. They looked at him askance, and one of them said, "Lawrence, a Sergeant Warrior is only worth five gold coins. Although this kid's a bit strong, he's definitely not worth five gold. Isn't your price a bit high?"

Lawrence smiled and said placidly, "It's a bit high, but we've come a bit late and all of the good warriors have been hired anyway. There aren't many left, so we can only choose him."

The others agreed as they pondered his words. Out of all the human targets left in the lobby, Han Shuo's strength was most likely the highest. If the warriors who had been here earlier were still here, then perhaps Han Shuo wouldn't have been worth this much, but now that he was the strongest here, the knight students didn't have much choice. People were also impatient to find a sparring partner, thus further increasing Han Shuo's worth.

"How does five gold coins sound to this amazing friend?" Lawrence smiled at Han Shuo and asked peacefully.

Han Shuo realized that no one would continue to bid higher after



looking around, and then proceeded to size up Lawrence as the strongest out of those present. He nodded, "I accept!"

"My name is Lawrence and here's five gold coins. I hope you can help me in our training later!" Lawrence walked towards Han Shuo and took five gold coins out of a colorful pouch.

Han Shuo was a bit emotional as he accepted the five gold coins. Bryan had been sold to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force for five gold coins back in the day. These five gold coins he'd earned for sparring with a knight student were enough to buy back Bryan's life! Five gold coins was a heavenly price for Han Shuo's current position; it was enough for his freedom!

"I'm called Bryan, nice to meet you." Han Shuo smiled urbanely at his fortune god Lawrence after he'd put the gold coins into his own ragged money pouch.

"Come with me and let me see if you're worth those five gold coins!" Lawrence walked out decisively with Han Shuo following close behind.

The training fields of the school of martial arts were quite similar to those of the school of magic. However, the corners were filled with obstacles instead of magical items. There was only Han Shuo and Lawrence in the spacious training field. The ground was tiled with rough, hard rock and the surface was extremely hard to the touch.

Lawrence changed into an athletic, white training uniform after entering the venue. He disarmed his sword, placing it to the side. Only then did he look at Han Shuo with some interest, smiling, "Those five gold coins aren't earned easily. Are you ready?"

Han Shuo inwardly thought that his body was worlds apart in toughness and strength from the original Bryan, thanks to the forging from the magical yuan. Add to that the magical yuan's curious negating effect against fighting aura, and he wasn't that afraid of Lawrence damaging his body with fighting aura. There wasn't much to prepare, so he nodded at Lawrence.

"Remember, you're sparring and thus can only dodge or block, but

cannot attack!” It seemed that Lawrence could tell that Han Shuo was new at this, and issued some reminders before beginning. He only started slowly walking towards Han Shuo when he was satisfied that Han Shuo understood.

Just as Lawrence was about to reach Han Shuo’s side, his speed suddenly increased like lightning. His empty left hand was like a sharp sword being unsheathed, and it came rushing towards Han Shuo’s chest. His fingers were arranged together and pointed towards Han Shuo.

Due to training his fighting aura, a knight’s strength and speed were completely beyond the realm of an ordinary burly commoner if he activated his fighting aura. Lawrence’s onrushing hand was more than ten times the speed and strength of Claude’s from earlier.

Han Shuo’s eyes lost focus as he saw that Lawrence’s hand was already near his chest. His heart spasmed in fright as his magical yuan started churning quickly. Han Shuo abruptly twisted his body and dodged to the side.

Lawrence slashed open the front of Han Shuo’s shirt with a clear ripping sound. Han Shuo felt a cold draft on his chest and saw his shirt flying away in the breeze. He felt relieved that he had managed to dodgd in time.

However, a large amount of force surged into his lower abdomen while Han Shou was still inwardly celebrating. His body involuntarily staggered backwards as he sat down on the hard rock. His intestines and stomach felt like they’d been smashed together and it hurt quite a bit.

He lifted his head to see that Lawrence’s extended foot was still halted in midair. The student was looking at Han Shuo with a bantering look, “Bryan, I pulled my punches this time, and didn’t keep attacking. I won’t be as kind next time.”

Lawrence’s kick just now had been infused with fighting aura. However, Lawrence had only employed his fighting aura to increase his body and attack speed, and had kept it contained within his body. He hadn’t projected the fighting aura into Han Shuo’s body for further damage.

And it was because of this that the magical yuan within Han Shuo’s body

hadn't reacted. His physical body had taken the collision that had been filled with a crazy amount of strength. Even his improved body had taken damage.

He nodded with his brows drawn tightly together. Han Shuo gritted his teeth against the pain from his stomach and stood up from the ground. He looked at Lawrence coldly, "I'll be more careful from now on. Again!"

# Chapter 25: Pain and Happiness

Lawrence looked at Han Shuo with some surprise, then smiled and said, “very good”. His body abruptly moved again, and he appeared in front of Han Shuo in the blink of an eye. He violently kicked out with his foot using lightning-like speed, still aiming for Han Shuo’s stomach.

Han Shuo had already taken a hefty kick to the stomach at this point in time and was in an exceeding amount of pain. He was well aware that sergeant knight Lawrence’s attack speed and strength was not something that he, someone who hadn’t even surpassed the solid realm of demonic practice, could fully defend against.

But, for some reason, Han Shuo was wholly unafraid, and even felt a bit of eager anticipation. The magical yuan within his body circulated through his abdomen a few times, and he felt a quick abatement of pain. He concentrated like he never had before, and faced Lawrence’s subsequent attacks calmly.

Just as Lawrence’s foot came flying his way, Han Shuo’s feet had already pushed off and he backed up with haste, evading Lawrence’s foot like lightning. However, Lawrence wasn’t surprised in the least and his body didn’t hesitate. He followed his empty kick with a string of punches and kicks, following Han Shuo’s retreat and ferociously continued to attack Han Shuo.

Lawrence was a sergeant level knight, and could increase his body functions beyond a typical muscle man when he circulated his fighting aura to his energy and attack power. Even with Han Shuo’s current agility, he still couldn’t avoid being repeatedly hit. Pilipala sounded continuously, as Han Shuo could only fully protect his face. That left his chest, waist, stomach, arms, and legs to suffer constant hits.

The pain in his body increased as he started being hit multiple times. His evasion speed became more sluggish due to his overall body condition. He was hit with more attacks this way, and towards the end his two legs were as heavy as lead, and each movement required a monumental amount of

effort.

If it wasn't for the fact that Han Shuo had been constantly practicing magic and strengthening his body during this time, then based off Bryan's weak and fragile body, he would've been dead within a minute of Lawrence's storm of attacks.

When he'd faced Claude and Erick, both had sent their fighting aura directly into Han Shuo's body. The wild fighting aura had been enclosed by the magical yuan as soon as it'd entered his body, preventing Han Shuo's body from suffering from too much damage.

Han Shuo hadn't been seriously injured the two times he'd been hit by fighting aura, causing him to slightly overlook the warriors and knight, but now that he'd been subjected to such a thorough beating by Lawrence, Han Shuo finally understood how he'd been completely wrong before.

He hadn't been hurt before purely due to the wondrous effects of the magical yuan. If it wasn't for the magical yuan, then his internal organs would have most likely have been completely destroyed as soon as the fighting aura entered his body. No wonder Claude was so taken aback when Han Shuo hadn't immediately died a grisly death when Claude sent his fighting aura into Han Shuo's body. This also explained why Erick confidently thought that Han Shuo was dead without a doubt, and didn't even bother checking Han Shuo's body.

Lawrence used his fighting aura in a different way and didn't send it directly into Han Shuo's body to wreak havoc on his internal organs. On the contrary, Lawrence used it to increase the speed and strength of his attacks. This prevented the wondrous effects of the magical yuan and forced Han Shuo to passively take the hits with his physical body.

Pa!

The same foot stomped on Han Shuo's stomach again, and Han Shuo staggered backwards in retreat. He finally couldn't handle any more and once more fell heavily to the ground.

The current Han Shuo had two broken ribs and numerous other injuries. Apart from his unharmed face, his entire body had suffered severe hits as

it never had before. Han Shuo struggled with his body and kept trying to stand up, but would wobble back to the ground every time he tried.

Each twist and movement of his body brought him great pain, but Han Shuo actually felt ecstasy at this moment. He could clearly feel that the magical yuan was circulating at a speed much faster than normal, and kept flowing through all his aches and pains, creating a strange, fiery sensation where his bones had been broken and wounds had been opened.

Han Shuo understood that his previous conclusion had been correct. The fastest way to breakthrough the solid realm was to “break things”. The magical yuan’s abnormal circulations now continually repaired his broken body, and reforged his tendons, bones, muscles, and skin over and over again, causing his physical body to become tougher.

Although his body hurt beyond belief, Han Shuo was quite satisfied. He grit his teeth and yelled brokenly while laughing grimly. He finally scrambled to his feet and stared at Lawrence in the eye, “I think our partnership can be continued for a long time.”

Lawrence stopped and stood in front of Han Shuo, frowning as he watched the latter struggle to his feet after falling again and again. As the attacker, Lawrence was well aware of the force of his attacks just now. Even an ordinary companion-at-arms with the benefit of defending with fighting aura would not be able to take the hits like Han Shuo stubbornly did.

What surprised Lawrence the most was that even after suffering these fierce attacks, Han Shuo could still laugh loudly in between screams of pain. Lawrence could hear from Han Shuo’s laughs that the latter truly seemed to be filled with joy. Lawrence thought this was simply too incredible.

When Han Shuo had mentioned a long term partnership, Lawrence was dumbfounded at first, but then smiled lightly. “Bryan, you’re quite interesting, but a long term partnership depends on your body and whether it can handle more attacks. To be honest, I haven’t fully exerted myself today, nor have I used my sword. I have coins in abundance. If you

still want to earn this money, you can come find me anytime. I will still offer the same price of five golds per session, what do you think?”

Han Shuo nodded and responded, “No problem, I’ll be back soon!”

“Good. Bryan you’re a very interesting fellow, I hope you can recover quickly. My attacks next time will be even more vicious! Be prepared!” Lawrence said as he changed out of his clothes, rearmed himself with his sword and left the training field.

Han Shuo didn’t leave immediately after Lawrence had departed. He instead sat down Indian style, and repeatedly circulated the magical yuan according to the principles of practicing magic, reforging his severely damaged body.

After a while, he felt his drained energy slowly revive after repeated circulations of the magical yuan. His legs, that felt like they weighed a ton, also gradually regained some strength. Although he still hurt all over, pain seemed to be better than the complete lifelessness he had felt earlier.

He grimaced as he moved, sensing the pain he was in. Han Shuo laughed loudly, holding up underneath the unending agony. He slowly stood up, then swaggered out of the training field.

“Oh, it’s Bryan, are you alright?”

Han Shuo heard others gasp in amazement as soon as he walked out of the training field. Upon swiveling his body, he realized that it was the kindhearted young warrior, Cal, the one who had tried to talk Han Shuo out of it in the lobby. Cal’s tight robes had some dust on it, and some traces of sweat beaded his forehead, but he seemed otherwise unharmed.

“No big deal.” Han Shuo smiled at Cal and responded faintly while nodding his head.

Cal was a seasoned warrior and could tell with one glance that Han Shuo was not as unaffected as he said he was. Cal had a great deal of experience as a human target, and naturally understood that even if nothing showed in outward appearances, that didn’t necessarily mean that the body was unharmed. The way that Han Shuo was walking and his

expression all indicated that his body condition was quite bad.

Cal quickly walked towards Han Shuo and reached out a hand to help steady Han Shuo. Cal frowned, "What no big deal. Your body must be in awful shape. Here, let me take you back. Good thing you walked out alive, I thought you'd be beaten to death in there!"

Cal meant well, but Han Shuo was an errand boy for the necromancy major, and a crazy one at that. If he were to return with Cal, it was bound to create unnecessary complications.

Besides, Han Shuo didn't want to owe anyone favors. Even though he felt terrible, he had to hold it in. He would be fine if he walked slowly. Therefore, Han Shuo brushed off Cal's steadying hand and smiled, "Thank you Cal. I'm fine, really. I can go back by myself."

Han Shuo turned to leave immediately after his words, but saw a familiar figure approaching from afar – Claude.

A human target followed behind Claude, and they both approached the knight student training fields. It looked like he was also here to spar with human targets.

Han Shuo had been prepared to bump into Claude when he came to the school for knights. The last time at the department of light magic, Han Shuo's little skeleton had almost been pulverized by Claude, and he himself had suffered from Claude's fighting aura as well. If it wasn't for the magical yuan enclosing the fighting aura, he would most likely be dead by now.

Claude had long since forgotten this matter, and didn't know that the Han Shuo was the master of the little skeleton, but Han Shuo had already noted this event for future revenge. Even though he was prepared to see Claude again, his body condition was at its worst at the moment and Han Shuo had no desire to go head to head with Claude right now. If he'd guessed wrong and Claude was still harboring a grudge from last time, death was the only possible outcome for Han Shuo if Claude took his revenge.

Han Shuo's mind frantically raced through ways to avoid Claude as the



latter approached with a sunny smile, turning his head to hold a spirited conversation with other knight students.

# Chapter 26: Entering a demonic mental state

As Claude neared him, Han Shuo grimaced and gave a low moan. He ducked his body and head and reached for his ankle, as if inspecting the injury to his ankle.

Next to him, Cal frowned involuntarily as he saw Han Shuo's actions. He propped Han Shuo up with one hand and said, "Are you alright? Is your ankle injured? Let me take a look."

"Nothing much, just that I twisted it a bit just now." Han Shuo responded lowly with a drooped head and a bent over body.

Claude and the other knight students had arrived by this time. The others had come later and did not recognize Han Shuo. There were many present who were wounded or crippled, and so Han Shuo's performance didn't attract too much attention.

Claude flicked a glance at Han Shuo and thought nothing of it, passing by Han Shuo as he chatted and laughed with his peers.

Han Shuo's ankle was indeed twisted, and had swollen up by now. Cal gave a soft gasp upon seeing it, "It's swollen up so much, let me take you home!"

Seeing that Claude's footsteps were going further away, Han Shuo stood up straight again and wiggled his ankle, spinning off his toes. He smiled at Cal, "I suddenly feel much better. Thank you Cal, no worries about taking me back!"

Han Shuo's walking pace picked up after he finished speaking, and he quickly disappeared around the corner without a trace or making another sound.

Cal shook his head, his face utterly perplexed as he watched Han Shuo suddenly become hale and hearty. "What a weird person!"

Han Shuo dragged his battered body back to the necromancy major of

the school of magic when the sky was about to turn dark. Now that his necromancy errand duties had been taken over by Carey and Borg, Han Shuo didn't need to expend too much effort. He lined up for his dinner after returning and went directly to the warehouse. He immediately started using the magical yuan to continually rebuild and reforge his body after he'd locked the door.

There wasn't a single inch of his body that didn't cry out in pain. His skin, tendons and bones had all suffered severe damage. The magical yuan circulated his body again and again according to the principles of practicing magic. Han Shuo could feel a bit of his strength return from the fiery mass of pain that was his current body each time the magical yuan completed a circulation.

The magical yuan churned continuously throughout the process, and it seemed to have grown just a tad bigger, bringing a new surprise to Han Shuo. It looked like the time and effort spent on strengthening his body was also a process of gradual improvement for the magical yuan. He would have to endure this kind of injury in the near future in order to fortify his body.

The pain in his body eased up after midnight and Han Shuo switched to practicing the Mystical Glacial Spellfire at this time. He circulated the magical yuan to his fingertips and palms of his hands according to the instructions of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire.

Time flew as Han Shuo sank into a strange, oblivious mindset. There were no distractions in his mind, just the perseverance and tenacity to train. He had long since forgotten the pain and injuries of his body, and just kept circulating his magical yuan according to method prescribed by the Mystical Glacial Spellfire.

Han Shuo had previously restrained himself when practicing magic. He would awaken at a set time, and had never immersed himself like he had today. Han Shuo had lost himself in it today, forgetting the passage of time, forgetting his sense of self, forgetting all mundane distractions.

Bam.

The small door to the warehouse suddenly banged open, startling Han Shuo out of his reverie. He frowned and his eyes shot like cold lightning to Jack's body.

Jack shuddered in fright under Han Shuo's stare, only exhaling softly when he saw the cold lightning in Han Shuo's eyes fade away. "Bryan, so you really were in the warehouse. I thought something happened to you!"

Han Shuo immediately checked his body's condition after being startled awake. He suddenly realized that his originally heavily injured body had mostly healed, and that the magical yuan circulating within his body was a bit stronger than before. His mental strength also showed more clarity than before.

"What could happen to me. I only slept in one day, that's all. Borg and Carey are cleaning for me anyway, there's nothing to do." Han Shuo cracked his stiff neck as creaking noises sounded. When Han Shuo got up from the small wooden bed and stretched his body, all the bones in his body sounded with crisp pa! pa! sounds, leaving Jack dumbfounded where he stood.

After a while, Jack finally reacted in surprise when the strange sounds had disappeared from Han Shuo's body. He called out involuntarily, "Uh, Bryan, you didn't sleep in for just a day. You haven't appeared in six days! I knocked on your door for a long time without any response from you, I thought something happened to you!"

Han Shuo was also astounded by Jack's words. Had he trained for six whole days? He creased his brow and then suddenly recalled the mention of 'entering a demonic mental state' within Chu Cang Lan's memories of demonic magic.

Some practitioners would be able to enter a demonic mental state due to fortuitous coincidence. It varied accordingly, and the demonic mental state was further split into either an aggressive or passive state. Some practitioner's minds and disposition would drastically change upon entering the demonic mental state, and they would thirst for and feast on blood and murder. Their bodies would feel no pain, and both their magic

and physical body would be greatly enhanced upon entering the demonic mental state. They would be unable to pause for even a second, and would only seek to continuously destroy everything and everyone in front of them. This was the aggressive type of a demonic mental state.

The other kind was what Han Shuo had experienced earlier, suddenly entering a demonic mental state during practice. It was a vague, foggy process undetectable by the practitioner, but his internal processes and magical yuan circulation would be greatly heightened compared to typical training conditions. He wouldn't be able to sense his own training status, but would be able to discern a huge change within his body when he awoke.

The first type of demonic mental state ordinarily occurred after the rational mind had lost itself due to severe interference. If the practitioner didn't die in the course of the endless killings spurred on by the demonic state, his body's energies would be greatly harmed along with other side effects. Han Shuo's peaceful demonic state was the much better option. Most entered this bizarre mental realm during training, and could feel the increase in their strength when they awoke.

"Oh, that's because I've been a bit sleepy lately and slept too deeply. Right, what do you need me for?" Han Shuo realized that his stomach felt empty as he spoke, and immediately understood that his body greatly needed food and nutrition after going six days without eating.

Jack withdrew a large piece of bread for Han Shuo as he looked at Han Shuo rub his stomach. "I was worried about you, and Master Fanny told me to tell you to go to her lab. Oh yes, Lisa was asking about you too. I don't know if she wants to make trouble for you again."

"I see. Hmm. I'll go to Master Fanny's first. Let's go!" Han Shuo munched on Jack's bread as he walked out of the warehouse.

It was a good thing that Han Shuo had shoved the little skeleton underneath the bed during this time. Jack hadn't seen anything amiss when he'd barged in. After he relocked the door that Jack had come crashing through, Han Shuo made straight for Fanny's lab.

Knock knock knock.

Han Shuo stood at the entrance to Fanny's lab and raised his hand to knock.

"Come in!" Fanny's gentle and soft voice sounded from the lab. Han Shuo opened the door and stepped into the lab upon hearing it.

Several magic scrolls were placed on the pedestal in the middle of the lab. Mysterious and exquisite magic words and diagrams were tattooed on the scrolls. Even someone who had just set foot into the halls of magic, a rookie like Han Shuo, could feel the strong magical currents from the scrolls from a far distance away.

At that moment, Fanny was chanting an incantation as she bent over, tracing beautiful lines on the magic scrolls as she dipped a long, elegant nail into the brown magic solution to the side. Those delicate lines looked random, but also gave a wondrous feeling of extreme harmony.

Fanny finished outlining the scroll after a while and injected magic into the scroll after reciting an incantation. A desolate, lonely and dark aura immediately started emanating from it as a dash of brown light flashed over the scroll. It then rolled itself up automatically.

When she had stored the finished magic scroll, Fanny lifted her head and smiled involuntarily. "Oh it's Bryan. How's your back doing?"

"Thank you for your concern Master Fanny. The injuries on my back are all healed." Han Shuo nodded and responded.

Han Shuo understood he couldn't continue to play the fool. Although doing so would bring some benefits to him, it would create more trouble sooner or later. Since that was the case, it would be better to slowly change himself, and let everyone unknowingly accept his new self. Therefore, people wouldn't find it surprising that he had changed, and would actually think that he had suddenly seen reason again after being crazy.

The previous owner this body, Bryan, had suffered greatly in the necromancy major. Han Shuo had vowed to take revenge for Bryan when he climbed out of that tomb. A lesson had been more or less taught to

Carey, Borg, Bach and Lisa, enacting quite a bit of revenge for Bryan. Han Shuo still remained in the necromancy major in order to lay the groundwork for future plans.

After gaining a better understanding of this world, Han Shuo realized that he would have to continuously become stronger if he wanted to thrive in this world. The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force was a place to continually improve himself. He remained here in order to take advantage of the school's resources to further raise all aspects of himself, including strength, knowledge, and a full understanding of this world.

Therefore, Han Shuo knew that he couldn't continue to be crazy, and needed to change himself bit by bit.

"Oh that's wonderful. We're just about to take a field trip and bring students to the outside world. They will be testing themselves on the development of their magic. Come with us! You can pick up after them, and I can take a good gauge of your body condition on the road. What do you say Bryan?" Fanny put down the items she held in her hand and smiled at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo stood motionless, thought for a bit and felt that this was a chance. He nodded involuntarily, "Sure!"

## Chapter 27: Hot damn, I'm awesome!

"Alright, then we set off in two days. Use these next few days to prepare. As for your errand duties, I'll ask the school authorities to temporarily hand them over to the other three, so no worries there." Fanny smiled charmingly upon seeing Han Shuo agree. Her beautiful face was even more tempting and moving because of her smile, making Han Shuo's heart lurch slightly.

Before he'd arrived in Bryan's body, Han Shuo's life could be categorized as a failure. Not only had he accomplished nothing professionally speaking, but his love life had also been in shambles. He still didn't know anything about being with a woman, to this day.

Once he came to this world, Han Shuo's self control had decreased and his various desires had increased due to practicing magic. Han Shuo was someone who'd died once before. The depressing and pointless morass of his past life had completely bound his past self. Adding to that was the weight of his family and his shy personality, which had resulted in him never daring to act on the evil thoughts that he dreamed up.

And now, in this completely foreign world, with his increasing strength due to practicing magic, many of his previous constraints had disappeared. He naturally wished to live without regrets and fully materialize all the daydreams that he had always buried deep in his heart.

And women, particularly beautiful women, had always caused an uncontrollable urge in Han Shuo's heart.

Fanny was not only beautiful and mesmerizing, she also paid particular attention to Han Shuo's well-being, and he was at the age that desired the fairer sex most ardently. He would naturally have unavoidable desires. With the principles of demonic magic demanding that a practitioner do as he wished, Han Shuo naturally viewed Fanny as the prey of his affections.

"Master Fanny, are the dark creatures we summon always different? Is it possible to summon the same creature after sending it back to the other dimension?"



Since Han Shuo had promised Fanny to accompany them on their outing, he started making preparations for his own affairs. Han Shuo had no advantages besides his summoned small skeleton that he could rely on.

Although he could still contact the skeleton within a certain range, it would likely be difficult to remain in contact with his current level of control over his mental strength once he set out, and they were separated by a vast distance. If the little skeleton got into any trouble because Han Shuo wasn't here to control it with his mental strength, then things would get sticky.

Although Han Shuo was confident that he'd be able to send the little skeleton back to the other dimension, he didn't know if he would be able to summon it again. Therefore, he wanted to solve this problem before setting out. As the teacher for the necromancy major, Fanny would naturally know more about these things. Just because Han Shuo had no way of solving his conundrum did not mean Fanny didn't, hence his questions.

Fanny looked at Han Shuo in confusion as soon as his question was asked. Her sexy, full lips moved as she asked, "Eh, Bryan, why are you asking these questions? These are things that necromancy students should pay attention to. You shouldn't care about these things!"

"Oh, that was Lisa's question. I was just asking you for her." Han Shuo nodded and spoke with a good Samaritan expression.

Fanny didn't suspect a thing after Han Shuo's response. She understood that Lisa often practiced necromancy magic on Han Shuo and thus, it made sense for Lisa to ask a question through Han Shuo. She thought for a while and then said, "So that's the case... It's not that one can't summon the same creature after sending it to the other dimension, it's just that there's no need to do so.

Every time a dark creature is summoned from the other dimension, it, or a group, is merely chosen at random from a crowd of similarly leveled dark creatures according to the mental strength powering the incantation, and the chant itself. Because they are the same level of dark creature, their

strength is roughly the same, and thus no one cares about these matters.”

“Then what should be done in order to resummon the same dark creature after its been sent back to the other dimension?” Han Shuo thought quickly and asked a follow-up question.

Fanny carefully put away the magic scrolls on the pedestal and ran her beautiful, long fingers over the top of the pedestal. She frowned as she explained, “If you really want to resummon a dark creature that you sent back to the other dimension, then leave a magical brand on its body. Lock onto the original dark creature through the magical brand the next time you summon it. You can find the original creature this way and resummon it out of the other dimension.”

Han Shuo’s heart was immediately overjoyed upon hearing Fanny’s words, but his forehead creased in a frown as he muttered to himself. “So that’s the case, I wonder if Lisa knows how to leave a magical brand on a summoned dark creature.”

After looking at Han Shuo oddly, Fanny smiled and said softly. “Bryan, you truly are a very kind person. I know that Lisa has not been the friendliest to you, and the problems with your body resulted from her Agony of the Soul. Yet not only do you not carry a grudge, but you constantly think about her. There are very few who are as pure and kind-hearted as you these days.”

Pure! Kind-hearted! Han Shuo was speechless internally, but maintained an honest smile on his face. He scratched his head and said with some embarrassment, “I don’t think a grudge should be carried, no matter the reason. People will understand if you treat them kindly. Heh heh.”

Fanny laughed softly and nodded as she heard Han Shuo’s words, and said no more. She took out a thin piece of yellow paper from a nearby cabinet, and picked up a quill with her slender fingers, dipping it in ink and quickly scratching out something.

After a short while, Fanny had filled the thin paper with words, and she stuck the quill back into the inkpot. She handed the text-filled, thin paper to Han Shuo and smiled, “This is the incantation and method for leaving a

magical brand on a summoned dark creature. Give it to Lisa, I think she will know what to do with her capacity as a novice mage.”

Elated, Han Shuo almost shook as he accepted the paper from Fanny. He nodded with a dumb smile, saying eagerly, “I’ll go immediately, Lisa will be very happy.”

Han Shuo left Fanny’s lab at an eager pace, clutching the thin paper in his hands as soon as he’d finished speaking.

“What an innocent little fellow. I hope that Lisa makes less trouble for him in the future because of this.” Fanny smiled slightly and said with some emotion upon seeing Han Shuo leave so urgently.

Midnight, the cemetery behind the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

““Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will, bone arrows!” A cuttngly sharp bone arrow materialized out of thin air as a lowly chanted incantation finished. Accompanied by a strident whooshing sound, it connected violently with the chest of the straw figure in front of it.

“Haha, I’ve finally successfully released a bone arrow!” Han Shuo laughed loudly and called out with pride after seeing that the bone arrow had neither broken in midair nor had been off course.

A lot of time had passed since the incident that had occurred in the cemetery last time. Han Shuo resumed his practice of the bone arrow magic whenever he was certain that no one would pay attention to the place.

During this time, his mental strength had increased at a rapid pace, particularly after the encounter with the strange ball. Since he hadn’t succumbed to that great calamity, Han Shuo’s mental strength had greatly increased. After repeated practice and enhanced magical knowledge, Han Shuo had finally mastered the low level necromancy magic of bone arrow to perfection, without any mistakes.

The little skeleton stood at attention in the distance, its empty eye

sockets vigilantly patrolling the four corners as its head swiveled. It grasped the bone dagger with its right hand, and glowed with a cold, dark light under the moonlight.

He would be temporarily leaving the Academy for the outside world tomorrow with Fanny and co. The fact that Han Shuo had used Lisa's name to ask Fanny some questions never came to light. After all, this was just a small matter, and Fanny wasn't someone who would ask about every little detail. She naturally forgot this issue after one or two days.

Over the past few days, Han Shuo studied "The Foundations of Necromancy" and "The Descriptions of Dark Creatures", as well as thoroughly reading and contemplating the words on Fanny's thin paper. He was confident that he would be able to leave a magical brand on the little skeleton. He planned to do so before he left on the morrow, and started to plant a magical brand on the little skeleton according to his understanding.

The little skeleton patrolling off in the distance came speeding towards Han Shuo with a yank of his mental strength. The seven bone spurs on its back fluttered slightly in the air, seeming to add a bit of power, and causing the little skeleton's body to actually lift above the ground for a bit as it ran. This surprised Han Shuo, thinking that his efforts in refining the skeleton had not been in vain. It was apparent that, just like him, its strength had continued to increase.

When the little skeleton came to a stop next to Han Shuo, he gathered his concentration in a way he never had before, curling his fingers upwards in the air. He then started to slowly recite the incantation found in Fanny's notes.

"My loyal servant, in the name of the summoner, I leave upon you my eternal mark. Dark Seal!" Han Shuo suddenly felt his mental strength drain rapidly away upon concluding the incantation, and an inky black aura, the size of a fist, formed between his hands.

The mental strength needed by this Dark Seal was more than what he'd anticipated. It was only then that Han Shuo remembered something he'd

overlooked – Lisa was a novice mage, and he was just a magic apprentice. Fanny’s method had most likely been tailored for Lisa’s mental strength, and hadn’t even considered the fact that a magic apprentice would be the one casting it.

Han Shuo felt a headache flare up as his mental strength was spontaneously depleted. He was involuntarily shocked by the feeling of something being drained away.

At this moment, the aura between his two hands abruptly drifted out, sinking into the little skeleton’s body between its two empty eye sockets. At the same time, Han Shuo felt extremely fatigued and sat heavily on the ground, panting heavily as he did so.

Suddenly, it was as if a corner of a veil had been lifted over the foggy memories left by Chu Cang Lan, and a portion of an incantation and memory became exceedingly clear.

The newfound memories had to do with harnessing magical treasure and the “Harnessing Magic Incantation”. This helped Han Shuo realize that he had gained better understanding of some part of Chu Cang Lan’s indistinct memories under somewhat bizarre circumstances.

A strange whooshing sound abruptly interrupted his thoughts, and Han Shuo subconsciously raised his head to search for the its source.

He was flabbergasted.

The little skeleton was waving the sharp bone dagger around in an airy dance. Cold light sparkled around the little skeleton’s body in dizzying waves underneath the moonlight. The bone dagger followed the movements of the little skeleton’s hand and stabbed multiple times at the straw figure, leaving it with the appearance of swiss cheese.

Han Shuo recollected himself after being dumbfounded, his face full of incredulous joy. He threw his head back to the heavens and roared, “Hot damn, I’m awesome!”

# Chapter 28: City of Zajoski

A streak of white light flashed as Han Shuo and several necromancy students materialized within a circular, magical matrix that was filled with magical symbols.

Han Shuo had experimented three times last night and realized that he really could send his small skeleton to the other dimension and successfully summon it back again. He joyfully took out the moneybag, that had been hidden under his bed, and made his preparations for the field trip.

He now wore an expression of astonishment as he continuously darted his eyes around in close observation of the magical matrix. The large matrix was circular in form, and on it was an enormous, six-pointed star on the rock beneath his feet. Exquisite magical forms were carved into the magical columns nearby, and a faint magical current emanated from the entire matrix.

He had been standing in a similar transportation matrix in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force a second ago. When the matrix had activated, Han Shuo could only feel the strong magical current that permeated the air. He had appeared here after a flash of white light.

From the students around him, Han Shuo understood that this was a magical transportation matrix. This kind of magical transportation was extremely rare and required a lot of complex magic and was costly to set up. Even eminent mages needed numerous quantities of magical ingredients in order to properly arrange the transportation matrix.

“Stop looking, the magical transportation matrix is amazing alright, but you don’t need to make a big deal over it!” Off to the side, Lisa spoke up as she saw Han Shuo looking around, gobsmacked.

This magic was truly wondrous. Although Han Shuo had heard of magical transportation matrices, this was the first time he’d experienced using one, and naturally felt it was quite incredible. He gave up his observations only after he had carefully contemplated the area around the

matrix.

Han Shuo understood that with his currently shallow grasp of magical knowledge, he probably wouldn't even understand the theories behind the transportation matrix, much less be able to set one up.

Not to mention that constructing such a transportation matrix would need an inordinate amount of magical ingredients. Even the Empire was unable to set one up in all the cities. Each activation required an awe inspiring amount of energy. Even some ordinary noble families would be unable to bear the burden.

If it wasn't for the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force having such a magical transportation matrix, and Han Shuo hitching a ride off the coattails of the students, it would've been extremely unlikely for him to ever travel through one in his lifetime.

This area was the Zajoski city on the outskirts of the Lancelot Empire. Zajoski was the biggest city in the southwestern part of the Empire, with the Kerlan Valley to the west of it. One would end up in the land of the orcs if they travelled west of the Kerlan Valley. To the south of Zajoski was the Dark Forest. All sorts of strong magical creatures lived within the expansive Dark Forest, including the elves that worshipped nature.

Things had never been peaceful for the city of Zajoski. The Empire had situated a lot of troops in Zajoski for defending against invasions by the savage orcs. It was said that the orcs lived in very barren land, and that the savage race had long wanted to occupy the fertile lands of the Lancelot Empire. Zajoski was the Empire's strongest point of defense in the southwest, and naturally enjoyed a lot of attention from the orcs.

The Dark Forest was also a turbulous area. Although the elves that worshipped nature were on more or less friendly terms with the Empire, many of the magical creatures within the Dark Forest often walked out of the forest to appear within nearby towns and villages. This caused things to be a bit tense in the towns and villages next to it.

Perhaps the Empire expended so many resources in setting up a magical transportation matrix within the city because of this unease. On one hand,

this facilitated a connection between the Empire and Zajoski, but on the other it was unable to support large scale military deployments due to the sheer energy requirements needed to send through a limited amount of people.

Zajoski's peculiar position turned this region into a heaven for adventurers. Merchants and adventurers of all sorts came here thirsty for gold and treasure.

Whether it was the crystal cores, bones, skin, or flesh of the magical creatures within the Dark Forest, the priceless magical equipment forged by the elves, some precious jewels from the barren wastes of the orc lands, or the multitude of other items with heavy profits – these were the intended targets of all the gold rushers.

“Noble and respected mages, welcome to the city of Zajoski. We hope you enjoy yourselves in Zajoski, and obtain all that you need!” The official in charge of the magical transportation matrix stood next to it and humbly bowed to Han Shuo and co.

“Thank you for your warm words, I'm sure we will receive our just rewards.” Fanny smiled and nodded her head at him, and then glanced at the necromancy students. She said softly, “This is not a peaceful place, everyone be careful and don't let anything happen to you. Let's go.”

Fanny led the crew outwards along the main street when she finished speaking. Like Han Shuo, the students were gazing around with curiosity, measuring up everything and everyone around them.

Apart from the two teachers Fanny and Gene, there were nine necromancy students and Han Shuo, bringing the total to twelve people. Fanny and Gene were adept necromancers. Fitch had not traveled with the group because he was still undergoing the test for adept mages.

The strength of the remaining nine students was unevent. Other than a journeyman mage named Derek, the rest were novice mages and magic apprentices.

The buildings lining the street were all cut out of hard rock, and lacked a touch of artistic beauty compared to the other buildings within the



Empire, but gained a few traces of dignity and toughness. Due to the frequent orc attacks, not only were the Zajoski city walls built to be impregnable, but even the buildings within the city were built on a principle of durability.

Along the way, Han Shuo noticed that many, many weapons stores, pharmacies, magical item stores, and provision stores could be found to the sides. There were also some small taverns for entertainment, a slave auction, and a bartering place for all sorts of materials.

It seemed that merchants knew what sort of transactions would be most profitable because of the unique characteristics of this location. Those entering and exiting these locations were warriors, knights, mages of different majors, robbers, archers, merchants, poets, and even a few slender, pointy-eared, beautiful elves, who were obviously from the Dark Forest.

The sounds of the street vendors, the elegant low chants from the poets, the brays from the warriors' steeds, the clashes of sudden conflicts – these scenes were all completely beyond Han Shuo's imagination. He was exceedingly astonished and had a better understanding of this chaotic city.

“Nothing much to see, we need to leave the city before sundown. This isn't a place where we should spend much time. Our next stop is the town of Drol. If we can't reach it by sundown, we'll have to camp in the wilderness tonight.” Gene called loudly and urged the students to walk faster.

“Heh heh, they're all flowers in a greenhouse. For some of them, it's their first visit to the city of Zojoski. No wonder they're so curious. They won't be in the future.” Fanny swept her clear eyes across the group and smiled involuntarily when she saw a few students, extremely excited by the sights they were seeing for the first time.

“Bryan, are you okay with carrying so many things on your back?” Next to Han Shuo, Lisa frowned as she looked at Han Shuo and voiced a question.

“Eh, Lisa, when did you start caring for Bryan. This doesn't seem like

you!” Novice mage Bella looked askance at Lisa and asked oddly.

Apart from being in charge of all the random little things, Han Shuo was also in charge of providing manual labor during this field trip accompaniment. Although wondrous “space rings” that could hold items existed in this world, they were quite expensive. It would be difficult for even ordinary noble families to obtain one, not to mention commoners.

None of these necromancy teachers and students were lucky enough to possess a space ring. Everyone had packed heavily for this field trip. As an errand slave, Han Shuo had naturally taken up the role of a pack mule.

Many items were lashed onto Han Shuo’s back, shoulders, wrists, and even his two legs. No one thought Han Shuo could carry so many items on him in the beginning, but they had piled all their belongings onto him after finding out with surprise that Han Shuo could still walk with ease when loaded down with so much.

Although Han Shuo could play the fool and carry less, he didn’t do so in order to further train his own body. He happily accepted the burden, and now carried all sorts of items on him. A few bags even hung around his neck, with only a happily smiling, dust-covered, face apparent.

“Oh, I’m not having any problems.” Han Shuo smiled slightly at Lisa and said in a carefree manner. After that incident in the trap in which Han Shuo had “passionately” declared his love, Lisa’s attitude towards Han Shuo had taken a huge turn. Her words had already started to defend him.

Seeing that Han Shuo didn’t recognize her good intentions and said such things, Lisa harrumphed lightly and muttered to herself. “Can’t recognize my intentions, what an idiot.”

“And it’s all thanks to you! If it wasn’t for your Agony of the Soul, how could Bryan become this crazy, but it’s a bit strange, Bryan seems to have gotten taller and stronger since then, and even his energy has improved. Lisa you’re quite amazing!” Bella exclaimed softly and said enigmatically.

“Bella, none of your business. Shut up!” Lisa flicked a glance at Bella and responded coldly.

“Tch. Who wants to mind your business? Just curious!” Bella snorted and replied.

“Alright alright, calm down. Let’s walk faster to leave the city. Your delicate bodies are in for it if we don’t reach Drol before nightfall.” Fanny creased her brow and admonished lightly, and then looked at Han Shuo. She said softly, “Bryan, are you truly alright?”

Han Shuo nodded and smiled slightly, saying decisively, “No problem. Good rations give me strength.”

Fanny smiled and giggled upon hearing Han Shuo’s words, saying, “Looks like me asking the school authorities to improve your rations has actually had some effect!”

The crew engaged in no more idle chatter after that and the students’ gazes did not continue to wander around. They all rushed towards the city gates.

# Chapter 29: The feeling of contempt

The band of twelve, including Han Shuo, were stunned by the magnificence of the city gates when they arrived at the city of Zajoski. The gates were all extraordinarily palatial and made from the strongest of rock. They were the color of dried blood, and no one knew whether or not it was because too much of it had drenched the stones.

Numerous guards, dressed in full body armor, patrolled the city walls, several meters above the ground. All sorts of defensive measures could be seen on the city walls.

From afar, the city gates looked like the open, fanged mouth of a bloodthirsty magic creature that devoured everything underneath the sun. Several sharp, cold, hangnails, that looked like the sharp teeth within the creature's month, peppered the city walls. Their cold light sparkled underneath the sunlight, giving people an incredibly deterring, spectacular feeling.

The two ink-black, grand gates, refined from who-knew-what, were open. The city entrance was immensely expansive, enough for ten horses to walk in abreast. It was quite crowded in front of the door and various mammoth and strange magic creatures slowly threaded their way through the entrance into the city, with all sorts of people and items on their backs.

These magical creatures were larger than any beasts Han Shuo had seen before. They were about five meters tall and ten or so meters long. Their skin was dark brown, with heads shaped like an elephant's. Their faces were covered in wrinkles, with two curved, white tusks jutting out from their cheeks. The tusks themselves were a meter long.

"This is an earth dragon, a gentler type of magical creature. They are easily tamed and move slowly, but can carry heavy loads. They're a popular form of transportation within the Empire. Merchants use earth dragons to transport heavy loads and trade with different areas." Fanny explained with a smile when she saw many students gazing at the earth

dragons in astonishment.

“Master Fanny, look after them while I go register at the officers’ quarters. I’ll also borrow a few battlesteeds, otherwise we’ll never make it to Drol by nightfall on foot..” Gene looked at Fanny with sparkling eyes and spoke with a smile. His gaze fell on Fanny’s beautiful face and didn’t stray for a moment.

The entire necromancy major knew of Gene’s feelings for Fanny. Fanny herself was also well aware, but she never expressed anything. Gene wasn’t in a rush and seemed to want to move Fanny with his sincerity. He often made use of various opportunities to express his feelings, and staring at her soulfully for long periods of time was one of them.

Han Shuo cursed privately upon seeing Gene’s unfettered gaze. In Han Shuo’s mind, Fanny had long since become his personal property. He would naturally be irritated that other people were peeping at her in front of him, but right now, he was just a mere errand slave and wasn’t strong enough to show his strength. So although it rankled at him, he had to keep himself in check.

“Mm. Go ahead, I’ll watch them carefully.” Fanny gave a tepid response and agreed with a smile, avoiding Gene’s fiery gaze. She turned her head to look at the magnificent city walls and said with emotion, “Although I’ve seen this multiple times, I always feel proud of the Zajoski city gates whenever I come back to visit. It’s because of these durable city gates that the savage orcs have always retreated with nothing to show for their efforts.”

Han Shuo was weighed down with all sorts of items, and just about drowning in all of it. Everyone had stopped at this moment except for Han Shuo. He bent and then straightened his legs, twisting his wrists, and repeated the same boring movements.

“Bryan, what are you doing?” Amy was standing next to Han Shuo and saw the piles of items move along with Han Shuo’s body. It caught her eye and she asked in astonishment.

The others noticed his movements after Amy had spoken up and also

concentrated their attention on Han Shuo, a perplexed look on each of their faces.

“Nothing much, I’m feeling a bit sore, and moving around will alleviate it!” Han Shuo replied calmly with a dumb expression, truly looking more than a bit dumb.

“Stupid, be careful. You’re carrying valuable items. If you accidentally break one, we wouldn’t be able to cover the losses, even if we sold you.” Bella frowned and said coldly.

“Bella, you’re such an idiot. Those things are quite sturdy. How could they break so easily? No one has allowed him to carry anything truly precious or fragile.” Lisa casted a look of disdain at Bella and replied sarcastically.

“You ladies are always arguing... stop it. We always run into some danger, whether big or small, when we travel for training in the outside world. You should unite as a team, or we’re bound to run into problems further down the road.” Fanny frowned and tried to separate the two when she saw Lisa and Bella were about to bicker again.

Han Shuo completely ignored Bella’s cold jeers and continued to repeat those boring actions. Those motions hadn’t been left behind in Chu Cang Lan’s memories, but were muscle building actions that Han Shuo had seen before. In order to keep improving his body and break out of the “solid realm”, Han Shuo was taking advantage of every second to train his body.

After a while, Gene returned with an ugly expression and empty hands. When he walked up to Fanny, he said furiously, “Damnit! They asked me for money!”

Fanny’s elegant brows knotted together and she spoke in surprise upon hearing those words. “Our Babylon Academy of Magic and Force is the cradle for the Empire’s knights, warriors, and mages. We nurture so many talents every year for the Empire. Even many of the guard officers and mages stationed in the city of Zajoski graduated from our Academy. There’s a protocol between the Academy and Zajoski. How dare they not lend us battlesteeds?”

“The guard officer was going to lend me the steeds when I said I was from the Academy. When I offered my identification and he saw that we’re from the necromancy major, he actually mocked me. He demanded fifty gold from me, saying that we would receive no steeds if we didn’t pay up. He further added that our necromancy major has never nurtured any talents for the Empire before, and thus shouldn’t enjoy free benefits.” Gene was maddened and bit off his words.

When the students heard his words, they too found a common enemy and shouted angrily, calling for revenge against the guard officer. It would seem that the feeling of contempt was a hard one to swallow. These students were already a bit aggrieved at joining an unpopular major, and were hard pressed to contain their anger now that they were so ignored.

“Forget it, take out fifty gold for him from the funds. These guard officers have lived here for a long time. Add to that the fact that our major truly has declined, and occupies a lower standing in the Academy. It’s no wonder than they think less of us. I will report this matter to the dean upon my return. Let’s not get into a fight with them right now.” Fanny shook her head, spoke a few conciliatory words with a dejected expression and finally made this reply to Gene.

Gene at first disagreed with Fanny’s words, saying that they could not allow such arrogant soldiers to strut around, but he sighed slowly and shook his head after a few placating words from Fanny, gloomily accepting fifty gold coins from Fanny’s hands and walking to the side of the city gates.

Han Shuo observed a few people, then looked at the despondent Fanny. He threw a glance at the far off guard officer and internally vowed that one day, the necromancy major would regain its past glories through his hands, and that people would tremble in fear at the sound of a necromancer.

“Don’t be depressed. No one dared to look down on us when the necromancy major was at its peak. It’s just that the necromancy major suffered from the ostracization of all the majors for a while. Legends speak of a great magic war that caused high casualties amongst the

necromancers and the loss of many incredible, powerful spells. This is what's caused the decline of necromancy.

Our trip to the Dark Forest this time is in search of a cemetery of death that I've heard rumors about. It's said that a wise mage, who studied necromancy for many years, once stayed within the cemetery of death. If we can find the cemetery and obtain the magical tomes of necromancy inside of it, then perhaps we can alter the current situation that the necromancy major is in." Fanny spoke bracing words of comfort upon seeing students become melancholy.

Many cheered up after hearing Fanny's words, and expressions of joy and astonishment crossed their faces. It would seem that they were all prepared to give their all in this time's external outing.

Seeing the ardor on everyone's faces, Fanny gave a silent, involuntary sigh. Although news had broken of the discovery of the cemetery, the person who discovered it died not long after walking out of it.

The Dark Forest was vast, and to search for something within it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. Even she didn't hold much hope. Besides, if such a location was truly discovered, it was bound to draw in a horde of adventurers. It would be a bit unrealistic to think that the power of their band of twelve would be able to retrieve what they needed at that time.

Fanny merely wished to comfort everyone with her words. The main purpose of this time's outing was to test the student's grasp of necromancy and help them realize magical knowledge in the real world.

"Eh? Aren't these people from the necromancy major? Are you adventuring as well? Hehe, why are you all standing here?" A sweet voice sounded from afar as the necromancy students were sunk in their own thoughts.

It was the light major student from last time, Irene, and a few other students and teachers from the light major. Her ardent pursuer, Claude, was also mounted on a tall battlesteed and came clapping in from the distance.



“None of your business. Don’t fall from your horse now.” Lisa looked at Irene with contempt and sneered back.

“Hehe I know, you must not have been able to borrow any battlesteeds. Ai, that’s a foregone conclusion. Your necromancy major hasn’t contributed anything to the Empire, so of course it’s a bit inappropriate that you use the Empire’s resources without any payment!” Irene chuckled charmingly as sarcasm and mockery filled her holy features.

Although Lisa and company were enraged, they couldn’t find the words to retort back as Irene spoke the truth. They could only grit their teeth and fume inwardly.

“Hello Master Fanny.” Light adept mage Beacher was mounted on a battlesteed and greeted Fanny with a smile.

“Hello Beacher, are you heading towards the Dark Forest for adventure as well?” Fanny smiled in return and commented lightly.

“Yes, we plan on traveling to the Dark Forest and hunting down the magic creatures that are often a nuisance to the villages around the Forest. We’ll be testing the students’ command of magic while giving back to the Empire. Heh, we’ll be off, see you later!” Beacher replied gentlemanly, but Han Shuo could still discern a trace of disdain in his eyes, as if Beacher looked down on the necromancy crew.

Gene finally brought six battlesteeds over after Beacher and the light major folk had zipped by on their large horses. Gene’s horses were obviously subpar to the ones the light major students’ had, whether in terms of physique or in number. It would seem that the necromancy major still couldn’t obtain equal treatment even after paying fifty gold extra.

But the necromancy group numbered twelve people, whilst there was only six battlesteeds. Therefore, each horse had to carry double. The students looked at each other and quickly paired up, leaving Han Shuo, Fanny, Gene, and Bach as the odd ones out.

“Bach, you and Bryan share a horse while I ride one with Master Fanny.” Gene’s eyes darted quickly and he became overjoyed when he connected the dots. He smiled happily at Bach.

“No! I’m definitely not riding a horse with that dirty errand slave!” Bach held a grudge against Han Shuo and immediately cried out in dissatisfaction.

Everyone knew Gene’s thoughts. This was a golden opportunity to get close to Fanny. He was about to respond huffily to Bach’s yell when Fanny suddenly smiled. “Since Bach is unwilling, then I’ll ride with Bryan.”

“Heh heh, thank you Master Fanny. I’m coming!” Han Shuo was elated and joyously brushed past Gene, striding quickly towards Fanny.

# Chapter 30: A tantalizing moment on the back of a battle steed

On the way to the town of Drol, the multiple items, previously loaded onto Han Shuo, were divvied up between the battlesteeds.

Han Shuo was seated behind Fanny, and their bodies touched as the horse maneuvered. A faint, alluring scent wafted towards Han Shuo's nose and mouth as her hair swung in front of them.

Fanny sat on the horse with her well-rounded upper body straight and proper. Her alluring curves, beneath her mage robe, were completely laid out for Han Shuo's admiring glance. As the horse galloped, the distance between the two started to close slowly.

Towards the end, Han Shuo's lower abdomen and Fanny's full butt slowly touched. The swiftly galloping horse caused the two to be off balance, and Han Shuo's lower abdomen and Fanny's beautiful butt bounced off each other. The thin mage robe did nothing to stop the marvelous sensation, and Han Shuo's uncontrollable desires reared their heads as the bodies collided against each other's.

Han Shuo himself didn't know whether to laugh or cry when a certain portion of his lower body stiffened, but he was unable to control his body's reactions. His upright lower body moved with the horse's ups and downs, constantly moving in the area between Fanny's wonderful butt cheeks.

Waves of strong stimulus came from the point of contact between Han Shuo and Fanny, stirring Han Shuo's heart so much that he almost cried aloud. Han Shuo stared at Fanny from behind, and realized that, at some point, a red flush had crept up Fanny's pure, white neck, making her look even more tantalizing and mouthwatering.

The sexy Fanny was already the subject of Han Shuo's daydreams, and he also happened to be at an age in which boys found it hardest to control their bodies. Add to that, the fact that Han Shuo was a virgin, who had no idea what intimate relations felt like, all this made the stimulus as earth-

shattering as thunder and lightning. Everything became difficult to control after that.

Unable to control his desires, Han Shuo was boldly wanton as he reached out his hand and slowly crept it towards Fanny's soft waist. Both of his hands firmly grasped Fanny's waist in order to more closely connect their lower bodies.

Two bone-piercing pains instantaneously came from the backs of Han Shuo's hands. He lifted his head in shock and immediately saw Fanny's ashamed and angry face. Fanny's beautiful face was red with anger as she turned her head, and her mesmerizing eyes glared viciously at Han Shuo. She said in a low voice, "Damnit, control yourself Bryan, otherwise I'll throw you off the horse."

But Fanny could immediately tell that something was wrong with Han Shuo. His face was beet red and his body convulsed spastically. He panted heavily and remained in this position for five seconds, after which his entire body froze and then returned to normal. The only thing left was a mouth panting on and off.

Fanny could clearly feel that something liquid and sticky had been added to the area between her behind.

"So... sorry Master Fanny! I... I didn't mean to!" Upon seeing that Fanny was about to spontaneously erupt in rage after Han Shuo had discharged himself, he immediately reacted and whined guiltily, but he actually kept revisiting the tantalizing moment in his mind, and wasn't as afraid or remorseful as he pretended to be.

Fanny was stopped up with rage. She also understood the nuances of Han Shuo's current age and that their bodies had been touching in a rather inappropriate way. Han Shuo's actions were out of instinct, and most likely not his true intentions.

But he had actually violated her in doing so. Even though the two hadn't really done anything, being a woman, Fanny naturally felt resentful and mad that Han Shuo had relieved himself behind her.

Han Shuo would most likely be unable to handle it if Fanny really lost

her temper and took it out on him, since she was an adept mage. Han Shuo also had feelings for Fanny, and was truly afraid that Fanny would throw everything to the winds and beat him. He really didn't know what to do with her current mental state, and was at a loss for what to do.

Just as Han Shuo was thinking random thoughts, he suddenly felt a severe pinch on the insides of his two thighs. He immediately ducked his head and cried out in pain, hearing Fanny's voice at the same time, "Damned Bryan, I'll settle things with you later."

"Master Fanny, what's going on? Bryan, what are you going on about?" Lisa had heard Han Shuo's scream up ahead and looked back in question.

"No, nothing. He lost his seat for a moment and was scared out of his mind." Fanny cut in to explain before Bryan had a chance to open his mouth.

Silence resumed as everyone continued to hurry down the path. Half an hour later, Han Shuo was amazed to discover that his lower body was standing up again. When Fanny felt the same thing, she immediately separated a short distance from the pack and reined in the battlesteed, angrily demanding that Han Shuo steer the horse.

"Master Fanny, I really didn't mean to, and I don't know how to ride a horse." Han Shuo clambered onto the horse with resignation under Fanny's angry motions and spoke with a pinched face.

"Shut up and listen to me. I'll teach you how to tame a battlesteed." The two had switched positions, with Han Shuo in the front and Fanny in the back. Fanny, who had always been gentle and nice to Han Shuo, was no longer so kindly disposed to him because of what had happened earlier and spoke angrily.

Han Shuo couldn't get a grasp on things under Fanny's directions at first, and the battlesteed pranced around directionless. It rushed violently to and fro, braying and screaming loudly. Han Shuo and Fanny's bodies were off balance, causing Fanny's full bosom to crash repeatedly into Han Shuo's back. Learning how to ride a horse was the furthest thing from Han Shuo's mind and he was completely distracted.

After struggling for a while accompanied by Fanny's rage-filled shouts, Han Shuo finally began to tame the battlesteed. Fanny propped herself up with two hands on Han Shuo's back, preventing her well rounded chest from intimately touching his back again. She directed the path forward and they rushed towards Drol.

When Han Shuo and Fanny had arrived at Drol, the sky was dusky and night about to fall. Gene and a bunch of necromancy students were all waiting for them, anxiously staring at the road.

Gene hastily walked out when Han Shuo and Fanny appeared, looking at her and quickly saying, "Master Fanny, what took you so long? I thought something might have happened to you, I was so worried."

"Nothing much, just that Bryan wanted to try his hand at steering the battlesteed halfway through. I gave him some pointers, thus the reason for the delay." Fanny had already regained her composure at this time. She smiled as she looked at the group and chuckled faintly, "Very good, everyone is accounted for. Master Gene, have we settled in at the hotel?"

"That's been taken care of. We can rest as soon as we stable our horses. We can head directly to the Dark Forest when dawn breaks tomorrow."

Fanny alighted gracefully off the horse behind Han Shuo, displaying a nimble body. She stretched and frowned, "We've been sweating all day. I'm going to take a shower in the hotel. Bryan, come to my room after you've stabled the horses. We need to talk."

"Understood Master Fanny." Han Shuo agreed with a wry face, knowing full well that Fanny must want him with regards to his earlier violation.

Fanny anxiously rushed off towards the hotel after she'd finished speaking. Han Shuo felt the stickiness of his lower body and understood perfectly why she was so eager to take a shower. A hint of a smirk crossed his face.

Han Shuo and a few male necromancy students stabled the six horses underneath Gene's guidance. They then all followed Gene to the hotel.

“Master Gene, Drol is far away from the Empire and directly faces the Dark Forest. There are many bizarre and unique shops in this town. Since it’s not fully dark yet, can we go take a walk? We know what the hotel looks like anyways, so can we go back a bit later?” Bach suddenly spoke up at this moment, and the other students beside him were all chomping at the bit as well. It would seem that they were up to something else, judging from their expressions.

“No!” Gene denied them resolutely, and then looked at them with a weird smile. He said lowly, “Do you really think that I don’t know what you’re up to? This town of Drol is also called town of Depravity because of its unique location. Danger can befall any of the adventurers and merchants who come here and so they all seek excitement whether in dreams or their waking moments. Thus, their entertainment industry is renowned throughout the Empire. Hmph, you are absolutely barred from opportunistic depravity.”

Indeed, Han Shuo observed the surroundings closely after Gene’s words and realized that although it wasn’t truly night yet, there were so many lights on Drol’s wide streets that they were a neon blur. Several young girls, wearing heavy makeup, stood on a street corner, flinging flirtatious smiles and catcalling the pedestrians on the streets, giving off the impression of total submission to any bystander’s will.

Gene’s words had obviously hit home as the despondent boys walked into the hotel with their heads trailing. They sighed and complained about Gene’s heartlessness.

The students all found their rooms with help from Gene, after entering the hotel. Gene threw a glance at Han Shuo and smiled faintly, “We had limited funds this time and already took out fifty gold earlier for the battlesteeds, so for simplicity’s sake, I’ve arranged the abandoned storehouse for you. The storehouse is towards the back on the left hand side. There’s no key, just head on back.”

Gene spread his hands apologetically after his words and speedily left with a smile. Han Shuo could hear Gene’s quiet snickering after a few steps and his low mutterings, “You mere errand slave, how dare you share

a horse with my beloved Fanny. Huh!”

The Han Shuo of now was hardly the Han Shuo of old. His senses were acutely perceptive within a short range, and he heard every part of Gene’s laughter and murmurings. Han Shuo smiled coldly and cursed in a low voice for a bit, then smirked evilly.

Just you wait until Fanny’s mine... I’ll see you cry tears of blood then. Han Shuo thought viciously as he made for Fanny’s room.



# Chapter 31: You're a magical genius!

Dondondon! Han Shuo stood outside Fanny's door and knocked with an outreached hand.

"Bryan, is it you? Come in." Fanny's faintly lethargic voice sounded from inside the room.

When Han Shuo pushed the door open, he was greeted with the sight of Fanny's wet purple hair plastered to the white nape of her neck. A few translucent traces of water still clung to her charming face. Fanny had obviously just showered as she was wrapped in a soft white robe. A small patch of milky-white, creamy skin was revealed on her chest as she towed away the water in her hair with her jade hands.

It was a simple room with a cloud of mist billowing out from the open doors of the bathroom, which was located in the back. Fanny was sitting next to a round table, a pair of troubled eyes roving over Han Shuo's body.

"Master Fanny, what did you want me for?" Han Shuo looked around the room and his heart seized upon seeing how tempting Fanny's beauty was, but he kept a dumb, honest, and even slightly fearful expression on his face.

"What for? Hmph. You were certainly bold on the back of that horse today. I've always thought you were cowardly and timid, but you commit the most outrageous acts when your lewd desires rear their head!" Fanny took her measure of Han Shuo and snorted lightly with a frown.

Here it comes. Han Shuo thought as his expression grew even more innocent. He scratched his head and held his breath until his face grew red, then took a deep breath and hung his head. "I'm sorry Master Fanny, you're so beautiful and pretty, and you were suddenly so close to me. I don't know what came over me, but I couldn't control my actions. I was wrong, Master Fanny please punish me?"

Pa!

Fanny suddenly slapped the table in anger and Han Shuo backed up "in

shock”, watching Fanny fearfully.

“Damnit, you violated me! Do you understand?” Fanny glared fiercely at Han Shuo as she shouted hoarsely.

Han Shuo nodded his head honestly and said with an open face, “I was wrong Master Fanny, I’ll bear responsibility!”

“Hah! You, take responsibility? Are you able to?” Fanny laughed in the midst of her rage upon hearing Han Shuo’s words. Although she giggled as she stared at Han Shuo, there wasn’t a single trace of a smile on her face.

“Eh... then I’ll do whatever you say. It’s all up to you!” Han Shuo was certain that Fanny wouldn’t do too much to him, so he sighed with a face of resignation and responded genuinely.

With that said, Fanny didn’t really know what to do with Han Shuo. From her perspective, it was highly likely that Han Shuo hadn’t committed that act on purpose, plus she had been the one who told him to get on the horse. Although that had happened, it wasn’t as if Han Shuo had committed a heinous crime at the end of the day. He was just a mere errand slave, it felt a bit awkward trying to decide how to punish him.

Seeing that Fanny’s brows were slightly knitted and that she seemed to be having difficulty in figuring out what to do with him, a thought struck Han Shuo and he said, “Master Fanny, didn’t you say that I’m your experimental subject? I actually have felt something weird with my body lately and something strange is happening to my mind. When I heard Lisa chant the incantation for the bone arrow spell a few days ago, I tried saying it as well and actually activated it.”

Fanny had been deep in furrowed thought, but started upon hearing these words. She immediately looked at Han Shuo in astonishment, saying excitedly. “Really? Did you really mean that? Can you try out the bone arrow magic for me?”

Han Shuo knew that Fanny was addicted to necromancy magic and was extremely curious about his body’s condition. He was also well aware that he wouldn’t be just an errand slave for the Academy forever, so this was a

perfect opportunity to slowly change his image in Fanny's eyes.

Indeed, as soon as Fanny had heard his body's peculiar condition, she immediately forgot about punishing him and temporarily focused all her concentration on this matter.

"Of course I can!" Han Shuo smiled faintly and raised his hands, chanting lowly, "Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will. Bone Arrows!"

A cuttngly-sharp bone arrow appeared out of thin air in front of Han Shuo as soon as he completed his incantation. The bone arrow flew towards the wooden wall at his gesture, but started to wobble halfway through, and then finally exploded with a sharp crack.

"No no, the incantation was correct, but your hand seals during casting were incorrect. The right hand should slowly lift up, and the left hand shouldn't be on the same level as the right hand." Fanny first started to teach in her accustomed manner, then abruptly reacted with a sharp intake of breath. She looked at Han Shuo with a face full of shock and her lithe body trembled eagerly. She cried out breathlessly, "Oh, my gosh. You can, you can really cast necromancy magic!"

"Yes, yes. I don't know what happened either. Oh right Master Fanny, can you explain to me in detail the proper hand seals to cast the magic?" Han Shuo sniggered inwardly and spoke to Fanny with a look of confusion.

"Of course I can!" Fanny was truly excited and threw the towel in her hand to the side. Her limber legs walked rapidly to Han Shuo's side as she started explaining in detail.

"This, this, like this?"

"Raise your hand higher, concentrate your mental strength, and don't relax even a bit. Right, that's the correct hand seal. Mm, slow your left hand down a bit and show me again."

"Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will, bone arrows!"

When the bone arrow appeared this time, its direction was correct, but it abruptly exploded into pieces again just before it reached the wooden wall.

“Bryan, mental strength. Keep an eye on your mental strength and don’t relax for even a second. You can only relax after the bone arrow has successfully struck its target, otherwise the bone arrow will explode halfway. Try again.”

“Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone arrows, and destroy according to my will, bone arrows!”

Upon completion of the incantation, the bone arrow flew as fast as lightning without changing its position towards the wooden wall. It pierced the wooden wall with a sharp pfft and then vanished without a trace.

“Oh, gosh. Bryan you’re a genius. You’re absolutely a magical genius. I’ve only given you tips twice and you can successfully cast the bone arrow magic. Students typically need one to three months before they can master this magic. You’re so incredible.” Fanny was utterly stunned by Han Shuo and capered around, exclaiming loudly. She looked very excited.

“Damnit, who’s randomly casting magic! It almost hit me. Eh, Bryan, Master Fanny? Bryan, what are you doing in Master Fanny’s room?” Lisa’s startled cry suddenly came from next door as one of her eyes peered in from the hole in the wall.

“Nothing much, I grabbed Bryan for a bit of bone arrow practice. Lisa go to sleep soon, we won’t be disturbing you anymore.” Fanny walked hurriedly to the hole in the wall and replied charmingly. She picked up the towel that she had thrown to the ground earlier and filled in the hole before Lisa had a chance to respond.

She turned and look askance at Han Shuo, walking quickly towards him. “Stand still and don’t move, let me see what’s going on with your body?”

“Alright.” Han Shuo smiled responded faintly. I only spent ten days to fully master the bone arrow magic. According to Fanny’s words, maybe I do have some potential for practicing magic.

“Hmm? What’s that weird smell?” Fanny had walked over and was about to reach out to inspect Han Shuo’s body when her refined nose wrinkled, and she asked in confusion.

Han Shuo stopped in his tracks, then abruptly understood. He looked down awkwardly, saying wryly. “My room doesn’t have a bathroom, so I didn’t shower. That’s why there’s still a smell left.”

Fanny’s beautiful face flushed red after these words and she glared violently at Han Shuo, cursing lowly, “Despicable!” She then pointed to the bathroom with its doors ajar, frowning as she hurried him, “The water is still warm, wash that disgusting crap off yourself!”

It truly was “despicable”. Han Shuo could still feel a strand of sticky liquid leaking out from a slit in his lower body. Fanny’s words echoed his current inclinations. It was indeed quite uncomfortable for his lower body to remain in a sticky state, so he walked merrily to the bathroom that Fanny had just occupied.

A simple, crude, round tub was inside the bathroom. The water inside still gave off steam, and several pieces of Fanny’s sexy lingerie was laid out on a nearby rack. It only took one glance of the small silk pieces that were as ephemeral as cicada wings, for a ball of flame to violently rise from Han Shuo’s lower body.

Just as Han Shuo was salivating fixedly over the lingerie that Fanny had changed out of, she abruptly rushed into the bathroom and hurriedly put away all the items of clothing in great embarrassment. When she turned and saw that Han Shuo’s eyes were just about ready to spit fire, she involuntarily made a light spitting sound and spat out, “detestable”. She finally left with panicked footsteps after violently pinching Han Shuo’s backside.

Han Shuo peeled off his clothes and lay within the round pool, breathing in the mesmerizing scent that Fanny had left behind in the bathroom with his mouth. Luxuriating in the water that Fanny had previously used, Han Shuo felt that the perfection of moment was indescribable with words. He basically didn’t want to leave.

Han Shuo took a long time to wash up, and carelessly scrubbed his underwear only after Fanny had checked in a few times, finally walking out of the bathroom clutching his underwear.

“It’s getting late, I won’t inspect your body today. Hurry and leave.” Fanny acted like nothing had happened after Han Shuo had walked out and spoke dispassionately to him.

Han Shuo nodded with an honest smile and happily walked towards the door. Fanny called out lightly just as Han Shuo was about to leave, “Bryan!”

Peering back in confusion, Han Shuo scratched his head and asked dumbly, “Yes?”

“Nothing, just that you don’t seem like someone who’s crazy!” Fanny sized up Han Shuo and said oddly.

“I don’t know what happens when my head hurts, but when I’m not being affected by anything. Everything is normal.” Han Shuo’s heart skipped a beat. He left in guilty haste after his response.

# Chapter 32: Small accomplishments in magic

Han Shuo didn't immediately rest upon returning to the hotel storage room, but rather practiced magic as usual.

The magical yuan within his body circulated according to the principles of demonic magic. Under Han Shuo's careful guidance, it flowed through every inch of his meridians, skin, muscles, and bones. Whether it was his physical strength or his five senses, Han Shuo could feel that both had greatly improved.

Han Shuo resolutely kept attacking the final bottleneck according to the instructions in the Mystical Glacial Spellfire. He circulated his magical yuan to the centers of his two hands and repeatedly tried to clear the meridians in his five fingers and bones. Pain continuously emitted from his bones and meridians as his two hands trembled with convulsions. Faint red and purple lights emitted from the backs of his hands, like two feeble lanterns.

The pain continued to increase while Han Shuo grit his teeth and stubbornly hung on. He knew that this was the critical point in training the Glacial Mystical Spellfire. It was up to his will to see if he could clear all the meridians in his hands and achieve successful results with the Glacial Mystical Spellfire.

The process of the magical yuan attacking the bones in his five fingers seemed to continue interminably. Han Shuo sat Indian style with sweat dripping out of every pore as his veins bulged and pounded in his forehead. His originally peaceful facial expression became a bit sinister and ghastly, giving off a feeling of extreme evil.

After who-knew-how-long, just as Han Shuo felt that he would faint from the pain, he could no longer bear the bone searing agony in his hands and involuntarily flapped his hands with a low roar.

Papapa...

Ten crisp sounds rang out from his fingers as Han Shuo immediately felt a bit drained, but the magical yuan flowed smoothly into his fingers with no obstacles.

Ten purple-red embers, like the flame on a candle wick, instantaneously arose from his fingertips. The ten purple-red blossoms of fire sparkled with breathtaking colors in the dark of the storage room. They were like hypnotizing flowers that had suddenly bloomed, giving others a secretive and unpredictable feeling.

The palms of his two hands were also dyed with purple-red color, along with his fingers. The bones within his hands could clearly be seen, and even his skin shone with a translucent gleam, looking exceedingly bizarre.

Absolutely elated, Han Shuo roared in a low voice. He then quickly looked around, and slowly withdrew the magical yuan from his hands back into his stomach. Without the continued infusion of magical yuan, Han Shuo's hands slowly went back to normal and the ten flowering flames disappeared as well.

Success. This was the evidence of successfully practicing the Glacial Mystical Spellfire. Although its full power could not be demonstrated due to his insufficient magical yuan, Han Shuo was no longer a defenseless, ordinary person, thanks to his current achievements.

The red flame of the Glacial Mystical Spellfire burned all in its path, whereas the purple flame was bone chillingly cold. Anyone struck with this spellfire would either be burned from the inside out, or experience their internal organs being frozen into blocks of ice. The likelihood of survival was exceedingly low. When the caster had sufficient magical yuan, even greater spellfire could be concentrated into the palms and thus unleash even more frightening power.

Han Shuo was engulfed by a huge wave of exhaustion after succeeding with Mystical Glacial Spellfire, and he fell into a deep sleep.

The next day, dawn.

Under Fanny's leadership, the band of twelve had gathered at the entrance to the town of Drol. They gathered some food and water from the



town and piled all these items onto Han Shuo.

“What were you doing in Master Fanny’s room last night?” Lisa asked Han Shuo in a low voice as she hung a leather water skin on him.

It seemed like Fanny hadn’t explained last night’s events to anyone. Han Shuo cast a glance at Fanny off in the distance and realized that she was reminding some students of things to be careful of. He also responded in a low voice, “Nothing much. Master Fanny wanted to test some necromancy magic and used me as a subject.”

“Hmph. Don’t lie to me, even if Master Fanny wanted to test some magic on you, she would test bone arrow. This kind of magic only needs to be practiced by apprentices, would she need to test this kind of magic as an adept mage?” Lisa huffed and looked warily at Han Shuo.

“Master Fanny was testing bone arrow magic, isn’t each magic spell divided into five levels? She just wanted to see what level of bone arrow magic she could cast with her current strength. You can ask Master Fanny if you don’t believe me.”

Ever since Han Shuo had lied to Lisa, her attitude had indeed changed drastically towards him. But, women were just so. Even if she didn’t like him, she would still treat you as her personal property when she knew that you liked her. If you developed an ambiguous relationship with anyone, she would be the first to feel uncomfortable.

Lisa was the same way. Although she didn’t think much of him, but once she “understood” Han Shuo’s thought, she naturally thought that Han Shuo would like only her unto his death, and shouldn’t have any goings on with Fanny. Han Shuo had heard of this from others before, and now it seemed that there was some sense to it.

“Forget it, you wouldn’t dare lie to me anyways!” Lisa looked at Fanny, spoke to Han Shuo in a carefree manner and then turned to leave.

“Bryan, let’s go. The trees and shrubs grow vigorously in the Dark Forest and the paths are winding and uneven. We can no longer ride horses and can only proceed on foot. You have too many resources on you and cannot be pulled down. There are many vicious magical creatures within the Dark

Forest. It would be tragic if you were pulled down and killed by them.” Fanny looked at Han Shuo from afar and called out.

Fanny’s attitude towards Han Shuo had subconsciously changed after yesterday’s events. She seemed to place greater importance on him now, but the gentle attitude she had towards him had ceased to exist, replaced with a brusque frustration.

“Coming, coming!” Han Shuo had taken huge advantage of Fanny yesterday and she’d also witnessed his ugliness in her bathroom last night. It was natural that she no longer looked kindly upon him. It was actually a kind of improvement now that Fanny was slowly changing her attitude towards him.

Drol was abnormally busy in the day as many stores had already set up shop bright and early. A few sleepy-eyed merchants and adventurers walked out of nearby alleys with their clothes in disarray. These people were also preparing to get to work after a night of depravity.

Merchants and adventurers formed groups and set off for the Dark Forest with their belongings in tow. They either sought to capture magical creatures or trade with the minorities within the Forest.

Under Fanny’s constant urging, Han Shuo’s group of twelve also put their affairs in order and followed Fanny and Gene’s footsteps into the Dark Forest.

The Dark Forest was vast and endless with various savage and violent magical creatures within it, as well as a few uncommon races. Elves, goblins, and savages numbered amongst them and were the main races within the Forest, but even these races normally lived on the outskirts of the Forest.

The real inner world of the true Dark Forest was full of mysteries and danger. The largest and most frightening magical creatures lived within this inner world, and that was the most tempting and mysterious part of the Dark Forest. Although legends spoke of great treasures and precious items within the core, few dared venture within. Those who dared to enter and still made it out alive were the cream of the crop.

“Follow me, we’ll head south.” Fanny called out loudly as soon as they entered the Dark Forest and changed the group’s heading, making straight for the southern part of the Forest.

The roads were indeed rugged within the Dark Forest. All sorts of durable rocks and towering trees with branches tens of meters long could be seen everywhere. There were many merchants and adventurers also heading south in the beginning, but they all veered off on their own paths as time went on. The others all disappeared in the blink of an eye, and no one knew where they went.

Suddenly, several rapid footfalls fell into Han Shuo’s hearing. He paused, concentrated his hearing, and then immediately said, “A sound is approaching, and it doesn’t seem like the steps of humans.”

“Bryan, you’re just an errand slave. What danger can you hear? So ridiculous.” Bach was the first to laugh loudly and mock Han Shuo.

Ever since Han Shuo had started training his magical yuan, his five senses had become a lot more perceptive than before. Besides, he was confident with his hearing to begin with. It was impossible for humans to emit the fast approaching light taps, and there seemed to be more than one.

Han Shuo had only spoken up because he understood from Fanny and everyone else the dangers of the Dark Forest, but seeing that no one paid any attention to him after his words, Han Shuo refrained from speaking up further.

The group continued to slowly walk south, but Fanny first frowned, and then exclaimed in surprise after two minutes. She said in her sweet voice, “There are indeed magical creatures approaching. Everyone put down your things and prepare to fight. Since we’re still in the outskirts of the Dark Forest, the creatures shouldn’t be terribly strong. No need to worry everyone.”

The students started, then looked at Han Shuo oddly after Fanny spoke. They hurriedly relieved themselves of their packs and formed a circular defensive position.

## Chapter 33: A small magic trial

Suddenly, five cat-like shapes rushed in from around them, but the shapes had three heads, a spiky tail, and yellow light dancing within its eyes.

“Not to worry, these are just barbed-tail cats. Everyone hurry and attack. Show me the results of your magic training.” Fanny breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing the magical creatures.

Numerous bone arrows swiftly materialized out of thin air as students finished their incantations after Fanny had finished speaking. The bone arrows shot towards the five barbed-tail cats with whooshing sounds. Although their speed was fast, three of them were hit by the bone arrows and blood immediately blossomed on their brown fur, affecting their speed.

However, the first two that had rushed up first actually evaded the students' bone arrow attacks and dashed straight for them. As the students panicked, their bone arrow attacks veered off course or exploded in midair as they repeatedly made mistakes in their frenzy.

The two barbed tail cats darted left and right. Fanny made her move just as the one of the left was about to charge into the defensive perimeter. The same bone arrow magic in her hands resulted in three bone arrows that flew unerringly onto the three heads of this cat.

Three shrill wails emitted from the barbed-tail cat's mouth and it shrank from making another rush. It ran away fearfully instead.

The other barbed tail cat made for Han Shuo, and in fact it had set its sights on him. In the other students' panic, their bone arrow magic continued to be riddled with mistakes and didn't slow down the cat at all.

Gene was only concerned with Fanny's side and in the heat of the moment forgot about the threat on the right. He only reacted after Fanny had fought off the barbed tail cat, but it was already a bit too late. The cat had directly charged to in front of Han Shuo, and its three fanged cat heads along with razor sharp claws went directly for him.

“Bryan, be careful!” Fanny and Lisa both screamed in fright.

Han Shuo’s face stayed calm and didn’t panic as he saw the barbed-tail cat bearing down on him. A cold curve even played at the corners of his lips.

Han Shuo suddenly snaked out a hand like lightning when the barbed-tail cat’s claws were in front of his face. His left arm swung violently, and the durable wooden sticks intended to be a tent structure that were tied to his arm caught the barb tailed cat’s sharp claws.

His right hand immediately thrust out, and the others seemed to see a bright red line drawn through the air. Han Shuo’s right hand landed on the cat’s lower abdomen, paused for a second, and was then retracted.

Gene’s bone arrow support also arrived at the same time, and two arrows tardily shot towards the barbed-tail cat. Three ghastly wails sounded out from the three heads as it fell listlessly to the ground with an audible thud, where it then laid unmoving.

The four already injured barbed tail cats were spooked by the fall of this cat and they cried wildly as they hurriedly retreated, vanishing without a trace in the blink of an eye.

“Eh? Master Gene’s bone arrows are so strong, they killed this barbed-tail cat in a flash! The bone arrows that we and Master Fanny shot towards our cats only injured them and weren’t nearly as powerful!” Amy gave a soft exclamation and looked at Gene in surprise.

The others also thought it was odd after Amy’s words, and even Fanny gazed at Gene in astonishment. She said with a perplexed look, “Bone arrow is just a basic attack magic. You were able to immediately kill a barbed tail cat with this magic. This is truly amazing!”

Gene’s expression was a bit strange in the beginning, as if he was also befuddled as well, but after Fanny’s words, he immediately displayed a very confident smile, and nodded faintly at everyone, as if he too was paying respects to the power of his attack magic.

“Bryan, when you slashed at the cat with your right hand just now, why

did I seem to see a red line slash through the air? What's going on? Although Master Gene killed the barbed tail cat, it seemed to have been you who made it off balance, right?" Lisa had been paying attention to Han Shuo and thought briefly, thinking it was a bit odd.

"Heh heh, don't think nonsense Lisa. Bryan merely hit the cat once, but his hit didn't have much effect. What harm could he bring to the barbed - tail cat with his errand slave strength?" Bach flicked a disdainful glance at Han Shuo and said in a voice heavy with sarcasm.

Han Shuo smiled dumbly and didn't say much, but the other students, having seen the same sight, also looked at Han Shuo with some confusion. They all soon decided that Han Shuo hadn't had any effect, and it was Gene who had killed the cat.

After all, to them, Han Shuo was just an errand slave that they could bully at their leisure... how could an errand slave have such strength and ways?

"Alright alright, let's get out of here. The barbed-tailed cat is a magical creature that picks on the weak and fears the strong, but this type of creature is a pack animal and would cause some trouble for us if they came back with reinforcements. These low level magical creatures have no magical cores, and their skin isn't worth much. Ignore them and let's leave!"

Fanny didn't pay much attention to Gene after that initial moment of astonishment as she urged everyone to pick up their dropped belongings and hurry on their way. This cause great disappointment for Gene as he thought that Fanny would definitely see him in a different light.

The group of twelve repacked their belongings under Fanny's cries and continued southbound.

Han Shuo trailed the pack and wore a bizarre smile before he left. He'd peeked at the two wounds caused by Gene's arrows and could smell a burnt smell already emitting from them. Its flesh could be glimpsed from the wounds, and he could see that it was already a charred, burnt mess.

This barbed tail cat's death was due to the red spellfire of Han Shuo's

Mystical Glacial Spellfire and had nothing to do with Gene.

He looked at his right hand and circulated his magical yuan. A bright red spellflame abruptly erupted from his middle finger. Han Shuo breathed a sigh of appreciation for the power of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire as he admired the flame, finally chuckling to himself before catching up to the others.

Night. Bright moonlight filtered through the dense tree branches and leaves to scatter on all corners of the Dark Forest. A few unknown bugs serenaded the night, bringing some joyful sounds to the otherwise peaceful forest.

A bonfire burned bright red, warming the chilly night air. Han Shuo picked up a few branches with fresh meat draped over them and continuously turned them over the blazing flame. Delicious meat scents began to waft out into student noses after he applied some spices onto the pieces of meat.

“It smells so good! Bryan, how do you know how to do this?” Lisa exclaimed in surprise as she wrinkled her cute nose as her gaze locked onto a piece of meat gleaming with oil.

“Your performance when you met the barbed tail cat today was terribly disappointing. You panicked so much that you couldn’t even cast the most basic bone arrow magic. This won’t do! And Master Gene, although your last bone arrow magic was quite amazing, you were too lax earlier. If it wasn’t for Bryan’s high alertness, he surely would’ve been harmed by the cat.”

The students were gathered around the bonfire as they listened to Fanny’s loud lecture. Her brow was furrowed and she seemed to be very displeased with the students’ and Gene’s performance earlier in the day.

The students had timid expressions on their faces and seemed to be listening very intently. However, their eyes kept traveling to Han Shuo’s meat rack, and many swallowed audibly.

Han Shuo had been a full time otaku in his previous life and had taken care of his daily needs. He’d naturally honed his cooking skills. The

development of this world's cuisines were a far cry from the time in which Han Shuo had resided in. People had started salivating when he'd merely deployed the slightest bit of his skills.

Han Shuo snuck a few glances at Fanny as her lecture sounded in his ears, a bit startled by Fanny's commanding aura. It looked like Fanny was the true organizer of this time's outing. Gene's position, who was also a teacher in the necromancy major, seemed to be a bit lower than Fanny. No wonder he was a bit afraid of Fanny. It wasn't as simple as him having a crush on her.

"Alright, let's stop here. We'll run into more danger along the way. I hope you won't be as careless next time. Let's eat."

After hectoring the students for a while, Fanny was also extremely tempted by the delicious scent of meat. She'd been on the road all day today and had partook only simple bread and clear water. Her stomach was the first to speak up now that such delicious food was in sight.

"Master Fanny, this is yours. Lisa, this is yours. Bella, Bach, Gene, these are yours..." Han Shuo had a strange smile on his face as he passed out the meat.

"Mm... Bryan, nicely done! This meat is delicious!" Fanny licked her lips after eating a piece and kept forth a steady stream of compliments. Han Shuo's heart lurched at the sight of this arousing scene.

"Not bad...It's actually really good! Bryan does have some skill!" Lisa was also smiling happily and she devoured half her meat in the blink of an eye."

"What kind of meat is this? This is disgusting! It's not fully cooked yet."

"Ew... this is gross. There's no flavor to this."

"Damned Bryan, you did this on purpose. This meat is still raw."

Bach, Gene and Bella, as well as some others with grudges against Han Shuo cursed repeatedly after taking a few bites.

Han Shuo smiled honestly with an innocent face, "Eh... maybe a few



pieces really weren't ready yet. Sorry, bad luck!"

# Chapter 34: Subconscious changes

Han Shuo and the band of twelve walked south for a full eight days. They met increasingly fiercer magical creatures along the way.

Unicorned charging bulls, enormous lizards, magical wolves that could release wind blades, and flying eagles that could spew out frost. They were handled easily at first and increased in difficulty until the band barely handled them by the skin of their teeth. Everyone felt the increasing pressure.

Everyone started off eating the food that they had brought and started cooking the meat from the magical creatures when all their rations had been eaten.

The magical creatures were increasingly violent, but not all of the flesh was edible. The lizard, for instance, had a strange smell that accompanied its flesh that made it hard to swallow.

But the stronger the magical creature was, the more valuable their carcasses, particularly the ones that could cast simple magics. These creatures would have magical cores within their bodies. These cores were very precious and could be sold for varying high prices according to their level.

The band's haul was uncommon as well. They had obtained four cores from magical creatures over the past couple of days, three from the Windblade Wolf and one from the Frost Eagle.

The cores from magical creatures were divided into six levels. Level 6 cores were the cheapest, while level 1 was the most expensive and basically hard to even catch a glimpse of. These magical cores could be used to create powerful magical weapons and increase a mage's power. Some special ones could even be used to increase a mage's mental strength, thus their prices were incredibly high.

The Windblade Wolf's magical core was ranked at level 5, and could fetch twenty gold at the market, while the Frost Eagle was higher, at level 4, and its market price was 150 gold. Based purely on their haul of magical

creature cores, the band had already turned a profit even after subtracting out the fifty golds needed for borrowing the battlesteeds.

Not to mention that apart from their cores, the bodies of these magical creatures were also worth some money. The fur of the Windblade Wolf and the unicorn horn of the charging bull were all valuable items. The value of these items added together had greatly exceeded Fanny and Gene's original expectations.

"Everyone has improved after a few days of training, and you no longer panic when faced with magical creatures. This is the most important thing in actual battle. On top of that, our luck has been quite good. We have gained much from this time's outing. We will allocate the profits out to everyone after we return to the Academy and sell these items." Fanny was in a good mood and she wore a satisfied smile on her face when she spoke softly to the students.

Han Shuo had been coldly observing everything along the way. The unskilled students had gone from panicking when faced with magical creatures to handling them with indifference. Han Shuo had seen it all clearly.

Han Shuo's five senses were much sharper than anyone else's due to training his magical yuan. His early warnings had accomplished much in the later days, but no one could understand why Han Shuo had such perceptive senses. Fanny had even thoroughly checked Han Shuo's body over the past few days, but had turned up empty handed each time.

Fanny was perplexed, but could think of no better way. She could only say that she would employ the school's magical facilities to give Han Shuo a thorough once over after they'd returned to the Academy. After several days of early warnings and cooking mouthwatering meat, Han Shuo's status had subconsciously risen a few grades in this time's outing.

Other than Bach, Bella, and others who continued to be extremely unfriendly towards Han Shuo because of their continued "bad luck" in always getting a piece of disgusting food, the other students no longer ordered Han Shuo around. Some of the students, who were more

particular about their food, had even tried becoming more friendly with Han Shuo in hopes of obtaining better food.

“Master Fanny, when can we reach that cemetery of death?” Lisa immediately asked after hearing Fanny’s words.

Fanny’s brow creased upon hearing this question and she became silent. She sighed gently after a while. “I’ve only heard that the cemetery of death was once discovered in the deep south of the Dark Forest, but I’m not too certain of its exact location. Our main purpose in traveling to the Dark Forest this time was to teach you the correct method of deploying necromancy magic when faced with danger. Based on our current results, you have all reached this standard.

I don’t know the exact whereabouts of the cemetery of death. You might have noticed by now that the magical creatures we are facing are becoming stronger and stronger. If it weren’t for the prewarnings that Bryan had been issuing the past couple of days, I think some people would have already gotten injured, but even so, we only made it through by the skin of our teeth when we met that Frost Eagle yesterday. I’m worried that some amongst us will not only be hurt, but some may even die if we continue further. Therefore, I think it’s time that we head back.”

The students were a bit dumbfounded by Fanny’s words, while Gene nodded and spoke, “Indeed. We’re just out here for training. The location of the cemetery of death is uncertain, and we don’t even know if it truly exists. It’s normal for us not to find it. Everyone had personally experienced the situation yesterday. If we continue south, I feel that everyone’s lives will be in danger. This time’s outing has already reaped rich rewards, so there is no need for taking further risks.”

The two teachers had thus spoken. A few of the more cowardly students thought back to the events of the past two days and all nodded their heads in agreement. “Alright, then let’s go back to the Academy. The dangers are becoming worse.”

“Bach, you coward. How else can rewards be gained if not through risk. If it weren’t for yesterday’s danger, how could we have gotten that Frost

Eagle's core? We should continue further south, perhaps we'd obtain even more valuable items. This way, the other majors won't look down on our necromancy major when we go back to the Academy." Lisa glared at Bach with a contemptuous look, and tilted her head back with sarcasm. She then cast a glance at Han Shuo, who was cooking meat on the side with an indifferent expression. "Bryan, wouldn't you agree?"

Ordinarily, no one paid any attention to Han Shuo, but after his performance over the past couple of days, incredibly enough, the students all stared at Han Shuo after Lisa had spoken. Even Fanny and Gene were the same, as if Han Shuo's decision was quite important.

Han Shuo was involuntarily speechless. He paused, and then smiled honestly. "Taking risks is a given. People haven't been hurt yet. Why don't we continue? Who knows, maybe we'll gain even more rewards!"

Fanny gazed at Han Shuo strangely, grew quiet for a moment, and then surprisingly nodded her head. "Alright, since this is the case, then let's continue until someone is hurt. Once that happens, we'll return on our original path."

"Come, come everyone, it's time to eat." Han Shuo laughed lightly and called out. Fanny and Lisa then hurtled forward merrily, dropping their manners as they accepted the two largest pieces of meat that Han Shuo handed over.

In the deep of the night, the cool moonlight spilled over the Dark Forest. A few students were already fast asleep in a few crude tents, while some others struggled against their sleepiness and took up the grave task of standing guard.

Han Shuo slipped away soundlessly by himself, slowly moving away from the students' tents and crept through the shadows of the towering trees.

Han Shuo's not terribly strong body could be seen through the cracks between the shadows of the the trees. He was as fast and agile as a cheetah, abruptly changing direction with ease as he wove through the trees. He had traveled far away from Fanny and co's tents in the blink of

an eye and continued south.

After a while, Han Shuo's body suddenly stopped as he spread his two palms upwards and chanted the words to summon a skeletal warrior. "Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald's call and reveal your existence!"

A skinny, inky-black little skeleton wielding a bone dagger abruptly materialized as soon as the incantation was complete. The little skeleton's body was even more dense and darker than before, completely becoming one with the color of the night. It was like an elf of the darkness.

The little skeleton continuously sprang off its feet to follow Han Shuo's high speed dash, but its bones no longer creaked with sound. The seven bone spurs flapped on its back, allowing the little skeleton to speed through the air, like it was hang gliding, as it wove through the forest side by side with Han Shuo.

Two Windblade Wolves suddenly appeared in front of the man and skeleton duo. The two Windblade Wolves were devouring the carcass of a magical creature in the shape of a wild pig. One of them seemed to feel the disturbance in the air as its sharp ears suddenly stood up and its green eyes darted to and fro.

A bone dagger shimmering with a cold, sharp light materialized out of the night. The bone dagger carved a marvelous curve through the thin air and suddenly stabbed towards the wolf, that had been on high alert.

At the same time, a nimble figure suddenly rushed out from the trees of the Dark Forest and made for the other Windblade Wolf. A faint, purple light suddenly flashed in the darkened sky, appearing all the more beautiful and fey.

Two ghastly wails sounded out from the two Windblade Wolves. The bloodthirsty wolves had all been killed before they had a chance to react. One wolf's skull was cleaved straight through with the bone dagger, and the other fell stiffly to the ground with frosty breaths coming out of its mouth.

"Heh heh, another two level five cores!" Han Shuo talked to himself in

satisfaction as he withdrew his hand.

On the other side, the little skeleton had already started dressing the valuable Windblade Wolf skin with its bone dagger. Judging from its practiced movement, this wasn't the first time that it had done so.

# Chapter 35: Prepare to fight

Han Shuo worked by himself during the nights, leveraging his perceptive senses to hunt down the magical creatures nearby. The flawless cooperation between man and skeleton had no drawbacks. They had gathered four level 5 cores by now, as well as some valuable skin and horns.

Han Shuo not only tried to cast magic whenever they hunted down magical creatures, but also repeatedly practiced the bone arrow magic, often combining missile and melee attacks for uncanny effectiveness.

Han Shuo never displayed the same panic and disarray that the students had displayed when they first met magical creatures. He always displayed the same calm, even a sort of numb callousness.

Even Han Shuo himself didn't know why he didn't have any negative emotions throughout the entire process. He could vaguely feel that his inner heart was actually brimming with eagerness and anticipation when he hunted magical creatures, as if he really enjoyed the process.

"I'm definitely not a good person!" Han Shuo laughed at himself, and accepted this time's haul of cores and Windblade Wolf pelts from the little skeleton's hands. He patted the darkly gleaming head of the little skeleton and smiled, "Let's go. We can go back now."

The little skeleton's hand clutched its bone dagger, with no traces of emotion in its empty eye sockets. It trailed behind Han Shuo and swiftly returned along their original path.

Han Shuo chanted an incantation when they were halfway there and the little skeleton returned to the other dimension. Seeing that he was about to return to the camping area, Han Shuo slowed his footsteps and walked unhurriedly through the shadows of the trees.

As it was past midnight, the students standing guard in the camping area had changed to Fanny, Lisa, and Amy. Lisa and Amy had half-drooped eyes and looked incredibly sleepy. Anyone could tell at a glance that they were slacking off and not shouldering the responsibility they were



assigned.

It was a good thing that Fanny understood the importance of keeping guard. Her pair of beautiful eyes roamed the four corners alertly, and her wary gaze immediately locked onto the direction that Han Shuo was coming from when his light footsteps grew near.

Her magic staff in hand, Fanny frowned with an expression of high alert on her alluring features. She slowly advanced in Han Shuo's direction and said softly, "Who goes there?"

"Master Fanny, it's me!" Han Shuo called out lightly as he walked out slowly from the shadows.

"I knew it would be you. I went to look for you earlier and discovered that your tent was empty. Where did you go in the middle of the night?" Fanny's eyes locked onto Han Shuo's body as she asked with confusion.

"Nothing much, I only went to find a secluded corner to practice magic. After I asked you about the bone arrow magic last time, I've been taking advantage of the night to find a secluded area to practice. I think that only with repeated practice can I guarantee that I won't make a mistake." Han Shuo scratched his head and answered honestly in a light voice.

"Bryan, it's great that you're so hardworking. After a while, when you've grasped more magic, I will explain this matter to the school authorities. That way, your status as an errand slave can be waived, and perhaps you will be able to enjoy the same treatment as the students." Fanny looked at Han Shuo and thought for a bit.

"Oh, I was sold to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Will my status as an errand slave be waived purely because I understand magic?" Han Shuo asked after he recovered from being dumbfounded.

Fanny nodded and spoke decisively. "No mage has ever been an errand boy or slave. Being a mage is an esteemed profession throughout the Profound Continent. Even if our necromancy major is unpopular, if you can prove that you truly understand magic, then your status will change, and you'll never have to be the slave that runs errands."

“I see, that’s wonderful. I actually have a lot more questions that I hope Master Fanny will be able to answer for me. I will do my best to improve myself and become an adequate mage.” Han Shuo’s thoughts raced as he suddenly recalled the many unanswered questions he had from the magic books he had read previously, and wanted to make the best use of this opportunity to get them answered.

“No problem, you can ask me any necromancy questions you have in the future. I will help you. Eh... although you’re a bit lascivious right now, I’m certain that you’re a magical genius and will help you escape your current position.” Fanny smiled faintly and responded in her gentle voice.

Han Shuo smiled honestly, as if he hadn’t heard Fanny accuse him of being too carnal. He contemplated briefly and started asking Fanny a few questions regarding magical knowledge.

After a brief moment, Fanny gave a great start of surprise and gazed at Han Shuo in shock. “Oh, goodness, Bryan, you already have so much magical knowledge. That’s amazing!”

“I gained this magical knowledge from reading the magical books in the library last time I helped Jack clean the library. Ever since I discovered that I could cast the bone arrow magic, I started to investigate the reason why.” Han Shuo lied smoothly, and in fact spoke with a slightly embarrassed expression.

“Bryan, I really wasn’t wrong about you. You really are a magical genius!” Fanny exclaimed in astonishment again upon hearing Han Shuo’s explanation.

At this moment, the sound of footsteps fell into Han Shuo’s ears again. His face grew grave as he hastily spoke, “A sound is approaching, but it doesn’t sound like a magical creature. Rather, it sounds more like a human.”

Fanny’s beautiful features changed slightly after Han Shuo’s words, and she pulled on his arms in panic. They ran straight for the tents, “There are many races within the Dark Forest, but not all of them are friendly. Even some who are humans like us will sometimes kill for a high level magical

creature core. We should be ready.”

Fanny’s slender fingers clutched Han Shuo’s wrist in her hurry. She had no particular thoughts about it, but Han Shuo’s mind had already been filled with sinister intentions. His mind started falling head over heels when the feeling of the smooth fingers of her jade hand crossed his wrist, and his mind suddenly recalled the tantalizing moment on the back of a battlesteed a few days ago.

“Everyone up! Lisa and Amy, get everyone up and ready for battle! Possible danger approaches!” Fanny words jolted the dozing Lisa and Amy awake. The two could detect the arrival of danger in Fanny’s frantic tone, and they started raising a ruckus to warn those in the tents.

In the blink of an eye, many students who had been sound asleep in the tents all rushed out with their clothes in disarray and still half asleep. They began urgent preparations for battle.

Fanny unintentionally glanced at Han Shuo at this moment and found that Han Shuo was smiling happily at the hand that was clutching his wrist. An expression of enjoyment could be found on his face. Incensed, Fanny let go only after she gave Han Shuo a sharp pinch with her jade hand. She spoke angrily in a low voice, “Damnit Bryan, I find that you’re as lecherous as Fitch.”

Han Shuo cried out in pain and wore an awkward smile on his face. He thought internally, I wonder what would Fanny think if she knew that I was the one who touched her butt last time?

Several heavy footfalls gradually approached and fell into everyone’s hearing in the mess of the students getting ready. Han Shuo had started to calm down after Fanny’s pinch, and the previous lustful gleam in his eyes faded without a trace, to be replaced by a deep coldness. It was as if he was a bystander coldly observing everything around him.

Heavy footsteps accompanied by weird, airy sounds continued to approach the crew. Gene frowned and asked, perplexed, “Such heavy footsteps shouldn’t belong to humans, but two legged magical creatures are exceedingly rare. What could they be?”

Fanny furrowed her brow in deep thought as her beautiful eyes suddenly brightened with understanding. She suddenly called out, "Everyone hurry and summon skeletal warriors to the front, we seem to have run into the man-eating monsters in the Dark Forest."

Everyone was gobsmacked when the words "man-eating monsters" crossed Fanny's lips. A few of the female students shuddered as fearful expressions blossomed on their faces. Gene was also startled and hurriedly commanded everyone to form a circular defense pattern. He too brought out a brown magic staff, that looked like a tree branch. His face was full of careful wariness.

Rounds of incantations flew out from the students' and teachers' mouths. Multiple skeletal warriors, ghouls, and zombie warriors appeared out of thin air, as well as Fanny and Gene's hate warriors.

Hate warriors were more advanced beings of existence amongst the dark creatures. These hate warriors were enormous in size, wielded metal clubs, and had incredible strength in all the fat on their bodies. Their bodies also possessed extremely durable defensive capabilities, and were a common meat shield used by necromancers.

Indeed, following their thudding footsteps, eight, grey-colored, 2.5 meter tall man-eating monsters wielding studded clubs and long spears soon appeared in everyone's vision.

Man-eating monsters were pack creatures. Ten or so man-eating monsters counted as a tribe. The man-eating monster's nature was lazy and they liked to steal things. They were born robbers. They understood how to use studded clubs and long spears, add to that, the toughness and durability of their bodies meant they had extreme power and damage in close combat.

However, what frightened people most wasn't the strength of the man-eating monsters, but their habits. Man-eating monsters were labeled thus because they ate humans. If they met humans in the course of a robbery, not only would they steal everything, but they would carry off the human for food.

Han Shuo and co. had formed a defensive field, with the skeletal warriors, ghouls, zombie warriors, and hate warriors forming an outer defensive perimeter. A few necromancers readied their offensive missile spells and watched the approaching man-eating monsters gravely.

“Prepare to fight!” Fanny called out. Her staff had already been raised up.

# Chapter 36: The calm of an errand boy

The man-eating monsters made weird sounds with their mouths as they moved. They abruptly started running towards the band when the strongest and tallest man-eating monster pointed at them with its club.

Strings of magical incantations sounded out before the monsters had even begun to approach. Bundles of bone arrows flew towards the man-eating monsters out of thin air, and those above the level of magic apprentice even fired out a stronger incantation, bone spears.

Bone spears was a necromancy magic similar to bone arrows, but one had to be at least at the level of a novice mage in order to master it. The power of the spell was also slightly stronger than bone arrows. Bone arrows and spears flew out simultaneously, through the air, making straight for the eight man-eating monsters.

These eight monsters knew to dodge the attacks as they ran, but they weren't a race known for speed. Some were still hit by the bone arrows and spears.

Except, their bodies were exceedingly durable. The bone arrows only caused them to cry out with pain and temporarily affected their speed, but couldn't pierce their bodies. Only the bone spears left bloody holes on their bodies, with green blood trickling out of them.

The eight monsters continued to get hurt as they approached, but none of them fully lost the ability to fight. They crashed into the outer defensive perimeter and started attacking the inner ring.

Han Shuo stayed within the defensive ring in an orderly, unruffled manner. His face full of calm, he looked coldly upon the fast approaching man-eating monsters and slowly sized up their battle strength.

"Let the dark creatures attack!" Fanny gave a great shout as her beautiful features turned grave as she saw the man-eating monsters drawing near.

Everyone started directing the outer ring of dark creatures to attack as Fanny's words rang out. The summoned ghouls, skeletal warriors, zombie

warriors, and hate warriors all held their positions firmly, striking out only when the man-eating monsters closed the distance.

But the man-eating monsters were tall and buff, and their muscles provided them with a tough defense. Apart from the hate warriors, which could actually cause some damage with their metal clubs, the effect of the other dark creatures' attacks was quite limited.

The ghouls and skeletal warriors were particularly ineffective. They were immediately pulverized beneath the studded clubs, with the skeletal warriors falling to pieces and the ghouls dying in a mass of flesh and gore. The zombie warriors were more durable and could take multiple hits from the studded clubs, but they too staggered around weakly after being hit a few times.

"These damned man-eating monsters are a bit tough to deal with!" Gene started to worry as he saw the outer perimeter of dark creatures begin to collapse, and yet the man-eating monsters remained standing, even when bleeding profusely from various magic attacks.

"Hold the line! Don't let them breakthrough, otherwise we'll surely die if we face them in close combat!" Fanny called out loudly, a trace of anxiety appearing on her beautiful face as well.

Rounds of bone spears continued to appear as she chanted her spells. They honed in on one particular man-eating monster, with the final spear piercing the monster through the eye and penetrating its head with one stroke. This caused the man-eating monster wobble, and then fall lifelessly to the ground.

The remaining seven man-eating monsters seemed to lose their minds after their comrade had been killed. It was like the two with spears had been activated as they cried out with weird whooshing sounds and suddenly threw their spears out. The spears drew a curve in the air, and whistled sharply as they pinned down the two hate warriors.

The two hate warriors were the strongest meat shields in the outer perimeter. Although they didn't immediately lose the ability to move, their movements became slower now that their bodies had been impaled. They

were pretty much ineffectual after two man-eating monsters started marking their every move.

At this moment, only two hate warriors and six zombie warriors were left in the outer perimeter. The zombie warriors were inferior to the hate warriors in every way, and the pressure on the former had increased with the hate warriors being impaled by spears. Two zombie warriors had fallen in the span of a moment.

“What to do, what to do? Will these damned man-eating monsters eat us?”

“Oh my gosh, why are their bodies so durable? The bone arrows have no effect when they hit!”

“Screwed, we’re all screwed. We should’ve gone back yesterday, wah... wah...”

Rounds of depressed complaints and fearful sobs rang out from the students’ mouths, affecting even their spells for a moment.

“Master Gene, let’s use the corpse explosion spell, quick!” Fanny called out suddenly and her beautiful face hardened upon seeing everyone become so forlorn.

“Oh perished soul, my will be the command, surrender your body to me, explode violently, Corpse Explosion!” Fanny and Gene both chanted at the same time, and Fanny pointed at the man-eating monster that she’d previously speared when it was done. Gene pointed at another fallen zombie warrior.

Two violent explosions suddenly erupted from the man-eating monster and zombie warrior’s bodies. The four injured man-eating monsters next to them, including two zombie warriors, who were fighting against them, were all affected as they flew forcefully through the air.

The four man-eating monsters were blasted apart with loud sounds along with the two zombie warriors. They all lay still and unmoving, obviously completely done for.

Han Shuo’s eyes shone brightly as he fixed them on Fanny. He was quite



gobsmacked by the corpse explosion magic. He had seen clearly just now that the exploded man-eating monster's body had abruptly lit up after Fanny had finished her incantation, to be followed by a frightening force. Of the four man-eating monsters, who had been blasted apart, three of them had died underneath Fanny's magic.

Han Shuo had previously only heard a bit regarding corpse explosion magic. He understood that only adept mages could cast it, and that explosions would vary according to the mage's strength. Fanny's corpse explosion magic had been noticeably stronger than Gene's. This may have had something to do with Fanny's magic and using man-eating monsters as fodder.

However, it seemed that the corpse explosion spell significantly drained their mental strength. Fanny and Gene's faces were both pale after casting the spell and they panted heavily.

Up until now, of the original eight man-eating monsters, Fanny had killed one with a bone spear, and four more had been killed with the corpse explosion spells. Although the two hate warriors had been impaled by the man-eating monsters' spears, they continued to hold their ground and resolutely tied up two more man-eating monsters.

Only the strongest and tallest man-eating monster hadn't been unduly affected. It wielded a studded club and sprinted over like mad, making weird noises and even yelling simple phrases like "I... I will... kill you".

"We've just used the corpse explosion spell and pretty much drained our mental strength. We'll be unable to use any other high level magic for a while. Everyone run!" Gene's face grew panicked and he yelled quickly.

Fanny glanced around and urged, "Everyone hurry and leave! Don't get caught by these monsters."

Everyone panicked even more after these words from Fanny and Gene. The resources on the side were all forgotten as they all frantically tried to distance themselves from the studded club-wielding, quickly-sprinting man-eating monster.

Except, although the man-eating monster's speed wasn't too fast, it was

still faster than the students', particularly as the latter sometimes tripped over the skeletal warrior remains as they panicked. This resulted in completely incomparable speed when compared to the man-eating monsters.

Fanny's thoughts were with the students as she urged them to leave and hung back herself. The tall man-eating monster, who remembered that it was Fanny who had cast the corpse explosion spell and blown three monsters to pieces, chased after her without a second thought upon seeing that she had fallen behind. Its club was raised high and crashed down towards Fanny.

"Master Fanny, be careful!"

"Watch out! Fanny, behind you!"

Lisa, Gene, and several others all cried out in shock and fright as they saw the club descend towards Fanny from behind.

Fanny turned upon hearing the others' cries and discovered that the studded club was falling straight at her. The sharp points of the studs sparkled with cold light, and the accompanying whooshing sound gave testament to the strength behind this blow.

Her enchanting face with starkly-white without a trace of color, and her beautiful legs were suddenly without strength. A feeling of mournful helplessness rose within her eyes as the studded club grew larger in her vision.

Clang. Sparks flew everywhere.

Fanny's beautiful eyes widened as she looked in front of her, a bit lost. Two studded clubs had appeared in front of her at some unknown time, and the two had collided together. The sharp studs had already been flattened at the point of contact, which still emitted some metallic sparks.

She followed her gaze down the opposing studded club and suddenly discovered that Han Shuo had appeared on her left. Both of his hands were tightly grasping the studded club that was completely disproportionate to his body. Veins had popped out on his forehead and

arms, and his face twisted in a grimace as he stared fixedly at the man-eating monster.

# Chapter 37: Ferocious Han Shuo

“Bryan, it’s Bryan!”

The students exclaimed in shock, even Fanny was a bit dumbfounded as she stared unfamiliarly at Han Shuo. She never would have thought that, with his 170 cm height, Han Shuo would be able to wave such a thick, studded club and block a savage attack to boot.

While everyone was shellshocked, Han Shuo stared fixedly at the man-eating monster and reached out with his right hand to give Fanny a push. He said with an honest voice, “Hurry and run.”

A shrill, panicked scream rang out from Fanny’s mouth. Han Shuo suddenly felt that his right hand had pressed on two balls of soft, big cotton candy amidst her screams. He understood that he had surely pressed down on the wrong place when he retracted his hand.

The students on the side were giving soft exclamations as Gene cursed loudly, denouncing Han Shuo’s wanton boldness.

His heart lurching, Han Shuo turned to look at Fanny and said awkwardly, “Sorry Master Fanny, I pushed in the wrong place. I really didn’t mean to!”

Fanny was extremely irate and was about to open her mouth to berate Han Shuo, when she suddenly sensed the man-eating monster behind her. Its large, studded club was already coming down on Han Shuo, and she reminded hastily, “Bryan, be careful!”

Traces of dull honesty still on his face, Han Shuo suddenly turned around and raised up the club that was bigger than his body. It whistled as it once more crashed towards the man-eating monster.

Clang. Sparks flew again as Han Shuo didn’t budge an inch, staying firmly put like an erect stone. The picture of his thin frame clutching the large club was imprinted in everyone’s eyes, causing students to look upon him weirdly.

“Master Fanny, hurry and get out of there!”

Gene's loud yell suddenly rang out at this moment. Gazing at Han Shuo in astonishment, Fanny finally reacted. Her beautiful eyes still locked on Han Shuo, she retreated backwards towards Gene and co.

After going head to head twice with the man-eating monster, Han Shuo felt an overwhelming need to vent his feelings at this moment. He wanted to fully let loose with all the power within his body as a faint desire to kill rose in Han Shuo's heart, giving him the urge to mash the man-eating monster into a meat pie.

Han Shuo suddenly gave a few chilling laughs as soon as Fanny had vacated the area. The dumb honesty on his face vanished without a trace and his expression grimaced scarily. He raised the thick club with a darkened face and rushed headlong towards the confused man-eating monster.

This fittest and strongest man-eating monster couldn't seem to understand why Han Shuo could withstand two of his heavy hits with such a frail body, and was standing there dumbly, as if contemplating something.

"Oh my goodness, Bryan must be crazy. He's rushing towards the man-eating monster!" Bella exclaimed softly, a look of incredulity on her face.

Everyone nodded in agreement as soon as they heard her words, all thinking that Han Shuo had naturally lost his mind. Even Lisa, who knew that Han Shuo was merely playing the village idiot, had a face of incomprehension, utterly shocked by how he was behaving at the moment.

"Bryan's suddenly become so strong after he went crazy. This is incredible! Lisa is too amazing. An Agony of the Soul spell turned the cowardly, timid Bryan into such a wild person!" Amy called out naively and looked at Lisa with emotion.

"Shut up!" Lisa stared directly at Han Shuo and responded.

At this moment, Han Shuo was wielding the thick studded club and moved as fast as lightning, dashing straight for the man-eating monster. The studded club whistled strangely through the air as Han Shuo grasped

it tightly with both hands, swinging it upwards in a curve and aiming violently for the monster's waist.

The look on the monster's face changed abruptly from confusion to rage and it repeated its previous movement. It sent its club clashing towards Han Shuo, as if wanting to thoroughly defeat Han Shuo with strength.

Loud clashing sounds rang out continuously between the two studded clubs. The durable club and sharp studs were all flattened after repeated clashes. The fight between the frail Han Shuo and the hulking man-eating monster became heated as the clashing sounds continued.

Fanny and the others had originally wanted to escape as soon as possible, but all remained where they were in shock as they saw how scary Han Shuo's strength was after he'd gone mad. He was holding his own in a fight against the man-eating monster, and the crew stared gobsmacked at Han Shuo's strength.

Dancing around with a club completely disproportionate to his body, Han Shuo displayed not even a hint of apprehension as he faced the towering monster. Firm and well defined muscles with popping veins were evident on his neck arms and neck. In this moment, his expression was hideously mad. He had a sort of dauntless valor that completely upended Fanny and the students' understanding of him.

In this moment, the magical yuan within Han Shuo's body churned quickly, and he felt a joyous glee in fully deploying his strength. His movements with the studded club became more practiced, and not only did he not become tired by the repeated clashes, but his vigor actually grew in strength.

"Hehehe..."

A few weird laughs emitted from the grimacing Han Shuo. The man-eating monster staggered backwards after another violent clash. Its originally wild attacks and enormous strength had started faltering after a few rounds of clashes.

"Oh.. my gosh. Is this that weak and cowardly Bryan?" Bella exclaimed and repeatedly shook her head in disbelief.

“I swear I’ll never test magic on Bryan again. He’s too scary when he goes crazy!” Athena displayed a frightened expression and muttered to herself.

Lisa’s expression was excited and her small fists clenched tightly. She would randomly scream, “Beat him!”

Bach and others with a grudge against Han Shuo all displayed fearful expressions after exchanging looks. They looked upon Han Shuo with a bit of fear.

“Hehe... you won’t get away!” After another weird laugh, Han Shuo followed closely behind the escaping monster. The thick, studded club suddenly swept forward, and the monster’s two legs were broken with a resounding crack. Han Shuo’s weird laughter followed closely thereafter and the studded club repeatedly crashed down onto the monster. Ghastly wails sounded out from the previously cruel man-eating monster.

The monster’s hulking body had long since fallen down as fresh blood continued spurting out of his body. The grey, strong body was a bloody mess after Han Shuo’s continued beating. It was a bit difficult to make out what it had originally looked like.

These violent and savage blows rained down like a furious storm for a minute, with Han Shuo suddenly waking up after the man-eating monster had been mashed into a mess of blood and gore. He was also startled when he stopped as he’d never thought that he would have such a savage side to him.

This was the first time he’d killed someone, but there was no corresponding wave of fear in Han Shuo’s heart. After the expression on his face had calmed down, Han Shuo turned to look at Fanny and the students, smiling an honest smile, “He seems to be dead?”

Against his expectations, the students, as well as Fanny and Gene, all screamed and took two steps backwards when Han Shuo turned his head. Lisa exclaimed in fright and then asked, “Bry... Bryan, are you... are you alright?”

Han Shuo started and quickly recollected himself. He scratched his head

and smiled dumbly, “What happened to me just now? Even I don’t know what I did. Why did this monster suddenly die?”

“You.. you’ve forgotten everything you’ve just done?” Fanny was also dumbfounded and then frowned as she stared at Han Shuo in interrogation.

Han Shuo nodded truthfully and explained sincerely, “Yes, I felt that my brain started to hurt a lot just now and then forgot everything that happened afterwards. The man-eating monster had already died in front of me when I came to. What’s going on? Eh? Weren’t there two more monsters? Where did they go?”

“You scared them off!” Bella stared at Han Shuo oddly and replied.

“Ah, no way. How can this be? Why would they be afraid of me?” Han Shuo asked, perplexed and with a face full of innocence.

“Bryan, you become so scary after you lose your mind, like you’re someone else. Even we were a bit afraid, not to mention the man-eating monsters. Good thing you’re alright now.” Gene spoke heartfully and voiced everyone’s thoughts.

“Don’t just stand there. Hurry and pack everything. We can no longer stay here. Two of the monsters got away, they may come back and create more trouble for us.” Fanny kept her cool and hurriedly directed everyone to clean up the aftermath upon seeing that the crisis had been temporarily averted.

Everyone returned to their original places after Fanny’s orders and picked up the resources strewn all over the ground. The students had become more mature after this life and death experience. No one wasted time in idle chatter, picked up and packed all the items with great speed.

“I think it’s time to leave and end this time’s outing!” Gene proposed gravely after seeing that everyone had appropriately repacked their belongings.

Everyone had recognized that their strength wasn’t as strong as they thought after meeting the man-eating monsters. There would be more



dangers as they travelled south, and thus everyone nodded in embarrassed agreement after Gene made his suggestion.

Momentarily speechless, the crew started organizing their things. They planned to bring back this time's pickings back to the Academy and not continue adventuring south.

But just as everyone was prepared to leave, a desolate cry suddenly came from the south. The crew had packed and were about to leave, but were all gobsmacked after hearing this sound. Expressions of greed surfaced shortly afterwards.

# Chapter 38: Another coolie

“It’s the hooting calls of a Frost Eagle. They’re solitary magical creatures... We’ve already hunted one down before, why not leave after killing this one?” An expression of joy appeared on Gene’s face as he gazed at everyone and asked.

The creature core of a Frost Eagle was at level 4, and was worth a lot more than a Windblade Wolf’s. Although everyone had expended quite a bit of effort to hunt the first one down, that meant they were now more experienced in dealing with Frost Eagles. Everyone blanked after Gene’s words, after which Fanny looked at Han Shuo and asked, “Bryan, what do you think?”

“A large sum of resources is in front of us. I think we should take it!” Han Shuo scratched his head and smiled honestly.

“Then alright, everyone make your preparations. We will return to the Academy after we’ve taken the Frost Eagle core. If our necromancy major can obtain two level four magical creature cores during this outing, then the other majors will not dare to look down on us.” Fanny nodded and instructed everyone to move out.

When the band heard her words, it was like they’d recalled the outrages they’d suffered before. Each person started moving angrily, following in Han Shuo and Fanny’s footsteps towards the direction of the Frost Eagle’s call.

Han Shuo walked in front, just like a leader, and everyone else wore a ‘naturally’ expression. No one had any opinions otherwise, and subconsciously, they themselves had all started to change the way they thought about Han Shuo.

By now, no one dared to treat Han Shuo as an errand slave that they could bully at their leisure. Their gazes towards Han Shuo subtly held a few more hints of respect and fear.

The band of people rushed along their way, following the Frost Eagle’s cries. They arrived at the Frost Eagle’s location after a while, but were

shocked by the scene that came into view.

Under the pure and bright moonlight, the band saw a tall, strapping, and handsome youth with tousled silver hair, wielding a longsword to battle the Frost Eagle in the sky.

He wore a simple paladin's robe and his shoulders, chest, and stomach were covered with armor that sparkled with silver light. His clothes and appearance made him out to be a knight. As he wove the longsword in his hand, beams of milky-white light flashed glaringly, causing the Frost Eagle circling overhead to continuously caw out when it was struck.

"Oh my gosh, a milky-white fighting aura... he's an earth rider knight! Ooh.. he's so handsome!" Bella squealed and locked her eyes firmly on the body of this earth rider knight. A boy crazy look rose to her face.

Several other female students next to her also revealed mesmerized expressions, their eyes shining as they gazed at the earth rider, who easily handled the Frost Eagle.

Han Shuo creased his brow, also surprised by the earth rider's strength. The last time Han Shuo and the band of 12 had confronted a Frost Eagle, they had found it extremely difficult and had expended monumental effort before finally killing the Frost Eagle. This earth rider not only was not having difficulties, but was handling it with ease. The Frost Eagle emitted continuous low keens after the white fighting aura was projected.

A beam of white fighting aura shakily rose upwards until it pointed straight at the heavily injured Frost Eagle. The Frost Eagle seemed to have perceived the danger as it flapped its wings in preparation to leave.

The earth rider's body had been standing on the floor until this moment, where it abruptly flew through the air in an accelerated jump. The long sword slashed past the Frost Eagle's belly as a wailing bird call sounded once more. The Frost Eagle wobbled in a listless, downward fall.

"That was amazing!" Bella's eyes gleamed as she giggled with infatuation.

The earth rider walked up to the body of the Frost Eagle, made a flicking

motion with his long sword and removed the Frost Eagle core. He then wore a faint smile as he took large strides towards Han Shuo and co. He swept his eyes across the band and then bowed urbanely, “Knight Clark greets these noble mages.”

“Hello Clark. You’re so strong! You killed a Frost Eagle all by yourself, you’re so amazing!” Bella laughed modestly and spoke gently, as if she was a completely different person.

Except, that Clark’s gaze didn’t rest on Bella, but stared at Fanny instead, as if waiting for Fanny’s response. This caused Bella to feel a bit awkward.

“We’re students and teachers at the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. We ventured out to the Dark Forest for training this time, it’s very nice to meet you Clark.” Fanny’s expression didn’t change as she too slightly inclined her body and smiled in response.

“I see... I’m also here to train in the Dark Forest. The magical creatures here are very strong and very suitable for increasing strength. I didn’t think I’d run into everyone, heh.” Clark smiled faintly as he looked at Fanny. There was a strange smell in the look that made Han Shuo slightly ill at ease.

“Master Fanny, the Frost Eagle has been killed by him, I think we should go back now.” Han Shuo looked at Clark for a few moments and understood why he would feel uncomfortable about Clark’s gaze. It turns out that Clark’s gaze was a bit similar to Gene’s. Although he didn’t take it to the level that Gene took it to, but this already subtly explained a question – this Clark seemed to be interested in Fanny’s good looks.

“Yes Yes, Master Fanny, it’s getting more dangerous. For the sake of student’s safety, we should head back to the Academy.” Gene seemed to have also noticed the threat as his gaze towards Clark wasn’t too friendly. He immediately seconded Han Shuo’s suggestion.

Fanny nodded upon hearing Han Shuo and Gene’s words and was about to agree when Clark suddenly said with a smile, “If the noble mages wouldn’t mind, I can join your group and accompany you. I think there’s a mutual benefit if we walk together, and a corresponding decrease in

danger. I wonder if everyone is amenable to this suggestion?"

"Yes, if a earth rider knight is with us, then our haul this time will surely eclipse the light major's." Bella's face lit up in joy and she abruptly cut in without waiting for Fanny's approval.

Some of the other female students hastened to agree after Bella had spoken, only Lisa was unmoved as she stared at Han Shuo in odd consideration. A few of the male students hadn't spoken. They didn't seem to care.

After Clark's words and Bella's unison, Fanny started to waver in her original intention to leave. She had felt particularly tempted when Bella had said their haul would eclipse the light major's haul.

Don't agree, don't agree. He's smiling, but he's not a good thing. This kid obviously has bad intentions, don't agree to travel with him. Han Shuo looked at Fanny and repeated in his mind.

"Alright, then we'll have to impose on you. We're a band of mages, so it will surely be of great help if such a strong earth rider like you were to join us." Fanny hesitated for a while and finally agreed.

Han Shuo was exceedingly disappointed, but didn't display it on his face. He exclaimed in astonishment instead and say, "Aiya, we came in pursuit of the Frost Eagle, but you had already killed it. Ai, the level 4 core from a magical creature, gone just like that."

Clark's face wore a bewildered expression after hearing Han Shuo's words and he looked at Han Shuo with some confusion. He asked, "You were the ones originally pursuing this Frost Eagle?"

Nodding his head firmly, Han Shuo said with a wistful expression, "Ah yes, but we hadn't thought that you'd kill it."

Fanny was a bit dumbfounded upon hearing Han Shuo's words and glared ferociously at him. Just as she was about to explain that this wasn't the case, Clark hesitated, and then took out the Frost Eagle core with some heartache. He forced out a smile and offered it to Fanny, saying, "I see. Since this is the case, then I return it to you. Master Fanny, you must

accept it.”

“Accept, we’ll absolutely accept!” Han Shuo smiled as he approached and had already taken the core from Clark’s hands before Fanny had responded. He handed it over to Lisa, who was standing beside him, and said merrily, “Heh heh. Clark the knight is such a good person. He’s given us a level 4 core so readily. I think he’ll be even more straightforward in the trials to come.”

Lisa’s two eyes shot out light as she also merrily, unapologetically put the core away. She nodded at Han Shuo with praise and surreptitiously stuck up her thumb up in a compliment.

Fanny was going to explain, but found that the core had disappeared into Lisa’s pocket in the blink of an eye. She involuntarily revealed an expression that was neither able to laugh or cry, rolled her eyes at Han Shuo and Lisa after she shook her head, but didn’t say anything else.

A level 4 core was equivalent to one hundred gold coins. One hundred gold coins wasn’t a small sum to even an ordinary small noble. No wonder Clark was feeling the pain a bit after Han Shuo had so easily taken it from his hands.

“Master Fanny, now that we’ve been joined by the noble and generous earth rider, I think we can continue south. There are certainly even stronger magical creatures there. If we have obtain a level 3 magical creature core, then we can surely strut with pride in the Academy after this outing.” Han Shuo slightly spurred Fanny on, thinking if Clark dares look twice at my woman, then he has to provide some free labor at the very least. It would be a pity to not use the earth rider.

Fanny’s spirits were recollected upon hearing the ability to strut with pride within the Academy. She nodded and smiled charmingly, “Alright, then we continue further on south. Noble knight Clark, we’ll have to trouble you to take care of us later on.”

Clark bowed humbly and smiled politely, “Not a problem at all, I’m happy to be of service.”

Since you insist on staying, see if I don’t play you to death. Han Shuo was

exceedingly unhappy with Clark's actions and his thoughts raced furiously in consideration of several evil schemes.

# Chapter 39: Making fun of the earth rider

The next day.

With the addition of Clark, the band continued their journey south in the Dark Forest. Due to Clark's involvement, it became much easier to handle the various magical creatures along the way.

Clark purposefully showed off his skills in front of Fanny, and it was thanks to his great assistance that two Windblade Wolves and one Frost Eagle were easily taken care of along the journey.

Whenever a magical creature was killed, Han Shuo would swiftly appear and immediately remove the creature core. He would then naturally hand it over to Lisa for safekeeping, absolutely treating it as if it was his side's spoils of war. Even the Windblade Wolf pelts weren't left behind for Clark.

Clark wanted to win Fanny's favor, and thus although his heart bled inside, he still forced a smile, played along with Han Shuo's actions, and didn't fight for the magical creature cores.

The crew raised a bonfire at dusk and it the duty of grilling meat fell onto Han Shuo again. Clark intentionally stayed with Fanny and wittily conversed with her. Off to the side, Gene eyed Clark and would repeatedly butt in and use words to ostracize Clark.

The other students all separated to either rest, laugh and chat, or silently organize their belongings. Only Lisa stayed beside Han Shuo, watching him flip the pieces of meat with ease.

"Bryan, I've discovered that you're becoming more of a villain, and that you're very different from before!" Lisa was holding a bright-red, wooden stick in her hands as she stirred the bonfire carelessly. Her bright eyes landed on Han Shuo's body as she spoke.

Han Shuo flicked a glance at Lisa before responding faintly, "Is that so? I'm feel fine...I just felt that I was living too hopelessly and stupidly before and wanted to change myself. Is there anything wrong with that?"



Lisa shook her head and said, “No no. I just feel that you’re different from before. I don’t know how to describe what is exactly going on. Maybe it is because I cast the Agony of the soul on you and made things the way they are.”

Laughing involuntarily, Han Shuo thought that he wasn’t Bryan at all and thus it had nothing to do with the Agony of the Soul. Whether it was Lisa, Fanny, or even the other students and teachers, it was quite funny that they all thought the Agony of the Soul was the reason behind his changes.

“Are my changes not good?”

“Very good, you’re much better than how you were before. I was really angry to see you so cowardly and timid before, so I was mean to you in hopes that you’d shape up, but you always accepted whatever life threw your way, and wouldn’t resist no matter who bullied you. I felt that you were quite pitiful then and that living was quite painful for you. It would’ve been better if you died. I actually used the Agony of the Soul on you because I didn’t want to see you living so pitifully anymore.” Lisa thought for a moment and then looked at Han Shuo.

A frown creasing his brow, Han Shuo looked at Lisa, perplexed. He asked, “Is this to say that you were helping me out of the goodness of your heart when you used the Agony of the Soul on me?”

“Of course!” Lisa’s neck raised as she explained, “Although I grabbed you for magic practice before, I treated you a lot better than the other students did, but you were disappointing and lived out your days so hopelessly. I couldn’t bear it anymore and wanted to set you free from this life. Look at you now, you’ve changed so much that I hardly recognize you.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo didn’t say anything more, but somewhat approved of Lisa’s methods within his heart. The pitiful Bryan really did live life so hopelessly and he’d long since wanted to kill himself but just lacked the courage to do so. Han Shuo, however, was still unable to forgive Lisa for helping people end their lives.

“Bry... Bryan. I think we can grill our own meat and don’t have to impose

on you.” At this moment, Bach, Bella, and a few others walked over from afar and looked at Han Shuo with a bit of fright as they spoke.

In these days, Han Shuo grilled out exceedingly delicious meat for Lisa, Fanny, Amy, and co. and horrendously gross meat for Bach, Bella, and a few others. After a few days of torture, Bach, Bella, and co. had already suffered from a few days of diarrhea.

They had been cursing and complaining at Han Shuo, but after experiencing Han Shuo’s berserk performance yesterday, these people didn’t even dare to complain and curse at him. They were afraid that Han Shuo would suddenly lose his mind again.

Now, they were truly a bit afraid of Han Shuo.

Smiling dumbly, Han Shuo said with some embarrassment. “How can this be done? I’m an errand slave for the necromancy major and preparing food is one of my jobs. It wouldn’t be that appropriate for your noble and delicate selves to do such tasks, would it?”

“Appropriate, absolutely appropriate! Since we’re out training, we should try everything once. Not to mention you saved our lives yesterday. We shouldn’t let you continue to take on that many missions... Wouldn’t you agree Bach?” Bella forcefully laughed as she spoke.

“Indeed, we should grill our own food and not rely on you for everything!” Bach’s stomach had suffered for a few days already, and he knew that if he were to eat Han Shuo’s grilled meat again, it would definitely be half raw and half cooked. He hurriedly fawned with a small smile, paused and opened his mouth. “Bryan, I was in the wrong before. Please don’t hold a grudge against me. If you hate me and come find me when you suddenly go cr-er, suddenly lose your rationality, then I would be screwed!”

“Alright, since you all are so kindhearted, then I thank you. Come, you guys grill the meat, I hope you have a great time.” Han Shuo felt damn good inside as he stood up with an honest smile. He took a few of the cooked meats, gave a huge piece to Lisa, who’d been eyeing them for a while, and walked the rest of the meat to Fanny.

The tempting smell of meat slowly spread out. Fanny had been listening to Clark and Gene put down each other with an impatient expression on her face when her eyes suddenly lit up and her tongue darted out to moisten her lips. A charming smile appeared on her lips.

“Master Fanny, Master Gene, um... and Sir Clark the knight, these are your grilled meats!” Han Shuo laughed lightly and handed over the meat to the three people.

“Ooh ooh... blech! Bryan, how come today’s wasn’t fully cooked, this is too gross!” Fanny suddenly squealed and spat out the piece of grilled meat she’d eaten.

This time, because of Fanny’s poor eyesight and the fact that Han Shuo hadn’t given her the meat individually, plus the fact that she was in a rush to eat, she’d already eaten one of the pieces that Han Shuo had prepared for Gene and Clark before he’d had a chance to remind her.

“Eh... Master Fanny, that one’s not yours, this one is!” Han Shuo didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as he thought you were seriously in a bit too much of a hurry.

He then quickly handed over the piece of meat that he’d painstakingly prepared, seized the half-raw, half-cooked piece from her hand and drew out a dagger to cut off the piece that she’d bit off. He smiled merrily as he handed it over to Clark, saying with some embarrassment, “Noble Sir Clark, this piece is yours. My cooking skills aren’t quite up to par, and although Master Fanny’s already taken a bite, I hope you don’t mind?”

Clark said, “Eh... I’ll just eat bread.”

“Now how can this be allowed, bread won’t increase body strength and you’re a knight who really needs a lot of body strength. You must eat lots of meat. Are you disgusted with Bryan’s lack of cooking skills or because Master Fanny has already taken a bite?” Gene had long since known that those who weren’t nice to Bryan would suffer greatly when eating something he’d prepared. Gene was laughing gloatingly on the inside while trying to convince Clark with a righteous and dignified expression on his face.

“No, I didn’t mean it that way. Just that, just that...” Clark had a face of resignation as he spread his hands out awkwardly. He shook his head but didn’t know how to explain himself. He had seen Fanny take one bite and spit it back out, and naturally knew that that piece of meat wasn’t very tasty.

“As a noble knight, sir Clark must not wish to eat something that others have bitten before. I understand. Master Gene, how about you take this piece?” Han Shuo had an expression of I-gotchu-man as he first insinuated that Clark was disdaining Fanny, and then passed on the hot potato to Gene.

Gene started to panic after Han Shuo’s words. He laughed shamefacedly and said, “No, absolutely not. How could I take something from sir Clark? Besides, this piece is mine, I’ll go off and eat it now.”

Vague traces of sweat apparent on his brow, Gene spoke frantically and hastily took the other piece of meat that was likewise half-cooked and half-raw. He headed towards Bach and Bella’s direction as if he was escaping, obviously intending to recook the meat.

“Master Gene is such a humble person! Looks like this piece of meat is still yours to dispose of!” Han Shuo smiled dumbly and planned to forcefully give that piece of meat to Clark.

Clark had a pathetic expression on his face as he smiled with a wry smile, and then suddenly spoke as if he’d abruptly remembered something. “I forgot something, please excuse me.”

Clark made like Gene as soon as he’d finished speaking and left like he was escaping something. He had disappeared without a trace in the blink of an eye.

“Bryan, you’ve become more and more naughty. No wonder Gene and Bach have been plagued with diarrhea the past couple of days. You were behind it weren’t you?” Fanny found it both maddening and funny as she glared at Han Shuo and lectured him.

“You’ve only realized it now Master Fanny? Bryan truly is different from how he was before, and has become naughtier than all the other

students.” Lisa chuckled lightly and then looked at Fanny oddly. “Right, Master Fanny you obviously know that Bryan is purposefully pranking them, why don’t you stop him?”

“That’s because I also feel that Clark and Gene are too irritating. They hover around me and chatter incessantly, keeping up a constant racket and drag me into it. It’s such a bore, but Clark has helped us out a lot and is truly a good person!” Fanny gave an evil laugh as she explained to Lisa.

Han Shuo gloated inwardly when he heard the first part of Fanny’s words, but that gave way to anger when he heard Fanny say Clark was a good person.

“So that’s the case, hehe. Master Fanny, I know of a spacious pool of water nearby. Its waters are clear, bright and clean. We haven’t bathed or showered in quite a few days, shall we go for a swim later tonight?”

“Lisa, you didn’t like to swim before. How come you’re suddenly liking swimming these days?”

“Eh... because swimming works out the body!” Lisa’s delicate face reddened at Fanny’s question and she responded quickly after turning her head to look at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo’s face wore an odd expression, thinking to himself that although Lisa had seemed indifferent on the surface when he told her about the way to develop her breasts last time, she had taken action secretly. He found it funny, and his understanding of the female mind deepened further.

# Chapter 40: To think that you were this kind of person

It was night. The moonlight was cold and clear as it scattered within the vast and boundless Dark Forest. The bright, silver moonlight added a few traces of silence and and comfort to the Dark Forest.

Several crude and simple tents were respectively erected on the soft grass. After experiencing a day's worth of labors, the students were tired, holding murmured conversations or meditating. Han Shuo surreptitiously hid behind a towering tree as he chanted an incantation.

A beam of light flashed through thin air as a small skeleton, holding a bone dagger, abruptly materialized. Under Han Shuo's guidance, it flew soundlessly towards the tent Clark was residing in.

Clark's tent was pitched a bit of a distance away from the students. Although he appeared humble and genteel on the surface, apart from being friendly and genuine with Fanny, his gaze towards the students held a subtle undercurrent of lofty disdain. His tent was also completely different from other people's and was a distance away by himself.

The little skeleton was agile and its inky-black form melded with the darkness. It didn't make a single whisper of a sound as it walked, and had arrived at Clark's tent within roughly ten seconds. The little skeleton slipped inside Clark's tent after Han Shuo's command.

A low grunt of pain sounded as Clark's tent spontaneously collapsed. The little skeleton figure abruptly dashed out and it fled quickly to the southwest.

After a cry of pain, Clark flew out of his tent in a bedraggled state. He held his longsword in his hand as he gazed around in all four corners, then huffed angrily as it followed in the direction that the little skeleton had taken, muttering strings of low-voiced curses.

Success! Han Shuo laughed silently.

Han Shuo cackled evilly as he closely followed in Clark's footsteps.

Hidden in the shadows, he wove quickly around the corners of the trees.

Southwest direction, a spacious pool of water. Strange, curved trees lined the banks. Beneath the light of the bright moon, the clear currents of the pool sparkled with silver color.

Continuous splashing sounds along with the sounds of laughter came from the surface of the pool, breathing in a few hints of life into the silent pool.

“Lisa, have you started developing? Your breasts seem to have changed lately?”

“Hehe, Master Fanny, let me tell you something. Swimming can actually enlarge breasts. I only discovered this secret after trying it.”

“Really?” Fanny exclaimed in astonishment and then laughed involuntary. “No wonder, I was wondering why you suddenly became infatuated with swimming lately. So this is the reason why. Heh heh, then we should swim longer today.”

“Master Fanny, your breasts are already so well developed... Why would you still care about this matter?”

“Heh, of course. No woman wouldn’t care about this.”

“I see. Hehe, apart from swimming, drinking milk, and massaging during showers can all help breasts become firm and perky. This has been my experience! I’ve been doing this lately and can really feel the changes in my breasts. Master Fanny, you can try too!”

“Ah, Lisa you seem to understand quite a lot now, but your breasts have actually been changing recently, it looks like your methods are effective.”

“But of course. Hehe, you can’t go wrong listening to me.” Lisa laughed a light, proud laugh as she spoke to Fanny.

At this moment, the sound of footsteps abruptly sounded in the distance. Fanny and Lisa looked at each other and Fanny frowned. “What is that noise?”

Lisa has ducked into the water so that only her head was showing and

was equally perplexed. She shook her head and said, “I don’t know, I discovered this area while I was collected firewood earlier today. No one else should know of this place.”

Fanny and Lisa were a bit surprised and about to leave when the footsteps grew nearer, and a heavily sweating Clark burst into view along the pool’s edge. He looked to and fro, surveying the vicinity.

When Clark saw Fanny and Lisa in the pool, all three exclaimed in shock at the same time. Lisa was utterly discomfited and hastily hid her body in the pool, pointing a frantic finger at Clark and speaking angrily, “Damnit, how could you commit an act like voyeurism as a noble knight!? You’re disgusting.”

“No, this isn’t what you think. I found this place because I was tracking a monster.” Clark was extremely upset and rushed to explain.

“Leave immediately! Clark, you have disappointed me greatly. To think that you were this kind of person!” Fanny also had a wrathful expression as her facial expression and tone turned frosty.

“Master Fanny, I really didn’t mean to come here to peep. Please let me explain.” Clark was sweating profusely as he too hadn’t thought that he would bump into Fanny and Lisa swimming here. He thought it was a bit odd and hastened to explain.

“Leave, immediately!” Fanny and Lisa gasped and screamed in unison as Clark was hurriedly explaining.

A resigned and wry smile on his face, Clark sighed and slightly bowed at the two from afar. He said apologetically, “My apologies to you both. I will leave immediately. I hope you don’t think that badly of me, I really didn’t mean to.”

Clark had a downcast expression and left with a dejected droop to his shoulders when he finished speaking. A round of complaints flew out of his mouth as he sighed and moaned that his luck was just too bad.

Han Shuo’s surreptitious figure materialized from the shadows of the tree after Clark had left, and he stuck up his middle finger to the figure



walking away into the distance. He cackled as he said in a low voice, "Trying to steal my woman. Go to hell noble knight!"

"It turns out that noble knights also have disgusting hobbies." Lisa was still infuriated and she snorted slightly with a face full of disdain.

"Men are all the same, noble knights are like this, lowly errand slaves are also like this. Only some know how to conceal it and others don't." Fanny also snorted lightly and said with some emotion.

"Errand slaves? Master Fanny, are you talking about Bryan?" Lisa was startled and then seemed to think of something as she stared at Fanny oddly.

"Eh... no, no. I was just sighing, purely sighing. Heh heh, Lisa don't imagine things." Fanny was internally startled that she had spilled the beans, and hastily laughed in embarrassment as a cover up after Lisa's question.

But Lisa's face was still full of suspicion after Fanny's explanation, and her gaze towards Fanny was also a bit strange. She kept murmuring, "Can it really be Bryan?"

Han Shuo had been concealed in the shadow of the trees and watching the two lecherously when he heard their words. His heart jumped, but before he had time to reflect, his eyes suddenly grew wide and his entire being speechless and dumbfounded.

Fanny had slowly started walking towards the edge of the pool at this time, and the body that had been obscured within the pool started to slowly emerge. The clear, bright moonlight scattered over Fanny's flawless body. Crystalline drops of water on her pure, white skin were like rolling gems beneath the moonlight, lightly traveling past her satin-like body.

Her upper body, as revealed beneath the moon's light, was so beautiful that it made Han Shuo dizzy. Her breasts were full and upright, with two mesmerizing spots of blush at the peaks. There wasn't an ounce of fat on her tightly toned lower body, and her slender arms were as tender as the snow lotus. A head full of beautiful, light-purple locks were scattered messily over her smooth shoulders. She displayed a soul and heart stealing

allure.

The rest of her lower body was immersed in the water starting from her lower abdomen, but under the light of the moon, Han Shuo could still make out sparkling white legs beneath the clear pool waters.

This was the first time that Han Shuo had seen a naked girl, and such an extraordinary beauty at that. Fanny's transcendent beauty and perfect figure under the moonlight, with water droplets slowly rolling off of it, caused Han Shuo to become utterly gobsmacked. His entire being immediately sank into a sluggish state.

A strange sound suddenly traveled into Han Shuo's ears, and his dumbly staring self suddenly startled awake and started surveying the area.

A loud, panicked scream emitted from Lisa's mouth. Lisa was still in the deep waters of the pond and was pointing fearfully behind her. She screamed hoarsely, "Master... Master Fanny, Deepwater Venom Python!"

Fanny blanked and turned her head to discover a light-green, spiked back ridge, a five or six meter long enormous python was quickly swimming in from the far reaches of the pool. A savage and merciless light was flashing in the python's dark green eyes, and its heavily fanged mouth spat out dark green smoke as it quickly approached Lisa.

"Run Lisa! Hurry and run!" Fanny's expression had also changed drastically and she screamed frantically.

But Lisa had been terror struck. Her originally fast moving figure had slowed down considerably due to the arrival of the Deepwater Venom Python, despite her arms and legs making splashes on the water surface.

"Master Fanny, wah wah... save me!" Lisa's voice was choked up as she screamed in a panicked frenzy. Her arms and legs moved in unison in a bid to reach the pool banks faster, but the Deepwater Venom Python drew ever closer to her.

"Damnit, where is that Clark now?!" Fanny cursed out of character for her, and her perfect body started back, making for Lisa's direction.

At this moment, Han Shuo had completely recollected himself and gazed

at the Deepwater Venom Python that continued to get closer. He hesitated, and then abruptly dashed out of the tree's shadows. He called loudly, "What's going on. Eh? Deepwater Venom Python, let me help you."

The Deepwater Venom Python was a level three magical creature. Not only did its body possess strong attack power, but its mouth could also spit out a poison mist, not to mention its speed and advantages had all been greatly increased because it was still in the water.

A level four Frost Eagle could only be brought down with herculean effort from everyone. This level three Deepwater Venom Python would be even harder to handle. Even Han Shuo didn't feel completely confident, but he couldn't just stand by and watch Fanny be eaten. He had to rush out even in the face of death.

"Damnit, screw it!" Han Shuo pulled out a dagger and his body flashed like lightning through the dark forest as he rushed towards the pool of water.

# Chapter 41: Battling the Deepwater Venom Python

Within the pool, the Deepwater Venom Python caused huge waves and ripples as it swam towards Lisa with a terrifying aura. It became harder for Lisa to escape the more frenetic she got, and the distance between the two had already shortened to twenty or so meters.

Fanny had already reached the banks of the pool when she pay no heed to anything as she splashed through the water, rushing quickly towards Lisa like a mermaid. Han Shuo's speed was even faster. It was like he met no resisting drag in the water as he sped towards Fanny like lightning.

All of Han Shuo's bodily functions had far surpassed an ordinary person's since he started practicing magic. When Han Shuo gave it his all, he immediately demonstrated an incredible energy. He had already arrived when Fanny was approaching Lisa.

He reached out with both hands without further ado, grabbing Lisa with one and Fanny's waist with the other as he quickly said, "Let's go."

He had no time or spare thought to feel the smooth tenderness of Lisa and Fanny's bodies at the moment. His only thought under the panicked circumstances was to quickly vacate the area. His two legs quickly moved through the water like swimming fish. Add to that Fanny's forceful arms and legs, and the three entwined around each other and swam for the banks of the pool, regardless of anything else.

Except, if it's only been Han Shuo, he may have really been able to shake off the pursuit from the Deepwater Venom Python. But his speed was greatly affected by the addition of Fanny and Lisa, and it was hard to resume his prior speed. They could only watch as the Deepwater Venom Python grew closer.

Lisa's screams and sobs hadn't stopped for a moment. Even Fanny was powerless in this moment, and her face was filled with shock and desperation.

In the pool, even summoning dark creatures to do battle wouldn't be much use. The level three Deepwater Venom Python had uncommonly thick snake skin. Any ordinary necromancy magic would be unable to stop it. They wouldn't be able to kill the Deepwater Venom Python with one stroke if they stopped to chant a spell, and they were sure to be tangled up by it and then be eaten without a doubt.

"Wah wah.... what to do, what to do. Are we going to be eaten by it?" Lisa sobbed frantically as her two hands slapped the surface of the water with decreasing strength.

Fanny also didn't know what to do, and could just watch the Deepwater Venom Python approach ever closer. She couldn't find a way to hide or escape and could only swim death defyingly.

A resolute expression appeared on Han Shuo's face after a moment of hesitation. He grabbed Lisa's right arm and swung her out with all his strength. Lisa's naked, charming body shot out from the water and flew three meters through the air, straight for the banks of the pool.

The left hand that had been wrapped around Fanny's waist suddenly pressed down on her beautiful buttocks. Han Shuo had already pushed out forcefully before she had a chance to scream, and he gave the fast swimming Fanny a hand. Her speed abruptly picked up as she shot towards to the banks like a spear.

"Hurry and go!" Han Shuo roared explosively and quickly turned his head around, facing down the Deepwater Venom Python alone.

"Bryan, Master Fanny, you have to save Bryan!" Lisa's desolate cry of astonishment sounded out from afar.

"Hurry and go on shore Lisa. Only then can we help Bryan!"

The look Han Shuo's face was cold and harsh at this point. He tightly clenched the dagger in his hands and could only watch as the Deepwater Venom Python started tangling around him.

Surprisingly, Han Shuo didn't retreat, but moved forward instead. He actually dashed out quickly before the Deepwater Venom Python's tail had

tangled him, and made for the Python's head.

Han Shuo knew that as fast as he could swim in the pool, he would still be unable to race against the Deepwater Venom Python. Now that it was tightly against him, wanting to pay attention to nothing else and just seek to escape would be a death sentence. The Python's skin and flesh were durable and strong, with soft skin and flesh only around its neck. Close combat was the only way to get out of this alive.

The Deepwater Venom Python most likely didn't anticipate Han Shuo would attack rather than run, and so when the enormous tail came to tangle him, it only swung around in a rather large arc but didn't touch Han Shuo.

The dark green eyes flashed as the Python seemed to jeer at Han Shuo's ignorance. A mist of dark green smoke sprayed out directly towards Han Shuo from its heavily fanged, bloodthirsty mouth as it lifted its neck.

"Bryan, be careful of the smoke it sprays. The smoke has a slow paralysis toxin and will cause your body to stiffen up, and finally become immobile." Fanny called out loudly at this moment to remind Han Shuo to be careful of the dark green poison mist that the Python was spitting out.

Han Shuo startled in horrified shock as his quickly moving body held a breath and hastily dived into the waters. He used the pool's clear waters to discern where the Python was and rushed in that direction.

Avoiding a swing of the Python's tail again halfway through, Han Shuo directly traveled to the area beneath the Python's neck. Han Shuo's body and the dagger in his hand thrust out through the water at the same time, and the dagger shone with a cold light as it traced a silver line through the moonlit sky, stabbing fiercely towards the soft flesh in the Python's neck.

The dagger sank up to the hilt with a puncturing sound and blood splurged out afterwards. It was accompanied by a ghastly wail from the Deepwater Venom Python as it twisted its neck. Its enormous body started twisting and turning crazily as well.

Han Shuo was taken aback and quickly yanked out the dagger, pressing down his right palm onto its neck. The red flame of the "Mystical Glacial

Spellfire” flashed once and it landed into the Python’s neck in the blink of an eye.

The Python became even more berserk after being attacked by the “Glacial Mystical Spellfire”, and it’s desolate wails rang continuously. A ball of dark green smoke had started spreading towards Han Shou before he had time to react.

Strands of strange air substance filtered into Han Shuo’s body through his pores. He felt his entire body suddenly go weak and numb, and even the dagger became as heavy as a thousand tons.

“Oh my gosh, Bryan’s been hit by the poison mist. What should we do Master Fanny, what should we do?” Lisa had already reached the shores of the pool when she saw Han Shuo get sprayed. She called out loudly in great haste.

The sound of Fanny chanting a spell suddenly rang out at this time. “Oh endless darkness, turn into destructive bone spears, and destroy according to my will, bone spears!” Three cuttngly sharp bone spears materialized out of thin air and sped, with a whooshing sound, towards the Python thrashing madly within the pool.

Fanny’s bone spears spell was indeed uncommon. The three bone spears all hit their target, with two of them embedding themselves into the Python’s forehead, causing two flowers of blood to blossom. The last spear landed in the Python’s mouth, a horrifyingly fanged mouth that had been about to swallow Han Shuo. The spear broke off a few of its sharp teeth, causing the Python’s enormous mouth to rear backwards.

At this moment, the magical yuan within Han Shuo’s body churned madly, and the sore, numbing feeling vanished immediately without a trace wherever the magical yuan circulated to. Previously leaden and lethargic, Han Shuo regained his energy and quickly moved next to the Python after its head was rearing from Fanny’s bone spears. The dagger in his hand stabbed downwards twice like lightning, and then he swam like the devil was behind him and made for the shore.

The Deepwater Venom Python suddenly gave a miserable, mournful roar

as it roiled the waters of the pool so that waves and froth formed. When its head appeared again, Fanny and Lisa could see that its two dark green pupils were all leaking viscous, fresh blood.

“Oh my gosh! Bryan can still move, and he’s blinded the Deepwater Venom Python! Ahahaha!” Lisa was hollering and hopping up on the shore, with the panic and whimpering of the previous second miraculously turning into excited squeals.

However, due to the Python’s wild frenzy, its enormous tail thrashed chaotically and just so happened to whip Han Shuo. Han Shuo had been moving quickly when his body flew through the air towards the shore after he’d been hit.

At the same time, Fanny continuously cast necromancy magic, aiming for the weak spots of the Python’s beautiful eyes and neck areas. Having lost its vision, the Python was hard pressed to evade Fanny’s attacks. The vicious wound on its neck and its eyes were repeatedly pierced by the bone spears and it raised an increasingly loud uproar within the pool. But judging from its appearance, it was steadily losing its strength.

Under its berserk frenzy, the Python didn’t seem to realize that it should escape at this moment, but rather followed the sounds and drew closer to the shore, as if wishing to eat its attackers regardless of all costs. But as its wounds grew bigger, the frenetic Deepwater Venom Python became drained of its vigor and lost its luster.

The Python finally fell down listlessly, and Han Shuo’s body slowly floated up to the surface of the water for the first time after he’d fallen in. The clothing around his chest and stomach had ripped apart in many places, and his right cheek was a fiery red. He’d seemed to have been injured by the Python’s tail whip.

Lisa had been shouting excitedly and Fanny had been continuously casting magic when they both exclaimed in shock and abruptly swam towards the center of the pool, paying no heed to the naked state of their bodies.

The two moved quickly and hastily pulled Han Shuo up onto shore. Han



Shuo's lower abdomen was distended and his cheeks puffed out with water leaking out the sides of his mouth. It'd seemed that he drank quite a bit of the pool.

Fanny knew a thing or two about rescue measures and immediately placed both of her slender, jade hands onto Han Shuo's chest. She repeatedly exerted force and compressed downwards, seeking to expel the pool water that Han Shuo had swallowed. Lisa did the same and large mouthfuls of pool water were expelled from Han Shuo's mouth under their combined efforts.

"Why isn't Bryan waking up yet?" Lisa's face was anxious after a while and she looked at Han Shuo with worry.

"Maybe because he's drank too much water, and the area around his throat is already blocked. Why don't you try to breathe for him?" Fanny looked at Lisa and made this proposal after a bit of thought.

Lisa blushed and glanced at Fanny, "Master Fanny, I don't really know how, why don't you do it?"

Fanny halted for a moment and creased her brow with thought. She grit her teeth with resolution and said, "Bryan saved our lives. Forget it, I'll try for him."

Fanny bent down as soon as she'd finished talking and, her charming cheeks a path of charming, embarrassed red, moved her delicious, red lips towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had actually woken up a long time ago and patiently held his peace until this moment. His heart thumping loudly and even feeling Fanny's smooth and tender arms on his chest, Han Shuo's heart was mad with glee.

A wisp of light fragrance accompanied the creamy sensation, reflecting directly into Han Shuo's mind. Fanny's sweet-smelling tongue darted out to separate Han Shuo's teeth as the two noses touched and lips locked firmly together. Fanny started helping Han Shuo breathe.

A marvelous, soul stealing feeling immediately spread through Han

Shuo's entire nervous system. Han Shuo only felt that this time's adventure had finally been worth the while and was completely unwilling to wake up. He carefully savored this moment of incredibly wondrous sensations.

Fanny sucked in one breath, raised her head to expel it, paused and had been about to continue when her clear eyes absentmindedly took in the strange little tent that had been erected between Han Shuo's legs.

Fanny was stunned, blanked for a moment and abruptly recollected herself. She gave a high pitched scream and placed her jade hands around Han Shuo's neck, violently shaking him. She cursed loudly, utterly discomfited and exasperated, "Damnit Bryan, I'm going to kill you!"

## Chapter 42: Erected a small tent

“Eh... bleargh, blech...” Han Shuo spat out mouthfuls of water as his face turned beet red. He hastily moved Fanny’s clenched hands away from neck, still not sure what was going on. He hurriedly said with a wry face, “Master Fanny, what are you doing? I’m already like this. Can’t you be more gentle?”

Han Shuo’s eyes suddenly bugged out after saying that and he stared fixedly at Fanny and Lisa in front of him. Their upper bodies were basically completely naked. The pure, snow-white expanse were revealed entirely. Fanny’s beautiful twin peaks and Lisa’s initially budding breasts were thus unabashedly utterly exposed to Han Shuo’s eyes at close quarters.

Dripping-wet, thin lingerie as thin as cicada’s wings covered the two’s most vital area on the lower body. Although he was unable to fully see through, the tantalizing, almost translucent temptation was even more fatal. Han Shuo’s brother had been about to droop down in the shock of being choked, but it now resolutely erected itself again.

“Aiya, Bryan you’re finally awake. Eh, Master Fanny, why are you treating him like this?” Off on the side, Lisa was equally perplexed and she quickly walked over.

“Look at his lower body. If he’d really fainted, why would his lower body have a reaction?” Fanny was irate and spoke to Lisa with a reddened face. She immediately retaliated by randomly pinching and twisting Han Shuo as she cursed in a low voice.

Han Shuo was immediately dumbfounded by Fanny’s words as his eyes still roved fixedly over the two bodies. Sudden brilliance struck him and he immediately argued, disregarding whether or not his logic was correct. “I was hit by the Python’s venom just now and my entire body went stiff and listless. My lower body was stiff too! How can this be my fault?”

After he’d spoken, Fanny and Lisa looked at each other and suddenly realized that they were still naked. They exclaimed in surprise and

screamed shrilly.

“Shut up! Stop making excuses. I’ve never heard of anyone with a stiffened lower body after being hit by the Deepwater Venom Python poison mist. Ooh, close your eyes and don’t you dare peek! Lisa, let’s hurry and put our clothes back on before we deal with him.” Fanny humphed angrily and hurriedly vacated the scene, screaming along with Lisa.

Han Shuo immediately shut his mouth and his beady eyes quickly opened when both had turned their backs to rove greedily over Fanny’s well rounded and pert bottom.

After a moment, a fully-dressed Fanny and Lisa walked furiously over from the distance with both of their cheeks burning red. Fanny sized up Han Shuo with a darkened face, snorting coldly after a while, “Why did you appear here so coincidentally?”

“Eh... I came to collect firewood and happened to hear your screams. That’s why I appeared here to save you without paying attention to anything else. Master Fanny, I’m hurt and I didn’t mean to look at you guys. I’m stiff all over and can’t move. The Python’s tail also whipped me from my chest to my right cheek and it hurts an incredible amount right now. This was all to save you two.” Han Shuo said with a pinched face as he lay there on his back, his entire body as stiff as a wooden doll with only his mouth and pair of eyes being able to move.

“Master Fanny, although Bryan is indeed suspicious, but he’s just saved our lives and become like this because of that. Can you let him go?” Lisa looked at Han Shuo from afar and flung him a vicious eye roll when she saw that his lower body was still firmly stiff. She spat lightly and only then begged for mercy on his behalf.

“Lisa, I... I’ve been violated by him!” Fanny glared at Han Shuo and spoke hurriedly when she saw that Lisa was begging for leniency for him.

“We’re the only ones that know of this. I won’t say anything, Bryan certainly won’t say anything, so you can just pretend that nothing happened. Eh, he’s also seen my body. Although I hate him too, we can’t very well kill him! He almost lost his life because of us just now.” Lisa

blanked for a moment and finally responded to Fanny wryly after thinking for a moment.

“I didn’t see anything, I didn’t see anything just now, I promise. Master Fanny please don’t kill me...” Han Shuo’s face was full of panic as his eyes moved rapidly, spitting out a string of crazy talk from his mouth.

“Shut up!” Fanny shouted irately. This expression was replaced by resignation, and she abruptly stomped her foot after thinking for a while. She gritted her teeth, “This isn’t over yet. You’re injured, so I’ll let you go for now, but I’ll settle this with you sooner or later. We have finished addressing last time’s matter when you’ve... eh. Nothing.”

Fanny suddenly realized that she’d almost let things slip halfway through. Seeing that Lisa was looking at her with a look of suspicion, she hurriedly changed to topic to cover up her slip.

“Master Fanny, you don’t mean?” Lisa looked at Fanny oddly and asked.

“No!” Fanny immediately huffily interrupted Lisa’s words, and then laughed charmingly and said gently, “Bryan kept making mischief in last time’s experiment, that’s why I said I’ll settle last time’s matter with him. Don’t think the wrong thoughts. Isn’t this right, Bryan?”

His eyes moving rapidly, Han Shuo hastened to agree, “Yes, Yes, that’s right.”

“Eh, Lisa you watch Bryan for now. The Deepwater Venom Python is already dead, I’m going to go extract the core from it. Hah, this is a level three magical creature core! We’ll be able to walk and talk proudly when we return.” Fanny was a bit afraid to continue to remain here, afraid that she would let something slip again. She hurriedly walked away like she was escaping something. She swam into the lake again, but this time she didn’t undress.

After Fanny had left, Lisa approached Han Shuo and sighed lightly, saying lowly, “Bryan, who would’ve thought that you would be so silly. I know that your death defying battle with the Python this time was all for me. I only half believed your words in the trap, but now after this event, I believe you completely. Bryan, I’m actually a bad girl and not worth your

effort!”

Han Shuo, “....”

Lisa saw Han Shuo stand there dumbfounded and thought that she had correctly guessed Han Shuo’s inner thoughts. She shook her head and clenched her teeth, “Bryan, give up on me while it’s still early. We’re really not suited for each other because the gap between our status and position is simply too great. My family would never approve a relationship between us. I’m sorry Bryan!”

Han Shuo, “...”

“Bryan, what’s wrong, why aren’t you talking? Are you sad?” Lisa maintained a knowing look on her face as she spoke frantically and continued to think that she was being a heartless person.

Han Shuo didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. As he watched Lisa continue to pay no attention to anything other than herself and carry on speaking those conceited words, he really didn’t know how to respond. He finally settled for being in a daze for a while and then shouting in pain, “Stop talking!”

After he paused, Han Shuo thought Lisa had been severely frightened. He hastily sighed and spoke with a face of desolation, “I understand in my heart. I just wish to look at you from afar and won’t bring you any troubles. Liking someone means that one shouldn’t weigh her down and should wholeheartedly consider all matters for her. Lisa, you don’t have to mind, really. I will take care of myself and silently wish you the best.”

Han Shuo had heard these words from a third rate soap opera before, and he even gave himself goosebumps upon saying them. He thought he was really being a bit too sinister and shameless.

“I’ve never heard anyone say such nice things, wah wah... I’m sorry Bryan!”

Contrary to Han Shuo’s expectations, Lisa actually burst out in low sobs after she heard his words. Her tears flowed down without pause. It’d seemed that she’d been greatly moved to pieces by his words.

Fanny returned, dripping wet, from the pool at this time. When she heard Lisa crying, Fanny's face changed as she glared viciously at Han Shuo. She said, "Bryan, haven't you bullied us enough?"

"Wah wah... Master Fanny, it has nothing to do with Bryan. I was just a bit scared after recalling what had happened just now. It had nothing to do with him, really!" Lisa hastily wiped away her tears, forced a smile onto her face, and explained when she heard Fanny berate Han Shuo.

Looking at Lisa in confusion, and then looking at Han Shuo, who hadn't moved an inch and was still lying there completely frozen, Fanny snorted lightly and said, "He wouldn't dare bully you anymore."

Fanny's clothes were tightly plastered to her perfect body as she'd emerged from the lake. Although nothing could be seen, those vivacious curves were still a feast for Han Shuo's eyes. He tutted in appreciation inwardly. Fanny not only possessed beautiful and striking features, but her body was a crime of utmost temptation.

"This is a bit odd, the Deepwater Venom Python was burnt to a soggy mess from its neck to its head. I wonder what happened? It looks like this Python died so quickly, not because of my magic, but because of the burnt mess within its head, which is weird because my bone magic doesn't have the amazing effect of making someone's body burned up from the inside. What is going on Bryan?" Fanny sized up Han Shuo and asked oddly.

Laughing dryly, Han Shuo said hastily, "Who knows? I only stabbed it a few times and don't have the kind of magic or fighting aura for it to burn up from inside. It's no use looking at me."

"Is that really the case? Why do I think you're very suspicious?" Fanny frowned and her beautiful eyes sized up Han Shuo as she spoke with a voice thick with suspicion.

"Eh, whatever you want to think. I'd love to have such wonderful magic and fighting aura though, but too bad I just don't have the strength!" Han Shuo laughed loudly and said with a bit of a self deprecating tone.

The magic that he was practicing was something that shouldn't exist in this world. This was a secret that he would never tell anyone else, even

under pain of death.

“Master Fanny, you must be thinking too much or saw incorrectly. Your eyes don’t work too well sometimes. Bryan just saved us, so why would he lie to us. Besides, if he was so strong, he would’ve long since stopped being an errand slave.”

“Perhaps.” Fanny smiled slightly, nodded her head and then said gleefully. “I’ve got the magical creature core. Come, we can go back to the tents now. This swim was quite thrilling, but we made out like bandits by getting our hands on a level 3 core!”

“Bryan, can you move now? Do you want me to get some of the male students to carry you back?” Lisa looked at Han Shuo and asked with some worry.

“According to my knowledge, the poison mist of the Deepwater Venom Python only temporarily paralyzes enemies in order to facilitate eating them later. It’s been so long. Bryan, you should be fine by now?” Fanny huffed angrily and rolled her eyes at Han Shuo in a bad temper, speaking with a cold expression.

Han Shuo exclaimed in surprise upon hearing her words. “Ah, that’s so true! I can move fully now. Let’s hurry and go back?”

Lisa started, then looked at Han Shuo and also spoke with a bit of anger. “Bryan, you could move a long time ago right?”

Han Shuo spoke seriously without a trace of awkwardness. “No no, I only knew I could move after I heard Master Fanny’s words. Let’s go... let’s go. They’ll be worried if we’re any later.”

He abruptly stood up after speaking without waiting for Fanny and Lisa’s responses. He walked speedily and headed straight to where the students had pitched their tents.

“Damnit, he’s definitely been pretending all along. I’ve found out by just testing him. Bryan, stop right there! You haven’t heard the end of this!” Fanny was infuriated and she chased after Han Shuo, pulling Lisa along in her wake.



# Chapter 43: Reborn

Han Shuo whizzed all the way back and suddenly detected that Gene hadn't gone to bed yet when he returned to the campground. He was sitting outside his tent instead, bored to death.

"Eh, Bryan. Have you seen Fanny or Lisa?" Gene immediately stood up and asked when he heard Han Shuo's footsteps.

Nodding, Han Shuo said faintly, "I did. Master Fanny and Lisa will be back shortly. Master Gene, why haven't you gone to sleep yet?"

"Oh, because Clark suddenly left for some business. He asked me to give Fanny his apologies. Hah, that Clark left without giving a reason. How baffling."

Han Shuo's thoughts raced after hearing Gene's words, and he immediately understood that Clark must have left abruptly because he knew that he would be unable to explain his actions for bumping into and angering Fanny and Lisa at the pool.

"I see. Master Gene, I still need to collect a few things from nearby. When Master Fanny and Lisa return, please tell them that I'll return at daybreak." Han Shuo quickly headed south after he'd spoken, not paying attention to whether Gene had agreed to pass along his message or not. He vanished without a trace in the blink of an eye.

Although Han Shuo's body wasn't stiff and drained of energy, he was still feeling the effects of the Python's tail whip. His body was truly injured, and he knew that Fanny and Lisa were bound to nag him for a while when they returned. This way, he'd be unable to use his magical yuan to repair his body. He therefore decided to temporarily avoid the situation and wait until morning. Their tempers would mostly be mollified by then, and there shouldn't be anything major by that time.

There was a towering tree to the south with a thick branch heavily forested with twigs and leaves about ten meters from the ground. Han Shuo sat down Indian style and was deep in concentration, coalescing the magical yuan to repeatedly strengthen his body.

Time flew by unknowingly, and the slight aches in Han Shuo's body faded away beneath the circulation of the magical yuan. Every inch of skin, flesh, tendon, and bone in his body felt like it was filled with surging strength.

Han Shuo had sank into the passive demonic mental state when a faint sliver of pain started emanating from his mind and gradually spread throughout his entire body. A sudden onslaught of pain accompanied it, as an agony ten times stronger than that pain roared to life and caused Han Shuo to immediately cry out.

Explosive pilipala sounds rang out from within his body accompanying his pain-filled roars. Faint, murky strands of air started rising from Han Shuo's pores along with these sounds, and layers of ripples swam along the surface of his body, as if someone had thrown a rock into water. When his pores had finished emitting the murky air and harmful matter within his body, a misty cloud of black splendor faintly surrounded his body.

This situation sustained for who-knew-how-long. Han Shuo only felt the pain all over his body suddenly vanished without a trace, and he dropped down from the ten meter high branch with a sharp crack. His body was scarily agile and nimble.

Success! He had finally successfully broken through the first demonic "solid" realm. From now on, his body had been reborn. Whether it was strength, pliability, or toughness, his body now far outstripped that of ordinary people. After surpassing the most basic "solid" realm, Han Shuo's effort in future training would be halved, but would be double in effectiveness.

A sudden thought struck him and his magical yuan circulated freely, meeting no obstructions. Not only could it effortlessly travel throughout his four limbs, chest, and stomach, but the magical yuan could also easily circulate to his head. Han Shuo glanced at his naked skin and saw that not even a single scar remained from his previously scar covered body. His skin and flesh were clean and supple, and he could clearly feel that his height had increased another one or two centimeters when he moved his body.

He lifted his head to look at the sky and saw that it was still deep night. Han Shuo was reveling in the joy of new life in the moment as he continuously circulated the magical yuan all over his body, excitedly feeling out every inch of change.

Suddenly, Han Shuo's mind raced as he remembered the handbag and jade box he carried around with him. Last time he'd used the bizarre object within the jade box to mediate and train his mental strength, he had almost had all his mental strength sucked away instead. It was only when the magical yuan had flowed into his brain that he had found a way out of danger and emerged with great rewards instead.

Now that he had broken through the "solid" realm, Han Shuo could freely deploy the magical yuan at his will and command it to flow to any part of his body, including the most difficult to reach part, his brain. Recalling the enormous rewards that he'd gained previously, Han Shuo found it hard to repress the desires in his heart. He immediately sat down, crossing his legs, and took out the bag he always kept on him.

When he opened the box, the ball that appeared like an eyeball was still as strange and sinister as he remembered. When he focused his mental strength and slowly started coalescing it into the round ball, the same thing that occurred last time happened again. The ball instantly emitted a hazy light green aura, and the drop of blood inside gave one a heavy, uncomfortable feeling.

Han Shuo's mental strength was sucked away like a whale drinking in water, and it flowed quickly into the round ball within the jade box. The pain in Han Shuo's mind increased as his mental strength continued to be siphoned away.

Finally, just when he thought that his mind would explode, his thoughts moved and the magical yuan pooling in his lower abdomen suddenly flew up into his mind. There was a loud roaring sound in his mind as increased pain caused him to roar out loudly in pain. At the same time, his surging mental strength returned with the force of leveling mountains and draining seas, instantly filling Han Shuo's mind.

Han Shuo abruptly sank bonelessly to the ground and panted heavily. His entire mind felt groggy and stuffy, and this condition maintained itself for a while. He slowly returned to normal and only felt that his mental strength had indeed increased significantly. Han Shuo stared involuntarily at the round ball with glee.

Suddenly, Han Shuo saw that strands of green light had started rippling through the ball. These strands of light wove together continuously, as if a pen was tracing out a drawing. A picture formed in the midst after a short while – a strange, grey castle.

Briefly revealed by the green lines, it suddenly vanished without a trace leaving only the drop of red in the center flashed continuously as it actually formed the shape of a red arrow. It froze momentarily, then pointed south.

What did this mean? What did it mean when the arrow pointed south?

Han Shuo was momentarily dumbfounded as he gazed at the spot of red in the center, lost in thought. His thoughts churned madly and finally confirmed one thing. The red arrow within the round ball had delineated a direction, like an objective to travel to.

He hesitated and gazed at the sky as his curiosity had been thoroughly piqued. He finally grabbed the jade box and quickly ventured south, in the direction that the jade box was pointing at.

Throughout this entire process, Han Shuo could feel that the further south he traveled, the more he heard sounds from large magical creatures. Dangers abounded along his way and he was quite wary. His eyes occasionally flicked to the round ball and noticed that the arrow continuously changed direction, as if pointing out the correct path for Han Shuo.

He proceeded in this way for quite a while when the red arrow in the round ball he grasped finally disappeared. The red blood-like drop reappeared, and the green light emitted from the ball became stronger. Strong magical pulses travelled out from the ball.

Han Shuo stopped, surveyed his surroundings and realized that this was

a common area filled with weeds, shrubbery and towering trees. An unknown, enormous tree with twisted, entwined branches was present not too far off, and its strange shadow, illuminated by moonlight, appeared like that of a monstrous creature's on the ground.

Han Shuo concentrated his attention and suddenly noticed something strange. In other parts of the Dark Forest, sounds from bugs would carry on no matter how quiet it was, but upon reaching this place, Han Shuo realized that this place was almost desolately quiet. There wasn't a single insect's call and not a hint of life to be found.

Bizarre. Han Shuo felt that the entire area was filled with a strange aura, hidden under an ordinary exterior. This aura felt familiar and friendly to Han Shuo, as if he'd long since grown used to some things, but upon thinking carefully, Han Shuo realized that he had no idea what was going on.

Just as Han Shuo was completely lost and deep in thought, the round ball within the jade box suddenly levitated into the air as the ball used the green light on the surface to draw beams of magical lines through the air. Han Shuo could feel the strong magical pulses through the air, and that they were growing stronger the more the ball's green light shone out.

After Han Shuo had noticed, he suddenly realized that the area bathed in the green light underwent changes that made his eyes bug out and his tongue tied. The weeds and shrubs on the ground would suddenly vanish without a trace whenever the green light touched it, to change into dry, grey, and dusty earth with piles of stark, white bones piled on it.

The leafy boughed, towering trees on the side also underwent eerie changes under the green light, changing into the skeletons of monstrous, dead creatures. If Han Shuo's memory served him right, those enormous skeletons were the legendary bone dragons, the most terrifying kind of dark creature.

Death. An empty, desolate wilderness morphed into an eternal land of death under the rays of the green light.

There was an enormous grey castle half floating in air, half buried

underground. A few odd, sharp spikes encircled the castle as numerous pictures of dark creatures were carved on the castle walls.

Han Shuo looked on for a while, completely gobsmacked. He finally muttered to himself in astonishment. “This... is this the legendary cemetery of death?”

# Chapter 44: Cemetery of Death

The cemetery of death was a legendary, sacred ground for necromancers, and the lofty hope that the band had held upon traveling to the Dark Forest. Han Shuo fully observed his surroundings, connecting it to Fanny's previous descriptions. He could be certain that this was the legendary cemetery of death.

No wonder Han Shuo had vaguely felt something so familiar about this place earlier. This was because Han Shuo also practiced necromancy magic. The strong pulses of death magic in this area, including the smell given off by the illusioned white bones, were all things that Han Shuo were exceedingly familiar with.

He gazed all over his surroundings, taking everything in. Han Shuo frowned as he thought, everyone who has ever seen the cemetery of death has ended up dead. Now that I stand here, do I go in or not?

The cemetery of death was a place in which mighty necromancers studied necromancy, back when this magic was at its peak. All the necromancers had later died, and the cemetery of death had vanished without a trace.

However, since this cemetery of death had been a place of research for those necromancers, some secrets of necromancy must surely exist here. This was a huge temptation for a rookie like Han Shuo, someone who had just entered the halls of magic. This forced Han Shuo to seriously consider whether or not to take on this adventure.

After a while, Han Shuo walked towards the direction of the cemetery and set foot into the piles of stark white bones, a firm resolution evident on his face. When he'd taken a few steps forward and set foot into the inner parts of this area, the dark green, round ball hung high in the air suddenly landed back into the jade box, and the green light that bathed the surroundings vanished with a trace.

Han Shuo started as he looked around him, stunned. The outskirts, that his eyes had just passed over, had changed again. It had been restored to

the sight that he had first seen when he had arrived. Only the surroundings areas around the cemetery to the ground underneath Han Shuo's feet were the same scene of death and gloom.

Looking at the round ball in his hand, Han Shuo understood that this ball was a pivotal item to enter the cemetery of death. It seemed to be able to open the doors to the cemetery. The entire cemetery was shrouded by a concealing field. No one would be able to detect anything out of the ordinary if they looked in from the outside, nor would this place elicit anyone's attention.

However, one would be able to reveal the true nature of the cemetery of death with this round ball and envelop the entire cemetery under a veil of silence and desolation.

The stark white bones creaked beneath his feet. The sound suddenly broke through the still and lonely air, giving Han Shuo the creeps. It was a good thing that he had just successfully broken through the "solid" realm, giving him some courage from who-knew-where. He actually walked headlong towards the cemetery of death without paying heed to anything else.

After a while, he finally stood in front of the cemetery. There was a circular moat in front of the door and inky-black water flowing in it. A bridge made of black lines and white bones hung in abject loneliness over the moat.

Without hesitating, Han Shuo's hands tightened around the jade box, that held the ball and stepped slightly apprehensively onto the bone bridge, slowly walking towards the doors to the cemetery of death. The bridge swayed, throwing his body off balance. He didn't know what was in the moat below, but a single glance was enough to raise his hair. He somehow felt that whatever was in the still, inky black waters of the moat was highly dangerous.

When Han Shuo walked onto the bridge, the round ball within the jade box started emitting the strange green light again. This seemed to be some miraculous medicine for motion sickness as the wobbly bridge stopped



swaying as soon as the green light flashed out. The black lines that had once been large gaps in the bridge immediately solidly bridged the space between the bones.

Han Shuo finally made it to the door. There were skeletons of two enormous evil knights and their steeds in front of the two great, grey doors that were made of unknown material.

Evil knights were dark creatures that possessed extremely strong battle power. Necromancers who weren't at archmage level shouldn't even entertain the idea of summoning evil knights. From the large skeletons of the two evil knights in front of the doors and the shape of their battle steeds, Han Shuo could vaguely tell that these two evil knights were the cream of the crop.

There were complicated and detailed magical patterns on the two grey doors. A round slot was present in the center, where the two doors intersected. The shape of that slot looked like a key that would open the doors.

At this moment, the dark green ball that Han Shuo clutched in his hands suddenly shot out a beam of green light, aiming straight for the round slot in the middle of the doors. Han Shuo's thoughts raced as he immediately understood what was going on. He raised the jade box without hesitation and brought the ball closer to the slot, slowly inserting it.

In the entire process, Han Shuo took pains to ensure that his hand wouldn't touch the round ball, because he understood that this ball was no simple object. He wasn't sure if some undesired changes would occur if skin and flesh touched it, so he therefore avoided touching it with his bare hands as much as possible.

When the ball had been inserted into the slot, a roar sounded out as the doors abruptly opened with a creak. The slot automatically split open with the opening of the doors, and the round ball that had been inserted in it remained in the jade box with no changes.

Hazy gloom and dust from the inside drifted out, accompanying the opening of the doors, causing Han Shuo to cough a few times before

calming himself down and observing what was inside.

There was a large hall within the cemetery of death and six rooms with closed doors around the hall. The entire hall was quite vast and the ceiling was extremely high. It was about the size of a basketball field, and there was a magical matrix in the shape of a large, six-pointed star in the center. It was about 80% to 90% similar to the one that Han Shuo had taken from the Academy to the city of Zajoski, and there were ancient, quaint magical pictures drawn in the center.

Apart from the six-pointed star matrix, the hall was bereft of anything else. There were only a few magical pillars that were supporting the building, and a few broken pieces of bone in the corner.

There was a thick scent of decay in the air and Han Shuo waited for a while at the door, only slowly walking in when he felt that the scent had slowly started dispersing through the open doors.

Apart from the six pointed star matrix, there was only the lofty ceiling within the hall, plus the six room doors that the matrix points were pointing at. He first looked throughout the hall and didn't come up with anything valuable. Han Shuo then turned his attention to the six rooms with the closed doors.

One, two, three...

Han Shuo was still empty handed after he having gone through all six room. From the shape of the six rooms, they were merely six warehouses with nothing inside them now.

He returned to the great hall and started recollecting what Fanny had said last time. Apart from the general outward appearance, Han Shuo gradually remembered that only a small portion of the cemetery of death was revealed above ground. Most of it was buried deep underground, and the true secret would surely lie in the depths of the cemetery.

Except, Han Shuo hadn't seen any tunnels or stairs leading down after he'd gone through the great hall and six rooms. This greatly befuddled him and he sank into deep thought again.

After a while, Han Shuo still felt that the round ball within his hands was the key. He immediately stood up again and circled the hall again, including the six rooms in his inspection.

Finally, Han Shuo discovered another slot in the corner of one of the rooms. He was overjoyed and another set of rumbling sounded out when he inserted the round ball into the slot. A dark tunnel suddenly split open the walls of the room, and rows of six silver sticks, made from strange material that was neither stone or wood, were laid on the first step of the tunnel. There seemed to be connection points on both ends of each stick, as if the six sticks could be assembled.

There was only a thin piece of paper apart from the six sticks. On it, ancient magical symbols were used to write a few hastily scribbled words. Han Shuo took the thin sheet of paper.

When he'd carefully read the magical words, Han Shuo understood that these six sticks could form a diagram with a six-sided star and be used in direct transportation with the magical matrix in the hall. He also clearly understood that if one had insufficient mental strength, one would be unable to venture further into the depths.

Apart from that, Han Shuo was unable to obtain any other useful information from the thin sheet of paper.

Thinking briefly, Han Shuo put away the six magical sticks and creased his brow as he started walking down the tunnel. An invisible field suddenly appeared as green light rippled, abruptly bouncing him off. Han Shuo only felt that his mind hurt abnormally throughout the process, and internally reflected that the words on this thin sheet of paper were true. His mental strength must be too weak and was being prevented from descending any further into the depths of the building.

Cursing lowly, Han Shuo stayed in the room and connected the six magical sticks according to the instructions recorded on the paper and formed a six pointed star on the floor. He then stood in the center of this mini matrix, activated it with his mental strength, and Han Shuo appeared in the large matrix in the center of the hall with a flash of white light.

Repeating the same method, Han Shuo infused the transportation matrix in the hall with his mental strength and returned to the same room after activation, appearing within the small, six pointed matrix

His brow creasing in deep thought, Han Shuo understood that he would be unable to enter the tunnel and explore the cemetery of death for the time being. It was a good thing that he had gained the six magical sticks and the round ball that allowed him to conveniently come here no matter where he was. This filled his heart with glee as he'd already started thinking of this place as his secret base.

Since he would be temporarily unable to discover the secrets of this place, Han Shuo had no desire to continue to stay. After thinking for a while, he rolled up the six magical sticks and placed them on his back, put away the piece of paper into his pocket, and walked out of the cemetery of death in the same manner of holding the jade box.

When Han Shuo had safely walked out, he looked back and realized that the scene was the same as when he'd walked in. The growth of tall weeds, shrubs, and towering trees remained unchanged. His surroundings were still quietly desolate.

A small, satisfied smile appeared on his face. Han Shuo understood that this time's outing to the Dark Forest had come to an end here.

He had stumbled upon the legendary cemetery of death by pure, dumb luck. The secrets of this cemetery also belonged to him and no one else, including the necromancy students and teachers.

# Chapter 45: Making a move when he should make one

After emerging from the cemetery of death, Han Shuo returned along his original path, but the sky had completely brightened halfway on his journey back. When he returned back to the original camping grounds, according to the way in his memory, he found that the necromancy students had long since moved on.

Just as Han Shuo was about to curse loudly, he suddenly took in the appearance of his surroundings. He discovered that the ashes in the area with the bonfire didn't look like they were from last night, but much more like they had been there for a few days.

Han Shuo's tent area had been filled with many resources, but now nothing remained. Only a few rocks were piled up in a triangular formation.

His interest piqued, Han Shuo quickly walked to the tent area. He took out his dagger and carefully flipped through the center of the stones, retrieving a piece of yellow paper after a while.

"Bryan, on the second day of your departure, we found traces of the two man-eating monsters nearby. We were worried that the man-eating monsters would seek revenge and decided not to wait for you. When you see this note, return to the academy along the original way. Perhaps we will meet halfway. Hope you are safe and sound, Fanny."

Fanny had left the note. Han Shuo whapped his head after reading it and silently said, "Oh no!". After reading the note, Han Shuo understood that much time must have unknowingly passed by while he was practicing magic, and not merely just a day.

It looks like the two man-eating monsters had appeared and caused Fanny and the others to panic. Add to that she was already deep in the southern territory of the Dark Forest and without Clark's protection, they had no choice but to resign themselves to return along their original path.

Currently, Han Shuo's slave status still had not been resolved, and the woman he wanted was still within the Babylon Academy of School and Magic, along with some tomes of necromancy magic that he wanted still wanted to learn. He would be unable to leave the Academy in the near future.

With the six magical sticks, Han Shuo could come and go from the cemetery of death at his leisure. He could absolutely use the transportation matrix to make the cemetery his personal territory after he returned to the Academy. The entire southern portion of the Dark Forest would be his training fields in the future. Whether it was magical yuan or magic spell training, half the amount would lead to double the effectiveness in a place like this.

Musing for a while, Han Shuo followed the instructions left on Fanny's note and followed the original road, swiftly moving towards the outskirts of the Dark Forest.

Although he traveled without rest for a day, Han Shuo actually didn't feel tired at all. Moving through the winding and bumpy paths of the Dark Forest, Han Shuo's speed was as fast as lightning, like a magical creature hunting down its prey.

He neared an area of randomly scattered rocks and shrubs around dusk. This was an area where they had camped before. The sounds of metallic clashes traveled to him from afar.

Han Shuo was startled, thinking 'Could it be that Fanny and everyone else are under attack by the man-eating monsters?' When he thought of this, his speed picked up and he abruptly flew towards the area of rocks and shrubs.

Along the way, many forest trolls with glistening green skin, towering bodies, grimacing faces, and wielded knives or studded clubs repeatedly attacked Han Shuo. He easily evaded all of them.

Forest trolls were a race within the Dark Forest that were mortal enemies with the elves. The elves treated them as marauders of the forest and continuously attacked them.

Within the Dark Forest, the forest trolls were even more frightening robbers than the man-eating monsters. Not only did they adhere to a strict code of conduct, but they also divided themselves according to methods employed by mankind into warriors, hunters, and even priests that could use some simple magics.

It was said that the forest trolls were evolved from plants and trees. They held high intelligence, similar to humans, and enjoyed some unique advantages within the Dark Forest. They leveraged these advantages to wantonly plunder the resources of other races, including the cargo of some traveling merchants. They were infamous bandits and robbers like the man-eating monsters.

Han Shuo listened closely to the sounds of fighting and quickly darted in the direction they came from. Along the way, some of the forest troll hunters threw out long spears, and they flew towards Han Shuo's spine with a whooshing sound. Han Shuo's five senses were exceedingly sensitive as he ran. As his ears twitched, he changed the direction of his body a few times and easily evaded the long spears that had been thrown.

Several forest troll warriors holding large, sharp axes yelled loudly as they rushed towards Han Shuo, but before they had reached him, Han Shuo had already agilely dashed past them and continued towards the center of the action.

After ten or so seconds of extremely fast sprinting, Han Shuo had finally made it to the thick of combat. He saw ten or so people wielding longswords, defending themselves against the forest troll attacks. Their dress clearly signified them as part of a mercenary band. They all looked like they had suffered some sort of injury.

There were about ten or so forest trolls surrounding them. Troll warriors handled the close combat up in the front, while about ten troll hunters continuously threw out long spears. The final five troll priests cast simple healing magics and fire of the soul to enhance body durability, healing the warriors' and hunters' injuries while increasing their vitality.

Judging from this scene, the fight had been going on for a while. The

battle strength of the band of roughly ten humans was also extraordinary, but it was a pity that the forest trolls held the strength in numbers, and they had missile fighters in the form of the troll hunters, as well as the healing-type troll priests. The combination of these three matched up against a mercenary band of only warriors. Add to that the forest trolls' advantage in strength, it was obvious that they held the absolute advantage.

A short, stocky fatty, with a face full of blubber, was behind the mercenaries. His yellow bean-like little eyes moved swiftly as he cursed loudly. He seemed to be searching for a way out.

So it wasn't Fanny and them... looks like this is nothing to do with me. Han Shuo thought as he immediately put the events of this tableau out of his mind. He had no thoughts of joining the fray and helping, and was intent on simply bypassing these people and continue on his path to exit the Dark Forest.

However, even though Han Shuo had no intention of lending a helping hand, these forest trolls didn't seem to want to let him go. A couple particularly strong and fierce troll warriors, who were out in the front, had already raised their large battleaxes and were rushing towards Han Shuo. A few sharp spears in flight also accompanied them.

"Sorry, I'm just passing by and will leave immediately. Continue robbing them. It's nothing to do with me!"

Han Shuo didn't want new complications to arise, so when he saw the troll warriors rush towards him, he yelled loudly and tried to leave and avoid them.

"Humans are the most devious and evil of all races. Kill him." Standing beside the troll priests on the outside, the forest troll leader of this operation suddenly screamed harshly with the common language (language of humans) of the Continent.

The troll warriors had paused briefly upon hearing Han Shuo's words, but lost their hesitation when hearing their leader's words and came rushing over with axes upraised.



Damnit! They were looking for death! Han Shuo was also a bit hacked off. He had just evaded the throws of the long spears when the tall, bulky troll warriors rushed over with their battleaxes. They were obviously planning on also taking care of him along with the others.

Wrapping his hand around a long spear beside him, Han Shuo pulled upwards and grasped the spear in his hand. He didn't wait for the forest troll warriors to get closer before he jumped upwards. The spear in his hand was so fast that it was like lightning piercing through the air. The spear first pierced through the chest of a troll warrior and also strung up the warrior that was close behind it.

The two troll warriors only had time to emit two ghastly screams before they died instantly when the spear impaled them. Han Shuo randomly grabbed one of the battleaxes that one of them had wielded and yelled loudly, "Can't blame me if you come looking for your own deaths."

After the matter with the man-eating monsters last time, Han Shuo was no longer timid nor did he waste time hesitating when it came to killing someone. He also somehow felt vaguely excited.

Han Shuo knew that mercy or pleas would be absolutely useless with these bandits and robbers. Only cold and cruel methods would be able to shock and awe them. The more timid and cowardly you were, the more they would act without reservation. Therefore, Han Shuo had acted extremely cruelly just now, directly using violent killings to face them.

Indeed, after Han Shuo had displayed his brutal methods, panicked expressions appeared on the glistening green skin of the other four forest trolls that had followed their brethren's charge. They retreated quite a few steps backwards in cowardice. Even the leader of the forest trolls looked at him with some horror, and an apprehensive expression appeared on his face.

"Brave warrior, please rescue me!"

At this moment, the short fatty, that the mercenaries shoved to the back for protection, suddenly cried out with excitement. He looked at Han Shuo with a fervorous expression, as if Han Shuo was his savior.

“No interest!” Han Shuo replied decisively. He picked up the battleaxe with a cold snort and prepared to leave.

The short fatty immediately lost his calm and cried out wildly upon seeing that Han Shuo was about to leave. “Brave warrior, I am willing to pay you a rich reward if you save me. I promise that you’ll be satisfied!”

Han Shuo had already taken a few steps forward when he heard those words. He suddenly stopped and turned with a faint smile, looking at the fatty. He said, “Noble sir, how large of a reward are you willing to give?”

The fatty was momentarily stunned, then hesitated. He grit his teeth and stamped his foot, yelling loudly. “Fifty gold!”

“Sorry, please find someone else!” Han Shuo thought that if it had been before, he probably would have been tempted by the fifty golds. Now that he’d entered the Dark Forest and discovered that his skills were absolutely enough for him to catch Windblade Wolves by himself, he no longer felt that fifty gold was enough for him to take the risk.

Fatty grew anxious seeing that Han Shuo was about to leave. He yelled out again. “Seventy at most!”

Han Shuo continued walking forward without even looking back.

“80. 100! 120, 150! 200! 200!!”

The moving figure abruptly stopped, Han Shuo suddenly looked back and rushed speedily back. He said, “Alright, 200 it is then. I’ll eat up the loss and count it as making a friend.”

“Oh my word. Two hundred golds! You’re robbing me just like they are. Two hundred gold is enough for more than ten slaves. Damnit, get me out of here!” Fatty hollered with a look of pain on his face.

# Chapter 46: Little skeleton acts violently

When Han Shuo had moved behind the fatty, he discovered that out of the ten or so mercs defending the fatty, the strongest of them were two mid-ranked warriors, followed by six novice warriors and a few other warrior apprentices.

All of them were covered with wounds, and the two strongest mid-ranked warriors were injured the most heavily to the point where they had almost lost the ability to fight.

“Master Fabian, we’re the ones who are supposed to protect you!” The mid-ranked warrior with blood still bubbling out of a bloody hole in his rib cage grew agitated as he saw Han Shuo quickly draw near.

“The situation now is quite apparent that you have lost the ability to fight and cannot offer me effective protection. I paid half of the gold to your mercenary band earlier, but because you were unable to escort me back to the Empire, I will not be paying the second half.” Fabian said with a face full of resignation and then pasted a warm, slight smile on his face. He bowed slightly and said to Han Shuo, “Mighty warrior, please take me away from here and I will pay you two hundred gold.”

“Alright, give me one hundred gold first and I’ll start immediately!” Han Shuo was at ease and also responded with a slight smile.

At this moment, upon seeing that Han Shuo did not seem to be leaving, the forest troll leader finally screamed with violent rage, “Devious and evil humans, kill them all!”

When the leader’s words sounded, the troll warriors, hunters, and priests that had been standing blankly in their places called out in the weird language of the forest trolls and rushed over in large strides.

“Alright, this is one hundred golds. When you safely take me away from here, I’ll give you the other hundred gold. Damnit, they’re coming for us, make your move!” Fabian hastily took out a money bag and poured out one hundred gold coins for Han Shuo when he saw that the forest trolls were rushing over with ugly expressions and wielding weapons.

Having received the one hundred gold coins, Han Shuo suddenly smiled at Fabian. Before Fabian had a chance to react, Han Shuo had swung Fabian onto his back and ripped out a few tattered pieces of gauze from an open pocket. He firmly tied Fabian onto his back without further ado.

“Let’s go, I’ll get you safely away from here. You must hold on tight, if you fall off halfway, you only have only yourself to blame!” Han Shuo hurriedly instructed as he threw away the battleaxe in his hand, grabbed a new long spear from beside him and abruptly dashed towards the perimeter.

Seven troll warriors had long since blocked the way, with a few other hunters and priests behind them. They had already thrown out their long spears and javelins with whooshing sounds when they saw that Han Shuo was rushing towards them.

Even with a fatty on his back, Han Shou still navigated the rough and windy paths with ease. He agilely changed direction and easily evaded several long spears and javelins.

When Han Shuo had rushed to the side of the seven troll warriors, the long awaiting troll warriors rushed towards him, carrying their battleaxes. He clenched the long spear in his hand tightly as Han Shou rapidly closed the distance, and the spear stabbed towards the chest of the first troll.

A blood red flower suddenly blossomed on his chest, and the troll warrior fell directly backwards after he shuddered. At this moment, the troll priest towards the back started singing healing and Fire of the Soul magics. A few beams of green light descended onto the troll warriors.

The troll warrior who had fallen shakily got back to his feet. When the other troll warriors had been enveloped by the magic of the Fire of the Soul, it was as if a layer of metallic skin had been applied to their already tough green skin. Their skin shone with a metallic gleam, followed by simultaneous increases in speed and strength. They rushed at the two with loud wails.

“Hurry! Hurry and get me out of here!” Fabian was frightened out of his wits and started screaming in a panic on Han Shuo’s back.

His expression unchanged, Han Shuo ignored Fabian's calls and yells. He abruptly threw out the spear in his hand and impaled the troll warrior, that had just unsteadily clambered to its feet, through the neck and nailed it to the floor. He then pulled out the spears and javelins stuck on the ground and threw them, one by one, towards the priests hiding the back.

One of the priests didn't dodge in time and was immediately pierced to death. Another two troll hunters also died due to being impaled from the front. At this moment, Han Shuo randomly pulled out a long spear and started to directly confront the troll warrior in front of him.

Having had the Fire of the Soul cast on it, all of the troll warrior's bodily functions had increased significantly. However, Han Shuo's current condition had had some small achievements in practicing magic, and the toughness and flexibility of his body still far outstripped them. He maneuvered the long spear and flicked out the battleaxes one by one.

Throughout this process, when the battleaxes had been sent flying from the troll warriors' hands, they would pull out a javelin or long spear from the ground at the same time, thoroughly blocking the way and entangling Han Shuo. He was up against six with a fatty on his back. Even though he dodged with high speed, he still wasn't able to fully avoid all the injuries.

Whenever danger approached him, Han Shuo would very evilly use Fabian on his back as a shield, using the latter's fat, stocky body to decrease the damage inflicted on his own body.

"Damnit, you can't do this, otherwise don't even expect receive the one hundred gold coins after." Fabian's butt had been poked by a long spear, and his back had been bloodied by a few javelins. He wailed in continuous complaints on Han Shuo's back.

Unfortunately, Han Shuo completely ignored all of Fabian's complaints. He conveniently pulled a long spear embedded in the chest of a troll warrior, and the resulting spray of flesh blood fully splattered all over Han Shuo. Han Shuo's expression had been cold and vicious to begin with and he looked even more like the reincarnation of a bloodthirsty god with all the blood over him. This momentarily shocked Fabian senseless and he

didn't dare speak further nonsense, merely whimpered and cried on Han Shuo's back.

"Kill him, kill him, rush him together!" The forest troll leader suddenly exploded into an irate roar upon seeing that Han Shuo had killed quite a few forest trolls. He even pulled out a battleaxe from behind him and rushed over.

Currently, although Han Shuo wasn't particularly breaking a sweat facing off against five trolls, it was still exceedingly difficult for him to break through. When the troll leader had finished speaking, even more forest troll warriors rushed over. Han Shuo dodged the crushing blow from a battleaxe and backed up a few steps.

"Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald's call and reveal your existence!" Han Shuo spread out his hands and suddenly chanted the spell used for a necromancy summons.

"Oh, my gosh! You're also a mage!" Fabian had been sobbing in a low voice when he was momentarily shocked by Han Shuo starting an incantation. He looked blankly at Han Shuo with an odd expression and called out weirdly.

The forest troll leader off in the distance was startled and then increased its speed, screaming loudly, "Kill him, hurry up and kill him."

A small skeleton that wielded a bone dagger suddenly materialized in front of Han Shuo. Its small, thin body stood there in solitude as its empty eye sockets patrolled the area a bit at a loss.

"Aw come on, just one little skeleton, and such a thin, small one. What use is it?" Fabian started wailing with surprise when he saw that Han Shuo had summoned just one skeleton.

"Wahahaha, so it was just one skeleton. That scared me... kill them all!" Upon seeing that it was just one skeleton after being shocked, the forest troll leader immediately jeered loudly and directed the troll warriors to quickly approach.

Han Shuo's two eyes were cold as a trace of a mocking smile also made

its way to his lips. When the forest troll leader had spoken, he immediately gave the order for the little skeleton to attack.

When the little skeleton received the command to attack, its small leg bones bent down and then extended, suddenly flying out like a sharp sword. The bone dagger in its hand drew a line of black light through the empty air as it flew out first. The first troll warrior, that came rushing up, was directly pierced through its forehead like cutting paper, and it fell straight down backwards.

The little bone dagger didn't stop after running through the head of the first troll warrior. It whistled through the air according to the little skeleton's motions, just like a ghost out for blood. Ear deafening whistling sounds accompanied secretive and unpredictable curves as it ran through two more troll warriors with another stroke. When the little skeleton drew close to the troll warriors, the dagger returned automatically back into the little skeleton's hands.

The mere loosening of the bone dagger had instantaneously taken the lives of three troll warriors. The previously exceedingly disappointed Fabian and loudly jeering troll leader were both dumbfounded after the little skeleton's single strike. They stared closely with a face of incredulity at the little skeleton. It was like a tiger that had entered a flock of sheep. The little bone dagger that was grasped tightly in its hand began to nimbly reap the lives of the troll warriors.

"Oh my goodness! Am I seeing things? Is that really only just one skeletal warrior?" Fabian had finally recollected his wits and began to shout excitedly. If it wasn't for the gauze that had completely wrapped around him, he might have even fallen off and landed on the ground in his excitement.

"Don't get close to him, everyone stay away from the skeleton and use long spears, javelins, and battleaxes to kill that skeleton." After the troll leader had recovered from its shock, it issued loud commands with a look of fear. Its originally advancing body stopped in its tracks as it began to back up in cowardice.

The troll warriors, that had been close to the little skeleton, had all retreated. When they had left, long spears, javelins, and even the troll warriors' battleaxes filled the air and descended upon the little skeleton.

Han Shuo was startled. As strong as the little skeleton was, it would most likely be hit under such a strong barrage of attacks, b. But he wouldn't be able to recall it in time even if he started the incantation now. Han Shuo grew anxious and started truly worrying for the little skeleton.

Except, the little skeleton's succeeding fancy, incredible performance completely upended Han Shuo's understanding and knowledge of it.



# Chapter 47: The horror of seven bone spurs

At this moment, the seven bone spurs on the back of the little skeleton suddenly waved in the air with a creaking sound. When the barrage of javelins, long spears, and battle axes were about to land on the little skeleton, the seven bone spurs instantaneously detached themselves from the little skeleton's spine and whirled into the air, dancing in an interweaving pattern in front of the little skeleton and above its head with great whooshing sounds.

The little skeleton held its ground, wielding the bone knife, and its little body capered madly, as if it was having an epileptic fit. The seven bone spurs drew mysterious curves through the air, as if manipulated into a dance by invisible hands according to the little skeleton's will.

Continuous cracks rang out as the flying javelins, spears, and battle axes were all struck down and broken by the interweaving seven bone spears. Not a single one made it near the little skeleton's body.

Han Shuo pinched his own waist and only knew this moment was truly real after he felt pain radiating from his side. Not only could the little skeleton manipulate the bone dagger and face off against enemies, but it could even activate the seven bone spurs on its back and make them form such a frightening weapon. This made Han Shuo feel that in this moment, the little skeleton was really quite incredible.

The "Law of Activating Magic" was a law that activated magical treasures to attack. The last time Han Shuo had bafflingly transmitted those memories to the little skeleton [1], he had seen the little skeleton immediately activate the bone dagger in a flying dance. This was already enough to astonish Han Shuo, but now that the little skeleton could even activate the seven bone spurs on its back, this thoroughly flabbergasted Han Shuo.

[tl: [1] = Han Shuo transmits memories to the skeleton at the end of chapter 27 ]

In order to activate the “Law of Activating Magic”, other than an understanding of the law, a magical treasure, that was tied with the caster’s life and shared one mind with the caster, was also needed in order to call upon the law naturally. It looks like that, unbeknownst to anyone, the seven bone spurs and bone dagger had become the little skeleton’s magical treasures under the constant reforging from the magical yuan.

Han Shuo didn’t have a magical treasure at hand and thus couldn’t activate the “Law of Activating Magic”, but who would’ve thought that a dark creature, a little skeleton, was walking ahead of Han Shuo and had been the first to successfully activate it?

“Oh my gosh! What, what kind of monster is this little skeleton!” Fabian gave an excited and high strung moan, exclaiming in a low voice while being tongue tied and with eyes bugging out.

After the flying javelins, long spears, and battleaxes had all been demolished, the forest trolls were also completely shocked. Following that, the seven bone spurs, that had been circling the little skeleton’s body, abruptly flew in all directions and pierced through the bodies of the seven forest trolls that were standing there in a stupor.

“Demon, this is a demon within a skeleton’s body. Run!”

An extremely panicked and horror filled scream rang out from one of the forest troll’s mouth. It was as if this was a signal to retreat, as all the forest trolls started fleeing for their lives in various directions, like lost dogs. Even the forest troll leader had no more crap to say as it ran heedlessly in a sprint for escape.

A situation’s development was always so out of expectations. Han Shuo had only planned on breaking out and escaping from here and hadn’t reckoned on the fact that the little skeleton’s seven bone spurs would be equipped with such scary power. When Han Shuo had recovered himself, the surroundings were littered with more than ten forest troll corpses and there were no longer any living forest trolls.

“Hahaha, good boy, good boy!” Han Shuo suddenly had an exceedingly proud feeling and couldn’t stop from laughing wildly.

At the same time, the seven bone spurs whirled in a circle in thin air and then accurately landed back on the little skeleton's spine. The little skeleton stood up straight afterwards, with bone dagger in hand, and started searching the forest troll corpses with practiced motions. It took everything on the bodies, except for the clothes.

"Give it to me, the other one hundred gold coins." Han Shuo smiled lightly as he let Fabian down from his body and asked for the remaining payment from a Fabian, that was still shocked silly.

At this moment, Fabian's eyes were still patrolling over the little skeleton's body. He only came back to himself when Han Shuo's voice sounded. Just as Fabian was about to bring out the gold coins, he suddenly thought of something and glared at Han Shuo. "No... you dared to use me as a shield when fighting with the forest trolls just now. Your actions have completely harmed the position of the employer. How dare you think of the other one hundred gold coins?"

His face suddenly stilling with a cold look, Han Shuo's frigid gaze roved over Fabian's body. He randomly plucked a javelin from the ground and asked lightly, "Mr. Fabian, are you trying to cheat me?"

On the other side, the little skeleton, that had been collecting the spoils of war, suddenly stopped as well, its empty sockets looking at Fabian.

Coldness suddenly emanated throughout Fabian's body as he heart gave a shudder. He reluctantly squeezed out a smiling face and took a few timid steps backwards, saying, "Joking, it was just a joke. Heh heh, haha, here's a hundred gold coins and not a single one short. You've done great work."

Han Shuo lightly "hmm"ed as he put the one hundred gold coins away without further blather. A feeling of carefree enjoyment rose in his heart as he thought powerful strength is never unfavorable.

"Noble warrior, the items on the forest trolls..."

"Mine, all mine."

Han Shuo abruptly cut off his words before Fabian had a chance to finish, matter-of-factly presuming that all those items were his spoils of

war.

Squeezing out a forced laugh, Fabian continued, “Of course, of course they’re all yours. I mean to say that I can purchase the items you’ve gleaned off the forest trolls.”

His brow furrowed, Han Shuo looked suspiciously at Fabian and a smile made its way to his face. Han Shuo mimicked Clark and bowed urbanely, “Does Mr. Fabian mean to say that he plans on buying these items from me by means of gold coins?”

That face changes swiftly! Fabian cursed inwardly, pasting the same smile on his face and nodded. “Indeed, I am a merchant and venture in and out of the Dark Forest to purchase items found within, then bringing them back to the Empire for profits. As infamous robbers within the Dark Forest, the forest trolls should have some of what I need. If you don’t mind, I plan to buy them off you.”

At this moment, the little skeleton walked silently over to stand beside Han Shuo with eight handbags hanging off his hands. Under Han Shuo’s orders, the little skeleton put the eight bags down and used the bone dagger in hand to flip them open one by one. Han Shuo also took out the treasures he’d gleaned during this trip and put them on the ground, awaiting Fabian’s appraisal.

“Eight level 5 magical creature cores, six level 4 and one level 3. Three complete Windblade Wolf Pelts, three fangs from the Venom Lizards, one egg from the Deepwater Venom Python, and five blades of Mooneating Grass. I can give you one thousand gold for all of this together, what do you say?” Fabian appraised the items silently after he had categorized them all and lifted his head to smile at Han Shuo.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said with an odd air. “That’s nothing. The Deepwater Venom Python is a level 3 magical creature. Its egg alone should be worth a great deal, not to mention the core of a level 3 magical creature. You offer only one thousand gold coins... do you take me for an idiot?”

Han Shuo knew that the price for a level 3 magical creature would

naturally not be too low, but he didn't clearly quantify how many gold coins, because he was unsure of the actual price. However, it was a given that merchants would always offer a price far below market price, so Han Shuo naturally wouldn't let him have the items so easily.

"The Deepwater Venom Python is a level 3 magical creature, but the rate of success for raising a Deepwater Venom Python from an egg is pathetically low, and it's not a guarantee that it will identify someone as its master. Therefore, the price can't be too high. How about this, I offer 1,500 gold coins, what do you say?"

Han Shuo said nothing and only looked at Fabian with a slight smile.

"Two thousand gold coins, this is my final offer. If you're unwilling to sell then forget it, I'll leave!" Fabian grit his teeth and finally raised his own price up another five hundred gold coins.

Seeing as this was about the limit, Han Shuo smiled lightly and said faintly, "Two thousand it is. The items are yours, but what about the gold coins."

These items would surely be worth more than this in the Empire, but Han Shuo was still in the Dark Forest and without a space ring, it would be inconvenient to take these things with him. In addition, Han Shuo's status was just an errand slave in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, it would be difficult for him to dispose of the items in the Empire. It would be easier and more convenient to directly hand them over to Fabian.

"This is a crystal card with two thousand gold coins saved in it. You can take this crystal card to any savings firm and exchange it for gold coins. Oh right, what's your name? I can print your name into the crystal card for you." Fabian took out a thin card made from golden colored crystals and asked Han Shuo.

"Bryan."

"Oh, okay Bryan." Fabian took out another thin, needle-like item after taking out the crystal card and slightly drew it over a thin slot in the corner of the crystal card. A faint, golden light winked and the crystal card went back to normal.

Han Shuo had arrived at this world for a while and after purposefully getting to know this world, understood that a crystal card functioned like an ATM card in his original world. Gold, silver and bronze coins were all tangible items with heft to them. No one could possibly carry thousands or tens of thousands of gold coins on themselves. These crystal cards were a necessity for nobels. Crystal cards could be used at will in the omnipresent savings firms to save or withdraw gold coins.

“Here, Bryan, this crystal card is yours from now on.” Fabian gave the crystal card to Han Shuo and smiled, looking at him. “I’m called Fabian, a member of the Empire’s Boozt Merchant Guild. You can come find me at the Guild if you ever have anything to sell in the future. This is my address, put it away carefully.”

The Boozt Merchant Guild was one of the biggest merchant guilds in the Empire. Controlled by the Boozt family, even Han Shuo, who didn’t get much in the way of rumors and news, had heard about the wondrous resources of the Boozt Merchant Guild. Listening to Fabian’s words, Han Shuo immediately carefully put away the crystal card and smiled, “Mr. Fabian, nice to meet you. Perhaps I really will have something to bother you with in the future. The forest trolls won’t dare disturb you now, and our matter is concluded. Good bye.”

Han Shuo didn’t say much after those words and he gave the little skeleton an order. One man and one skeleton quickly vanished off into the distance.

“Hello brave mercenaries. I think our business can continue to be conducted.” Fabian called out to the mercenaries who were looking after their wounds and walked towards them upon seeing Han Shuo suddenly leave.

# Chapter 48: The allure of gold coins

After departing from Fabian, Han Shuo's path took him straight to the outskirts of the Dark Forest. He took paths that their group had all taken before.

During his journey, Han Shuo continued to practice magic. Having gone through the reforging of the "solid realm", it was as if Han Shuo had been reborn. Now that his magical training had bore fruit, the magical yuan could travel to all parts of his body according to his will.

There were nine levels in the world of demonic magic, and Han Shuo had now reached the "open passages realm". The training for the "open passages" and "solid" realms differed slightly. This was a realm that primarily focused on the expansion of the body's meridians, greatly increasing the width and durability of the meridians. In every instance of training, the process of "opening passages" filled his body with splitting agony, as if there were insects biting and gnawing within the meridians.

The first three levels of demonic magic of solid, open passages, and molded spirit were the most foundational realms. Training became increasingly difficult as one progressed, but with the experience of training in the "solid realm", Han Shuo already understood that agony and inhumane torture accompanied his magical training. The inhumane pain of the "open passages" realm was also within his expectations. He used magical yuan to repeatedly expand his meridians without letting up for a second, basing it purely on indomitable will.

After twelve days of training and traveling, Han Shuo still hadn't run into Fanny and the others along the way. He finally made it out of the Dark Forest alone and made it to the town of Drol again when dusk fell.

Compared to a month ago, Han Shuo had weathered through the trials of the Dark Forest, and since then his strength, mindset, and appearance had all undergone drastic changes. Han Shuo was now over 170 cm, and although his body wasn't too muscular, he was no longer thin and scrawny.

After baptism by fresh blood, Han Shuo had greatly improved both his pluck and knowledge. His entire aura was also undergoing mysterious changes. He was slowly changing under circumstances that even Han Shuo himself wasn't even aware of.

At dusk, the town of Drol was enclosed in a happy, carefree atmosphere. Many adventurers had returned from the Dark Forest. Some wore expressions of sorrow, having lost companions, while others had satisfied smiles on their faces due to obtaining rich rewards, and they planned on a thorough night of depravity within the town of Drol.

When it was dusk, Han Shuo first came to the place where Gene and the others had borrowed and stabled their battlesteeds. He observed the place from a distance and noticed that the battlesteeds that they had spent money to borrow were still present. He immediately understood that Fanny and everyone else probably hadn't returned to Drol yet.

Although they had spent money on the battlesteeds, the necromancy teachers and students only had the rights to use them. When they returned to Zajoski, they would have to return the battlesteeds to the Zajoski guards in precisely the same condition that they had received them. Since the battlesteeds were still here, that meant Fanny and them had definitely yet to leave.

Han Shuo naturally knew that traveling with such haste by himself, he was sure to return much more quickly than Fanny's slowly plodding group. Perhaps Fanny and the others had been delayed by magical creatures along the way, so it was within his expectations that Fanny and the others hadn't returned yet.

He went to the small hotel that everyone had stayed in previously, walked to the main counter, and said with a smile, "I need a room."

The owner was eating fruit with his eyes almost shut. He raised his head to flick a glance at Han Shuo and said lazily, "Oh, it's you. Give me ten bronze coins. That warehouse is always empty... you can go there now."

The last time Han Shuo had come with the others, Gene had especially rented out a warehouse for Han Shuo, and Han Shuo had been scorned by



the owner because of this. Therefore, when the owner saw that it was Han Shuo, he naturally assumed that with Han Shuo's status, he could only rent the warehouse.

He didn't become angry, but rather smiled and took out the money bag at his waist. He clinked and poured out one gold coin from it, dumping it onto the round wooden table. He looked sideways at the owner and said, "I don't want to stay in the warehouse."

The owner had been lazing about when he suddenly sat up, swiping the gold coin off the round table. A professional smile swiftly pasted itself to his face and he raised his voice, "Of course, of course. How would a warehouse be worthy of one gold coin. Cute little fellow, tell me whatever kind of room you want to stay in. A gold coin will be more than enough."

His treatment was drastically different from last time's with the presence of gold coins. Han Shuo smiled faintly and nodded, "I want the room the female teacher was in last time. Arrange it for me."

"No problem, not a problem at all. This is the key. One gold coin is enough for up to five nights there. Do you have any other desires, young man?" The owner asked further with a toadying expression. The owner's face was wreathed in smiles as he merrily took out a key from a drawer behind him and handed it to Han Shuo.

"Nothing else, just go about your own business!" Han Shuo walked directly towards the room that Fanny had occupied before after receiving the key, thinking that money had the same miraculous power no matter what world one was in. It would seem that in order to gain one's footing in this world, gold coins were a requisite item.

Han Shuo unloaded his belongings after arriving at the room Fanny had stayed in before, leisurely taking a hot bath in the tub. Recalling the pleasant affair that had taken place here last time, Han Shuo felt a burst of flames erupt from him and his lower body bore certain uncontrollable, strong signs.

Cursing in a low tone, Han Shuo stood up naked and grabbed a towel from the side to dry his body off. Just as he was about to leave the

bathroom, he caught a glimpse of his athletic, sculptured body in a wide mirror that had been off to the side.

Han Shuo's body in the mirror displayed bulging muscles all over his body and a fit figure. The sun had turned his skin copper colored during this time, and he looked exceedingly healthy and full of masculine energy, a marked difference from his previous waif-like, thin self.

He squeezed his two chest muscles with satisfaction. They were neither too big, nor too small, and he struck some poses in front of the mirror. Han Shuo pointed at his reflection in the mirror with quite some narcissism, laughing as he complimented, "Little fellow, looking good eh!"

Han Shuo came to a clothing vendor after he left the hotel and spent one gold coin to purchase a soft, high-quality undergarment, wearing it inside the errand boy uniform that the Academy had handed out.

He then came to a weapons vendor and spent ten gold coins to purchase a higher quality dagger, four gold coins for fifteen sharp steel needles and hid them in his pant legs, and another six gold coins to purchase a miniature crossbow to hide in his sleeve, fully arming himself.

Afterwards, Han Shuo went to a pharmacist and took out forty gold coins to buy a few solutions and powders. Apart from a few simple medicinal supplies, tranquilizing and psychedelic aphrodisiacs were also part of the mix, as well as a bottle of poison.

These items were prohibited within the Empire's city of Zajoski. Even if Han Shuo had the money, he didn't have the means to procure them, but in the town of Drol, open trade was allowed because adventurers needed them. Since Han Shuo had come here with money in hand and now that he understood the importance of strength, he naturally bought some in case they would be needed later.

After he had bought all these items, Han Shuo finally sighed and thought that it was good to have money. He felt that even his spine was more upright than normal after walking out of the pharmacist. Everything became so much easier when there were gold coins in his moneybag.

On the way to the hotel, Han Shuo's stomach roiled as he looked at the

hotels decked out in colorful lights. He followed his body's needs and ducked into one of the hotels.

The din was loud and deafening within the hotel and neon lights flashed randomly on the roof. Adventurers and merchants had formed small groups and had congregated on the tables and chairs within the hall, loudly chattering about their adventures.

These people's faces were flushed red and they held wine glasses in their hands, drunkenly calling out and conversing without any reservations. Delicacies were placed everywhere on the tables and a few young male and female waiters continuously threaded the throng, serving them more fragrant wine and dishes.

Han Shuo made a beeline for the only empty table in the corner of the hall and sat down. A shy young waiter quickly walked in front of Han Shuo afterwards and asked politely, "Excuse me, what would you like?"

"Good wine, good meats, give me some of both of them." Han Shuo fished out one gold coin and flicked it into the waiter's serving platter with his thumb, commanding loudly as he opened his mouth.

When the server saw the gold coin land, his eyes immediately brightened and he immediately bowed even more respectfully. He put away the coin without a change in expression and smiled with a gentle voice, "Yes sir, please wait just a moment, it will be up right away."

One should enjoy themselves when they had wealth to spend. Han Shuo lazily lounged against the chair and sized up the various adventurers and merchants in the hall with slitted eyes. Some of these had possibly just returned from the Dark Forest, or were about to enter to Dark Forest. Some of them had just escaped from danger, whereas others were planning on heading into unknown perils. They were all releasing their energy in great waves, enjoying the depravity of the town of Droll to their heart's content.

After a while, the shy server placed a bottle of light purple wine, three large platters of meat, and two bowls of fruit on Han Shuo's table."

"This is Purple Leylan, the most renowned wine in the town of Droll.

Adventurers all love drinking this, I hope you will be satisfied with it.” The waiter pointed at the bottle of light purple wine and introduced it after placing everything on the table. He then bowed and retreated.

Han Shuo couldn't wait and grabbed a piece of meat and started tearing away at it. Although it didn't taste as good as the ones he'd prepared, it was still quite good. He twisted the top off the wine bottle and gulped down a large mouthful of Purple Leylan. The luscious sweetness also embodied a certain fire to it, and a mellow aftertaste was left in the mouth after it had travelled down to the stomach, bringing another kind of enjoyment to Han Shuo.

Good wine indeed, Han Shuo complimented. When he raised his head to look around, he suddenly saw two familiar figures walk in the door – Claude and Irene.

Claude and Irene scanned the area, searching for an empty seat. Both started when their gazes landed on Han Shuo, after which they actually started walking towards Han Shuo in pure coincidence.

# Chapter 49: A belated revenge

“Isn’t this the necromancy major’s errand boy?” Claude asked with a frown as he’d made his way to stand next to Han Shuo.

“Necromancy errand boy Bryan... who would’ve thought that we’d bump into each other here?” Han Shuo nodded, gulped down another mouthful of Purple Leylan, and smiled in response.

“There seems to be no seats left. Claude, why don’t we switch to another place for dinner?” Irene raked a gaze over Han Shuo with a trace of disdain in her eyes.

“No need, at this moment, most of the hotels in Drol must be packed with people. There’s only Bryan at this table. Since we’re all from the Academy, I’m sure Bryan wouldn’t mind if we sat down with him, would you Bryan?” Claude said to Irene with a smile and then stared merrily at Han Shuo.

“Of course I don’t mind! If you don’t feel that sitting with an errand boy like myself detracts from your dignity, I’ll gladly share a table with you two.” Claude had injured his little skeleton in the past in order to appease Irene. Perhaps Claude had long since forgotten about this matter, but Han Shuo had silently remembered it. Now that his strength had increased, Han Shuo had lost more and more reservations when taking action. He’d been fretting that he had lost his chance to enact revenge on Claude, but who knew that he’d come knocking on Han Shuo’s doorstep. Han Shuo was naturally loathe to let this opportunity pass by.

“I hate everyone from the necromancy major, even errand slaves are without exception!” Irene creased her brow, flicked a look at Claude and spoke coldly.

Claude started, then threw a meaningful glance at Irene. He smiled and said to Han Shuo, “Bryan, aren’t you with the rest of the necromancy major? How come we don’t see any sign of them and you’re here by yourself? Oh, come to think of it, you, an errand boy, would be able to enjoy such a rich feast of food and wine. How surprising!”

Irene also looked at Han Shuo with surprise upon hearing Claude's words. She seemed to particularly mind about Claude's questions and was in no hurry to leave at this point. When Claude saw that Irene had displayed an expression that indicated her interest, he eagerly wiped off the dust on the seat in front of her. She finally sat down unhurriedly after he had indicated that she should sit.

Han Shuo ripped apart the grilled meat in his hand and sent it into his stomach completely as if nothing had happened. He belched in satisfaction after another mouthful of wine, rubbed his stomach in self satisfaction and said with a smile, "Master Fanny and the others should be back soon. They were afraid that I would be a burden and so gave me a few gold coins for me to wait here for them. Are there any problems?"

"No no. So that's the situation. Right... Bryan, how was your haul this time? Any high level magical creatures?" Claude winked at Irene and asked Han Shuo with a smile.

Irene revealed an expression of interest and likewise stared intently at Han Shuo, seeming to suddenly care quite a bit about the necromancy major's haul.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said, "I don't know, I returned halfway. I don't know if they had any major gains, but I think their haul this time wouldn't be too small."

"Huh. Those people? What kind of haul could they get? They could at most hunt down some level five magical creatures, and likely find it hard to kill even a level four." Irene looked at Han Shuo contemptuously and snorted coldly.

Han Shuo only faintly flicked a glance at Irene in the face of her jeering and didn't say much. At this moment, Claude had already hailed the waiter and also used one gold coin to arrange for some wine and meat.

Han Shuo inwardly took stock of the situation, wondering how to take his revenge on Claude. After thinking for a while, an involuntary trace of a wicked smile appeared on his lips. He calmly and subtly took something similar to a banana peel from the plate in front of him and threw it

underneath his foot. When a fast walking waiter carrying a plate appeared, Han Shuo pushed out with the toes of his right foot and sent the fruit peel abruptly flying out from beneath the table.

The waiter was setting a fast pace with plates in hand when he set one foot on the fruit pool, stumbled with a exclamation of surprise and fell forwards. The plate in his hand flew out and hurtled towards Claude and Irene from behind.

Claude and Irene reacted upon hearing the commotion and suddenly turned around. Claude's right hand abruptly rose and deftly caught the plate crashing towards them. At the same time, Han Shuo's left hand flashed out like lightning and with a flick of his pinky finger, the grey-white psychedelic aphrodisiac landed quietly in Claude's wine glass.

"Be careful when you walk." At this moment, Claude's brow was furrowed as his right hand handed over the plate he'd caught to the waiter, who had stood up once again. His voice was displeased.

"Thank you noble knight. I will be careful in the future!" The waiter fearfully took the plate from Claude and quickly left after a bow.

Han Shuo was composed and collected. His head was lowered as he lifted his glass, drinking wine as if nothing had happened, like he hadn't noticed what had just happened.

Claude and Irene didn't say much to Han Shuo afterwards. Claude fawningly talked with Irene, putting away glass after glass of Purple Leylan with psychedelic aphrodisiac mixed in. Irene's expressions were cool, responding to Claude on and off. It looked like she had yet to accept Claude's love.

"You guys take your time. I still have some matters to attend to and will be heading off now!" Han Shuo knew with certainty that the psychedelic aphrodisiac powder had been absorbed by Claude when he'd drained down several glasses of Purple Leylan. He immediately stood up and dropped this sentence.

Claude and Irene were originally derisive of Han Shuo to begin with. They'd absolutely paid no heed to him and wished devoutly that Han Shuo

would leave, as opposed to being an irritating sight in front of them. They waved their hands in unison after Han Shuo's words, indicating that Han Shuo should have left earlier if possible. After a bit of time, they no longer concealed the scorn on their faces.

Leaving the hotel with a smile, Han Shuo stood alone in an undetectable street corner beside the hotel. After a while, a hotly-flushed Claude and a slightly pink cheeked Irene walked out side by side, heading for the north side of Drol.

The sky was dark by now and the festivities of the town of Drol had reached their peak of the day. Adventurers formed in groups of three or five staggered drunkenly, loudly down the streets. Han Shuo followed the two noiselessly, and stood by the side of the street, waiting for a good show upon seeing the two of them enter a luxurious hotel.

According to Han Shuo's observations just now, it seemed that Claude had yet to move Irene's heart. If at this moment, under the influence of the psychedelic aphrodisiac, Claude did anything that exceed boundaries, he was sure to be severely beaten by Irene.

Fruit in hand, Han Shuo ate leisurely and thought wickedly. No disturbances had come from the hotel after a while. Just when Han Shuo was beginning to lose his patience, the hotly flushed Clark suddenly walked out from the hotel and walked onto the streets with great haste.

Han Shuo's thoughts moved. He hadn't thought that Claude's willpower would be so strong, that he hadn't fully lost all rational thought by now, but judging from Claude's appearance, Han Shuo knew that he wouldn't be able to hold out for much longer and he quickly caught up to Claude, following him from afar.

Indeed, he'd only made it about ten or so meters when Claude slightly lost control after a wave from a heavily made up, scantily clad older woman. He panted heavily as he made for the alley, looking like he would resolve his biological needs at close proximity.

"Eh? Wasn't that Claude?" An exclamation sounded from the adjacent street. Han Shuo swiveled his head to sudden joy, inwardly exclaiming



“Even the heavens are helping me!”.

The light major teacher, Beacher, and a few light major students happened to be passing by. One of the female students with particularly sharp eyes just so happened to see Claude and the coy, revealing woman dart into the alley and had cried out in astonishment.

“No way, how could Claude be that kind of person? He is a noble knight and wouldn’t demean himself in places like this. Not to mention that Claude is pursuing Irene right now, so there is no way that he’d do so.” Beacher frowned and said in unconvinced confusion.

“It really was him, I’m sure I didn’t see improperly. If you don’t believe me we can go inside and check.” The female student, who had spoken first, thought for a moment, and then said decisively.

“Come Katie, it’s none of your business here. Don’t go poking your nose where it doesn’t belong.” Beacher was silent for a moment, and then hurried the students to leave quickly.

Katie looked angrily at the alley and stomped her foot after a moment’s thought. “How can this be allowed?! I’m going to tell Irene. If Claude isn’t in his room, then it must be him. I will absolutely not allow Claude to defraud Irene’s feelings.”

Katie left in a fast, huffy pace as soon as she’d finished talking, making a beeline for the hotel that Irene was staying at. The other light major students looked askance at each other when she left, not knowing what to do.

Han Shuo almost couldn’t hold his raucous laughter in. Who would’ve thought that things would work out like this? Han Shuo had been planning on doing things himself and think of a scheme to lure Irene here. Who knew that Claude was really so unlucky? Looks like it would be difficult for him to avoid bad luck today even if he tried.

After a while, an Irene with a frigid expression and a huffy Katie walked swiftly from afar. One look at Irene’s expression was enough to know that she was feeling incredibly wrathful. Claude would find it tough to get out of this one.

“Claude was indeed not in the hotel. Looks like I didn’t see incorrectly! That must have been him just now. Irene, I think if we should go in now we’ll be able to catch him in the act. How could he commit such despicable acts as a noble knight! Claude is too disgusting.” Katie looked angrily at the alley after she’d arrived.

Irene nodded with an icy face, wasting not a moment more with talk and grabbed Katie in a rush to the alley. Beacher and the others were afraid that a messy situation would develop and followed after a moment’s hesitation.

When they’d all gone in, Han Shuo unhurriedly made his way into the alleyway with a sinister face dressed in an evil smile.

# Chapter 50: A harsh reality

A ear-piercing round of screams first sounded, then all sorts of noises followed, coming from a house on the left side of the alley. After a while, Beacher and the others came out dragging a bedraggled Claude, who wasn't quite there.

Irene's face was full of rage as she grimly lectured Claude while staring at him. She spoke vehemently, "Claude, you're disgusting. I never want to see you again! Katie, let's go."

With the way that things had developed, Han Shuo knew that his revenge had been exacted and that there was no further need to stick around. When he saw Irene and Katie walking quickly in his direction, he hastily hid himself and leisurely made his way back to the hotel.

Back in the hotel, Han Shuo washed up and then sat cross legged on the bed to practice magic. The magical yuan slowly expanded his meridians inch by inch. Han Shuo grit his teeth against the heart wrenching pain and continuously circulated his magical yuan according to the instructions of the "open passages realm".

Unbearable pain often accompanied the process of practicing magic. This caused Han Shuo's personality to shift from its previously lackadaisicalness to firmly resolute. Whether it was his willpower or ability to stoically endure pain, Han Shuo had significantly increased both.

Han Shuo's entire personality and character had unknowingly continuously changed with the advent of practicing magic. As his strength slowly increased, the previously timid and cowering Han Shuo had already experienced great changes. The way he viewed and understood things were vastly different from the thoughts that he had held prior.

A solid, dull footstep suddenly sounded in Han Shuo's heart. Han Shuo abruptly stopped all magic practice, held his breath, and concentrated. All his bodily functions instantaneously sank into a frozen and unmoving status.

The footsteps that had sounded until now had been from the southern

intersection of the town of Drol and the Dark Forest. Based on the dullness and rhythm of the thumps, Han Shuo could draw the conclusion that this came from a magical creature with high speed. This creature's weight was definitely heavier than a battlesteed, and their numbers consisted of more than a few.

Creasing his brow, Han Shuo thought for a while and walked out of the hotel, slowly moving towards the direction of the magical creatures, wanting to see what the situation was.

Just as Han Shuo had emerged from the hotel and arrived at the southern streets of Drol, two figures had also rushed over with a look of haste. It was an elderly, thin wizard and a female elven archer with green-tipped ears. The two displayed expressions of shock seeing Han Shuo upon arrival, as if they hadn't thought that Han Shuo would be here.

"Little fellow, what are you doing here?" The thin, small wizard gazed at Han Shuo and asked with a smile.

From their cautious attitudes, Han Shuo understood that they had most likely also detected the disturbance coming from the south. Weighing things up internally, Han Shuo made a slight bow and responded, "Noble wizard, I've become separated from my companions. They said they would return here after a few days, so I've been waiting here."

The wizard nodded and frowned in consideration. He said to the female elven archer next to him, "Blanche, go scout and see if it's wolf riders from the orcs. They always send wolf riders every year before winter to raid and loot the villages on the outer edge of the Empire.

But the town of Drol is in a unique location and is filled with large quantities of adventurers and mercenaries. The orcs had never sent wolf riders to attack Drol, why would they act so oddly this time? Not to mention that there was still quite a bit of time before winter!"

"Yes, Master Felix." Upon hearing the old wizard Felix's words, the female elven archer called Blanche immediately headed south, floating in front of Han Shuo like a gust of wind.

"Little fellow, the town of Drol isn't a peaceful place. It's late at night, so

you should head back early to rest. Your companions should come looking for you when they return, so there's no need to continue waiting here." Felix looked at Han Shuo with a smile as he tried to convince Han Shuo.

"Alright, then I'll be heading back now." Han Shuo responded calmly and started picking his way back as soon as he'd finished speaking.

After Han Shuo had left, Felix mused as he stared oddly at Han Shuo's retreating figure. He finally murmured to himself after a while. "I must be overthinking the situation... there's no way that this kid is more perceptive me, a wind archmage!"

On his way back to his hotel, Han Shuo noticed that a few others walked out from nearby hotels with the same surprised expression, hastily making their way to the southern street. It looks like they too had detected the disturbance and had gone to the southern street to check things out.

"Bryan, I have some matters with you! Come here for a second!" On the way back, Han Shuo bumped into Claude on the street to the hotel. Claude's face was heavily overcast, and it appeared that he was in an exceedingly bad mood.

His heart skipping a beat, Han Shuo had a vague premonition of unease. He could strongly feel repressed rage emanating from Claude. Although Claude looked at him with a calm gaze, his teeth were gnashing slightly, still enabling Han Shuo to feel the strong ripples in his emotions.

Staring at Claude dumbly, Han Shuo thought furiously. At this moment, Han Shuo understood that his actions in the hotel just now had still been too heavy handed and impulsive. When Claude had sobered up, he would have surely detected his body's condition and certainly deduced that it was something caused by the Purple Leylan in the hotel. Claude wasn't a stupid person. Only Irene and Han Shuo had been at the table then, and Irene would never do anything like this. Connecting the dots to when the waiter suddenly tripped, Claude must have sussed out the entire situation.

"Okay." Han Shuo thought carefully and knew that the situation was bad. He was prepared for a brutal beating from Claude as he followed behind the knight, walking slowly out of Drol and arriving at a secluded

patch of forest to the south of Drol.

Moonlight filtered through the forest as bugs chirped lightly nearby. However, Han Shuo's sensitive ears were able to catch the low breathing from Claude's strongly repressed fury.

Looks like it'll be quite a beating. Han Shuo thought wryly, but didn't feel too much fear. He had gotten used to the beatings during this time and knew his body's situation quite well. He knew that the usual type of blows would be unable to hurt him, so his heart was relatively calm.

Pa.

Just when he was thinking wryly, a ringing slap sent him staggering towards the left before he was able to react preventatively. It was a good thing that Han Shuo's body far outstripped normal people's. He steadied himself in the mess, regained his footing, and scrunched up his face as he smiled wryly at Claude.

"You damned lowly slave. Pig! Who do you think you are to scheme against me!?" Claude's firmly repressed anger had finally exploded. An ugly, vehement face stared at Han Shuo as his usual, sunny, gentlemanly demeanor had long since vanished above the clouds.

Pilapala. A wave of attacks rained down on Han Shuo's body. Han Shuo clutched at his head with both hands and didn't raise them to defend himself, taking the hits from Claude's thundering rage. He finally abruptly curled into a ball and fell to the ground, looking like he couldn't take any more hits.

"Well, does that hurt? I won't let you die so easily. Do you know who I am? I am Claude Asche, the son of the commander of the Empire's Gryphon Legion, Commander Bob Asche. You lowly errand boy dares to scheme against me and ruin my relationship with Irene. I will make you experience agony and pain in full before letting you die slowly. Ahaha." Claude stared venomously at Han Shuo as he drew his longsword with a cold smile, walking slowly towards Han Shuo.

Up until now, Han Shuo had finally understood that he had always committed a huge error. Whether it was Fitch or Bach, his methods had

always embodied a large amount of risk. With his status as an errand slave, no matter who killed him, they wouldn't have to endure too much backlash. Even if Bach killed him, the Academy would probably only admonish him for a few words and demand a few gold coins in compensation.

Han Shuo had originally thought that Claude would at most brutally beat him up for a prank like this, but the result now had finally facilitated Han Shuo in understanding the harsh reality. Claude not only wanted him to die this time, but also wanted him to fully experience agony and pain before dying. This was the harsh reality.

At the moment, Han Shuo finally understood what kind of world this was. Status and position were a foundational, integral existence. A yawning difference in status existed between the two, allowing Claude to kill him without reservations and without a need to bear any particular responsibility. Claude had called him to this deserted forest because he didn't want to ruin his noble status and self. Even if he'd killed Han Shuo in Drol, it would have been quite matter of fact with no one thinking about it twice.

Growth always came at a cost. Han Shuo curled up on the ground, still emitting loud wails and pleas for mercy. A heart, that only held vague thoughts of evil, slowly hardened with cold.

"I will dice you into several pieces, letting you wail as you bleed. You will slowly, fully experience pain before dying. Remember your status in your next life. You're a mere errand slave, a pig. Never attempt to challenge the temper of your superiors." Claude snickered sinisterly as the long sword in his hand pierced towards the chest of a Han Shuo who had seemed too long since losing the ability to defend himself.

At this moment, the continuous howls suddenly disappeared as Han Shuo's curled figure abruptly moved, rolling towards Claude's feet. His speed was such that it caught Claude off guard.

When Claude was about to dodge, he suddenly emitted a ghastly wail. A few iron needles stuck out from the tops of his feet, firmly nailing his feet

to the ground. A wave of bone-cutting pain emanated from his lower abdomen. Claude lowered his head to find a dagger sticking out of his stomach. Han Shuo looked at him with a cold and distant gaze, the look in his eyes giving Claude a very foreign feeling.

“I am the son of the commander of the Gryphon League. You damned errand slave, how dare you harm me?” Claude’s body was wracked with pain as he yelled furiously with a weak voice.

“Thank you for letting me know the harsh truth of reality. It’s because of your vaunted status that not only will I harm you, I’m going to kill you!”

After saying this words in a remote tone, another iron needle appeared in Han Shuo’s right hand and directly pierced through Claude’s throat amidst Claude’s terror-filled screams.



# Chapter 51: The calm aftermath after killing someone

This wasn't the first time that Han Shuo had killed someone, but compared to killing forest trolls, the impact Han Shuo's heart received from slaughtering Claude was exceedingly great.

After all, forest trolls were a different race from him, and were renowned robbers. Han Shuo killing them felt as natural as killing magical creatures, but Claude was completely different from them. Han Shuo had been forced to kill him because he knew within his heart that if Claude didn't die, Han Shuo could put all thoughts of peacefully living his life in the future out of his mind.

Watching Claude weaken and sag into a pool of blood, Han Shuo felt a bit numb in that moment. There was an empty feeling in his heart, he hadn't hesitated when he made his move, and it was only when he watched Claude die in front of him that a feeling of nervousness grew in Han Shuo.

Claude was a noble, and the youngest son of the commander of the Empire's Gryphon Legion. If news of this matter leaked, only death awaited Han Shuo.

Gazing at Claude's corpse, Han Shuo stared dumbly into space for a while. His originally slightly panicked expression became more and more resolute and harshly cold.

Finally, Han Shuo rearranged his clothes and stood up, walking up to Claude with a calm face and rummaging through his clothes. He poured out a few gold coins from his money bag, a crystal card, and some scattered medicine.

After thinking for a bit, Han Shuo only put away the gold coins. He set aside the potentially incriminating crystal card and Claude's other belongings.

A little skeleton, wielding a bone knife, appeared in front of Han Shuo

after his incantation had finished. Han Shuo searched out a desolate clearing as one man and one skeleton wielded bone knife and dagger spent a few minutes digging a deep hole. After burying Claude in the hole, Han Shuo carefully cleaned up the traces of blood that Claude had left behind. He even slowly covered up the traces in which he'd fallen down and rolled around.

Circling around the forest patch and confirming that no clues had been left behind, Han Shuo did not return along the original way. Rather, he made an additional circle and dug a deep hole to the north of Drol, burying all of Claude's belongings. Finally, he returned to Drol using another street.

He did all this because he was careful and cautious. They hadn't garnered anyone's attention on the way to the forest with Claude earlier because Claude had intentionally done so.

Now that Han Shuo had killed him and carefully buried his body, logically speaking, no one should discover it. Even if someone unintentionally discovered Claude's body, Han Shuo had taken all the belongings off the body, creating the impression of murder in the course of robbery. These things happened quite often in the town of Drol and should be able to conceal the original reason of death.

After Han Shuo had dealt with these loose ends, he concealed himself in the surroundings of the hotel of Irene and the others for the next two days, silently observing the movements of the light major students. He discovered that whether it was Irene or Beacher, none of them came looking for Claude. It looked like they thought that Claude had wronged them first and so left him alone.

Claude was certainly the one who understood his bodily condition the most. No matter how he tried to explain under those circumstances, it was more than likely that not many would believe his words, and judging from the timing in which Claude had come for him and his understanding of the psychedelic aphrodisiac, he more or less surmised that Claude had come looking for revenge as soon as he'd sobered up, and hadn't had time to explain anything to Irene or Beacher.

After two days of observation, Han Shuo finally relaxed and let down his guard upon seeing that Irene and Beacher made no moves to look for Claude and only focused their attentions on spending money as they visited various weapons and armor vendors as well as pharmacists.

At dusk on this night, Han Shuo did not venture out again to keep an eye on Irene and Beacher, but instead stayed inside to quietly practice magic. He repeatedly expanded the width of his body's meridians and improved their pliability.

Han Shuo was seated primly on the edge of his bed, completely naked, sweat pouring down his entire body, starting from his forehead. The tendons of his body jumped as they bulged out like endless numbers of worms moving through the surface of his body. It looked even more cringe worthy and scary than even the most evil tattoo.

During this entire process, a sudden tremor ran through Han Shuo's mind as he sank into a senseless realm. For the moment, he forgot himself, forgot time, and was like a sculpture, without life. Only a faint hint of black splendor circulated beneath his skin.

Dondondon.

A sudden round of fierce knocking abruptly awakened Han Shuo. When Han Shuo came back to himself, he took stock of himself internally and understood that he must have unknowingly sunk into the demonic mental state just now.

Dondondon.

The knocking was still continuing and Han Shuo was a bit irritated that his training had been interrupted. He grabbed a random towel and wrapped it around himself, saying with irritation, "Coming. Coming!"

When the door was opened, Han Shuo received the shock of his life. The irritable expression on his face vanished without a trace as it immediately transformed into a smiling face. He said merrily, "Eh, it's you guys. I've been waiting a long time for you. You've finally come back."

Standing outside the door, Fanny and Lisa looked a bit worn out and

their hair was a bit messed up. They carried items in the hands and packs on their back, looking quite tired from the road. It appeared that they'd just returned from the Dark Forest.

"You Bryan, you actually made it back to Drol such a long time ago. We were worried about you for quite a while. Oh, how'd you get money to live in such an expensive room? If it's wasn't for the owner's certainty, I truly wouldn't have believed that you were the one living in this room." Fanny's clear eyes swept over Han Shuo and she spoke with a bit of a bite to her words.

"Bryan, what happened the day you left? You didn't return for two days and I thought something happened to you?" Lisa said.

"I got lost after I left, and when I found the original camp, I discovered that you'd long since left. I couldn't find you guys, so I went one step ahead and returned to the town of Drol to wait for you. Good thing that everyone is fine. That's wonderful." Han Shuo smiled slightly and faintly explained himself.

Fanny raked a gaze over Han Shuo, thought for a moment and spoke to Lisa beside her. "Lisa, go and finish arranging the rooms with Master Gene and the rest. I have some things to discuss with Bryan."

Lisa looked at Fanny with some suspicion and said, "Master Fanny, that incident has passed for quite some time now. Bryan even saved our lives... are you still holding a grudge against him?"

Her face reddened when Fanny heard Lisa mention last time's incident again. She said furiously, "No, I have other things to discuss with him. Go select a room for me and I'll be over shortly."

Lisa still wasn't fully at ease upon hearing Fanny's explanation, but didn't say anything further as she turned to leave, muttering something in her mouth.

As soon as Lisa had left, Fanny raked her gaze over Han Shuo and looked at the room she'd once lived in, seeming to remember what had happened last time as her cheeks flushed even redder. She humphed lightly and said, "Aren't you going to invite me in?"

“Eh, Master Fanny, this way please.” Han Shuo was taken aback and hurriedly turned his body to the side. When Fanny had stepped inside, he stuck a head out for a look in the hallway and hastily shut the door tight, like he was acting with a guilty conscience.

“What are you doing so surreptitiously? I ask you, what happened the day after you left camp? How do you have the gold coins to stay in this room?” Fanny nailed Han Shuo with a patrolling look after she sat down.

Han Shuo still hadn't fully recovered from killing Claude. Upon hearing Fanny's words, he was a bit surprised. He thought for a bit and then explained with a laugh, “When I left the camp that day, I stayed nearby practicing necromancy magic. I met an injured Windblade Wolf afterwards. I kept chasing the injured Windblade Wolf and finally killed it when it wasn't paying attention. When I returned to the camp, I made my way back here after I realized that you had gone.

After returning to Drol, I sold the Windblade Wolf core and pelt. That's how I got the gold coins. I thought that you guys would likely be staying here again after returning, which is why I rented the room to wait for you guys. This is what happened.”

Fanny didn't immediately speak after Han Shuo had finished, but rather gazed upon Han Shuo in apparent thought. She exhaled lightly after a while, “Bryan, you're truly completely different from before!”

He started and managed to squeeze out an honest smile. He scratched his head, “Really? Where am I different?”

“In many ways. Your appearance, body, and height, as well as your personality and expressions when you talk are all much too different from how I knew you before. It looks like you were the one who changed the most after experiencing the trials of the Dark Forest. All the students have undergone some changes after constantly facing battles of life and death, but who would've thought that your change would've been the biggest? How shocking!” Fanny stared dumbly at Han Shuo and said with a face of severity.

Han Shuo understood that during this time's outing in the Dark Forest,

unbeknownst to him, a change had truly occurred in the way he viewed things. This change had accompanied the increases in his strength and the dangers that he had faced. After killing Claude with his own hands the day before yesterday and a serious round of reflection, Han Shuo had gained a clearer understanding of the harsh realities of this world, and with it, his heart had become colder and crueler.

“Master Fanny, you left a note saying that you guys had met the two man-eating monsters. Did you get into a conflict with them in the end?” Han Shuo laughed lightly and didn’t explain things in further detail, but rather started asking Fanny what had happened to them afterwards.

“Of course, the two man-eating monsters kept following us. They even colluded with a few forest trolls to attack us. We finally made it out, but our paths were deviated significantly from our original direction because we were avoiding the man-eating monsters and the forest trolls. That’s why we returned to Drol so late.” Fanny responded.

Nodding, Han Shuo was about to open his mouth, when he suddenly frowned and abruptly stood up. He said with a face full of seriousness, “Looks like we’ve got trouble.”

“Everyone on alert! The orc wolf riders have appeared in the southern part of Drol. They are headed this way, everyone make ready for battle!”

Large yells suddenly sounded from the streets outside the hotel, all having to do with the imminent invasion from the orc wolf riders.

# Chapter 52: Wolf riders invade

Han Shuo had been talking with Fanny when he immediately yelled upon hearing the voices ringing out from outside, “Master Fanny, let’s hurry and meet up with them!”

Fanny didn’t mince words and started for the door to Han Shuo’s room in a rush as soon as his voice had sounded. After Fanny had left, Han Shuo randomly flung off the bathrobe that had been wrapped around his body and quickly put on his clothes. He carefully put away the iron needles, dagger, crossbow, and bottles of medicine he’d bought over the past few days and finally left the room.

Adventurers’ darting bodies and merchant’s loudly calling voices were apparent all over the main street. These people had been drinking in their hotels or enjoying themselves in places of temptation, but they had all immediately left their rooms when they heard news of the wolf riders’ invasion and surged onto the main street.

Adventurers and mercenaries all lived their lives on the edge, living on the edge of a knife’s blade, and so were long used to such dangers. When they left their rooms, they all methodically organized their weapons and armor, congregating onto the South street according to the origin of the voices.

Han Shuo walked out from the room and realized that even the hotel owner had grabbed a longsword when he’d walked back to the front desk of the hotel. The owner was standing in front of the door with a fierce expression on his face. It seemed that the citizens of Drol were indeed fierce and valorous.

Fanny and the others were all standing in front of the door. All the students hastily put their belongings down in the room and hurriedly rushed out again. After the adventure to the Dark Forest, these young, sapling mages had learned how to be composed and self possessed, and didn’t cry out randomly in panic.

“Bryan, hurry and come over here. We must set out for South street

immediately. Since orc wolf riders dare to invade the Empire's town of Drol, we mustn't let them succeed!" Lisa immediately raised her hand high and called out as soon as she saw Han Shuo appear, as if deathly afraid that Han Shuo wouldn't be able to see her.

Apart from Fanny and the others in front of the hotel doors, a couple other adventurers and mercenaries had also formed into groups of three to five people. The necromancy students continued to walk out of their rooms. Each one was armed to the teeth and bristling with weaponry. Fanny counted heads shortly after Han Shuo had made his way toward Lisa's side. When she discovered that they were all accounted for, she immediately shouted, "Follow me to South street and don't get separated."

Han Shuo followed behind Fanny on a main street crowded with figures, arriving at South street shortly thereafter. When they'd arrived, Han Shuo saw that almost a hundred adventurers and mercenaries were nearby. The old mage, Felix, and female elf, Blanche, that Han Shuo had seen last time were also there. Judging from the way things looked, they were acting as leaders. Felix was hovering in the air and was loudly shouting something.

"Eh, this old mage can hover in midair using levitation magic. It looks like he must be at least of the archmage level." Gene exclaimed in shock after they'd arrived and started explaining to the students. "When a mage trains to a certain realm, he/she will be able to use levitation magic to fly. However, only mages who've reached the archmage level can cast levitation magic. Therefore, mages ,who can fly, are all without a doubt noble and exceedingly powerful characters."

"Brave warriors of the Empire, the orcs' wolf riders are moving towards the town of Drol. According to my observations, the wolf riders are moving in a formation of five hundred. As an encampment of the Empire, our town of Drol has zero tolerance for being trampled on by these savages. Warriors raise your weapons and give them a taste of the fury of the Empire's warriors!" Felix hovered in midair and clutched an exquisite magic staff, embedded with sapphires, in his right hand, speaking loudly to raise morale.

"Eh, aren't these the people from the necromancy major? Heh heh, fancy



meeting you here.” Beacher’s voice suddenly sounded from the side at this moment. Han Shuo twisted his head to see that the light major students had all cast their eyes this way.

“Hello Master Beacher, to think we would run into you here. I trust that you have gained rich rewards from this time’s outing?” Gene nodded and smiled in greeting, asking his questions afterwards.

“Nothing much, no big rewards, just that the students have truly improved.” Beacher responded faintly with a smile.

Dull, thudding sounds, that originated from the south, sounded in the distance. Under the instructions of Felix and Blanche, the warriors had long since armed themselves and bristled with weaponry as they stood in the front. Mages, archers, and priests stood in the back, separated from the warriors by a distance of five to six meters. They had taken out their magic staffs and gazed intently towards the south with grave expressions.

Seeing that everyone had assumed their positions, Beacher and Gene didn’t waste time in furthering their idle chitchat, instead moving to stand with the mages. Although Han Shuo’s body had greatly improved, he wasn’t so dumb as to stand in the front and draw attention to himself. He too followed Fanny and stood with the mages.

Just as everyone had taken up their respective positions according to profession, dull, clapping sounds sounded like dull drums in the hearts of the assembled people. A concentrated, heavy sense of strong aura slowly found its way into everyone’s hearts. The wolf-riding orc wolf riders slowly materialized out of the flying dust cloud and into everyone’s vision.

A grave, killing aura immediately enveloped the entire town of Drol. The wolf riders immediately started charging forward as soon as they’d appeared, accompanied by sharp howls and screams. The longswords in their hands flashed with cold light, and the strong flare of aura from five hundred wolf riders charging in union immediately gave others a strong sense of oppression.

“Mages ready, release your magic on my mark!” Felix was relatively calm as he hovered in the air, gazing down on the wolf riders. He spoke calmly

only when the wolf riders had truly started charging.

“Everyone be careful! Don’t let anything happen to you.” Fanny was also a bit nervous at this moment and she turned to give a few reminders to the students standing next to her. Just as Fanny was about to remind Han Shuo, she suddenly discovered that there was a type of numbing, cold severity in his eyes that were set in a face of calm. There was no panic at all. He gripped a sharp dagger in his hand, and a frigid aura slowly started emanating from the dagger.

Noticing Fanny’s gaze, Han Shuo’s concentration lapsed and the bone-piercing, frigidly cold aura that he had infused the dagger with as a result of guiding the magical yuan in his left hand into the dagger after activating the Mystical Glacial Spellfire suddenly faded away, without a trace.

“Is something the matter Master Fanny?” Han Shuo looked at Fanny and asked with an honest smile hanging on his face once again.

“No, nothing. You be careful!” Fanny looked at Han Shuo and responded in a bit of a weird tone.

At this moment, Fanny had finally realized that the honest, dumb smile that Han Shuo had worn on his face was merely his disguise. The calmness and composure that he had while facing danger was most likely Han Shuo’s true state.

Damnit, you lied to everyone. I’ll make you pay for that sooner or later. Fanny thought fiercely in her heart on one hand, and on the other surreptitiously appraised Han Shuo, suddenly feeling that a calmly serious Han Shuo had a very different quality to him.

# Chapter 53: The perils of the town of Drol

“Loose!”

Felix’s high call drew open the curtains for magic attacks.

Suddenly, all the mages next to Han Shuo and the others started chanting magical incantations. A column of sharp windblades, multiple large, blazing fireballs, several ice bolts shaped like spikes, lightning landing violently from the skies, and even the longswords from the light major students’ Radiant Slash all abruptly appeared, rushing towards the charging wolf riders.

Fanny and Gene also chanted their incantations and skeletons and zombies staggered out, one after another. They ran out from the side of the foremost warriors and rushed at the wolf riders.

The orcs on the backs of wolves were engulfed in magic in an instant and suffered brutal blows. Beneath the howling of the windblades, multiple injuries appeared on the wolf riders and the large wolves they rode on. When the large fireballs came crashing down, several wolf riders were completely swallowed up by the blazing fire. Soon after, the ice bolts and lightning also took down ten or so wolf rider lives.

However, there were five hundred or so wolf riders. When this wave of magic came crashing down, it only killed the thirty or forty wolf riders in the very front. The rest of the wolf riders did not display the slightest hint of fear or cowardice upon seeing their companions die. They continued to thunder forward in excitement, caring not a whit for their deaths.

Just as the mages were about to sing the second wave of magical incantations, crossbows appeared unbeknownst to anyone in the hands of the charging wolf riders. They raised the crossbows and clouds of sharp arrows flew like the wind, soaring over the first row of heavily armored warriors and making for the mages and archers.

“Everyone be careful!” The elven archer, Blanche, called out in a melodious voice, also directing the archers to counterattack.

The mages had been chanting incantations, planning to attack the wolf riders. When they saw the sharp arrows flying towards themselves, they immediately changed the direction of the magical attacks and released waves of magic to crash down onto the arrows in the midair, destroying them before they could strike their targets.

However, not all the sharp arrows were destroyed by magic. Ten or so sharp missiles still shot down, and the strong force behind them immediately pierced two thunder novice mages to death. Three or so mages more or less suffered some sort of injuries. At this moment, the three priests suddenly started singing healing incantations, taking care of the three injured mages.

Because this wave of magic had all been used on countering the sharp arrows, the wolf riders hadn't suffered much damage. They rushed over with an even faster speed. The large wolves charged over with an extremely fierce aura. The skeletons and zombies, that bore the initial brunt of the attacks, were demolished within seconds.

Beneath the charge of the large wolves, the lowest level skeletal warriors were abruptly trampled into bits of bone and didn't have much effect at all. The zombie warriors stood up to the onslaught for a brief moment, but under the slices of the orcs' longswords, the heads of ten or so zombie warriors were simultaneously sent flying as they fell to the ground.

"Humph. The dark creatures of the necromancy major are indeed useless!" Upon seeing that the dark creatures from the necromancy major weren't having much effect, Irene and a few other light major students started jeering at them.

Han Shuo grasped a dagger in his hand, his entire being still calm and composed. He eyes gazed at the figures of the wolf riders in the distance, completely ignoring the mockery coming from Irene and the light major students.

The crossbows in the wolf riders' hands rose again, and another hail of arrows rained down. The mages in the back all used magic to defend themselves. A couple mages with more training destroyed the sharp

arrows that flew towards them and were still able to continuously release magic to attack the wolf riders careening towards them.

Five sharp arrows suddenly shot over with a whooshing sound, heading towards the students of the necromancy major. Fanny and Gene's facial expressions changed as they both sent out bone arrows, destroying three of them in midair. One of them had veered off course and shot towards a corner in which no one was standing, whereas the other made a beeline for Amy.

At this moment, Amy became panicked and started chanting magic. Gene and Fanny were also a bit anxious and also started to swiftly chant magic, but the speed in which they all chanted at was obviously slower than the speed of the sharp arrow.

A dagger suddenly drew a cold line through the air and flew into the sky like a bolt of lightning. A sharp crack sounded out as the arrow that had been flying towards Amy broke into several pieces. At the same moment, Han Shuo's body suddenly squirmed out, stopping in front of Amy and catching the dagger before it landed on the ground.

"Thank you Bryan!" Amy smiled widely after the crisis had been averted and was full of gratitude towards Han Shuo.

"You're welcome!" Han Shuo nodded with a faint smile, returning once again to Fanny and Lisa's side with dagger in hand, surveying the surroundings with a face full of calm.

Finally, after paying the price of seventy injured or dead wolf riders, the wolf riders broke through the constant waves of magic attacks and came into direct conflict with the warriors of Drol. A large battle suddenly commenced with fifty to sixty warriors armed to the teeth, wielding broadswords and long spears. There were even ten or so knights wielding lances, fighting with the wolf riders from the back of their battlesteeds.

The mages chanted their magics as they flew across the air in glorious sparkles, landing on the wolf riders in the back. The entire southern part of the town of Drol had sunken into the heat of battle amidst the sounds of violent explosions.

Han Shuo, Fanny, and the others were situated behind the warriors and continuously chanted magic. Bolt after bolt of bone spears and arrows flew out towards the orc wolf riders that were charging at the defensive line of warriors.

Felix, hovering in midair, became the main target of all the orc wolf rider crossbows. More than ten sharp bolts came whistling towards him, but Felix showed no trace of panic. He chanted an advanced wind magic after which a ten meter tornado formed in the air behind the wolf riders. Wolf riders were swallowed up wherever the tornado touched, and ghastly screams and wails sounded endlessly.

After the tornado had appeared, Felix gave a wave of the magic staff in his hand and more than ten windblades instantaneously flew out from his body, demolishing the sharp bolts that flew to him. At the same time, a magic shield appeared and completely covered him. The few sharp missiles that finally made it past his magic were blocked by the magic shield. Felix didn't suffer any harm to his body whatsoever.

"So strong! That's the true power of a mage!" The light students were watching Felix's relaxed expressions besides Han Shuo and all of them displayed expressions of adoration and worship as they sighed with emotions.

Just as everyone was reflecting on how amazing Felix was, the previously relaxed Felix suddenly gave a great yell. "Oh dear, more wolf riders have appeared in the distance. There also seems to be a few orc shamans with them. Let's retreat! Everyone split up and make for the city of Zajoski."

Felix's words immediately had a huge impact on everyone assembled. Han Shuo was the first to react as he grabbed Fanny's small hand and said calmly, "Follow me, hurry."

Fanny was startled and when she saw Han Shuo's gravely calm expression, the curses that had made their way to her mouth transformed into, "Alright, but where do you want to go?"

"To where the battlesteeds are kept. We must hurry and find the battlesteeds. Only on the backs of horses will we have the chance to

escape to Zajoski, otherwise it will be difficult to guarantee our escape from the grasp of the wolf riders.” Han Shuo’s mind was thinking very quickly at this moment and he spoke with decisiveness and grim determination.

Fanny immediately reacted likewise when she heard Han Shuo’s explanations, calling out hurriedly. “All students, follow me.”

Han Shuo knew that Fanny agreed with his plan when he heard her call out. He turned his head to see Lisa looking covetously at the hand that he’d used to grab Fanny’s small hand. Han Shuo’s expression turned wry as he also reached out a hand to grasp Lisa’s hand.

He then paid no attention to either of their expressions and hauled them off to where the battlesteeds were kept.

# Chapter 54: Dog eat dog

Because of Felix's words, the originally smoothly cooperating warriors and mages, that were defending against the orc wolf riders, abruptly sank into panic. People started becoming distracted from defense and instead frantically contemplated their means of escape.

In the span of a moment, an impregnable defense collapsed. Apart from the warriors in the front, who were fighting as they retreated, the mages and the archers panicked and escaped in all directions.

Han Shuo had grabbed Fanny and Lisa's wrists and was forcefully hauling the two with great haste to where the battlesteeds were stabled. Behind Han Shuo, Gene directed the other necromancy major students to follow closely behind him.

After a few rounds of life and death battles, Han Shuo was no longer naive nor terror stricken when faced with danger. He quietly thought of what actions he should take next as he calmly sped forward.

Also retreating with Han Shuo and the others, like tidewaters, were a few other mages and archers. If these people blocked Han Shuo's forward movement, they would've been shoved to the side without a moment's hesitation.

The archers and mages were hard pressed to increase their speed in the chaos of the crowd. Somehow, with Han Shuo as a meat shield, they managed to rush to the front after a moment's work.

After fifteen minutes, Han Shuo had finally hauled Fanny and Lisa to where the battlesteeds were stabled, with Gene and the others following far behind. The master of the place had also gone to the southern streets to observe the earlier events and had only left a servant inside to watch over the horses. Han Shuo directly broke down the door and pulled Fanny and Lisa in the direction of the stables in the back.

"What are you doing? Just what are you doing?" The elderly servant immediately stood up in a panic when he saw Han Shuo break down the door and rush towards the stables. He yelled angrily at them.



“The orc wolf riders have already fought their way here. If you continue to stay, you’ll face only death. We’re here to pick up the battlesteeds that we’ve stabled here. If you want to live, then hurry, choose a battlesteed, and flee!” Han Shuo explained calmly as he rushed towards the stables.

The elderly servant had already heard the chaos and commotion from outside at this time. He blanked for a second and then also made swiftly for the stables. It looked like he’d accepted Han Shuo’s suggestion.

Han Shuo finally released Fanny and Lisa’s little hands and his eyes made a desperate sweep of the surroundings. His eyes landed on a handsome battlesteed and vaulted onto its back without another word. He landed on the back of the horse in a second, swung the dagger in his hand, and slashed through the ropes that restrained the battlesteed.

He turned his head to find that Gene and some of the light major students had also made it to the stables. All were panting and joined Fanny and Lisa in looking for the horses they’d stabled here last time.

“Are you all idiots? The orc wolf riders will be here any second, what are you looking around for? Not to mention the battlesteeds we stabled last time were all inferior beasts, there were only six of them... do you want to die?” Han Shuo could finally hold in his impatience no longer and suddenly yelled out upon seeing that these people were still looking amongst the crowd of stabled battlesteeds.

Han Shuo’s violent roar sounded throughout the stables. The necromancy students and teachers, who were looking for their battlesteeds, were all lectured. They all froze in that moment – Han Shuo had called them idiots! It was a bit tough for them to accept that!

“Then what do we do?” Lisa froze and then asked Han Shuo as she looked at him.

“Choose the best, strongest battlesteeds. We’ll each take one. The lives of others have nothing to do with us. If you all want to die, then continue looking for the inferior battlesteeds that we had!” Han Shuo’s face darkened as he resolutely called out.

This was originally a simple concept, but the pity was that these

necromancy students and teachers had always functioned in the necromancy major that encompassed a multitude of rules and customs. For them, following the rules was the natural thing to do. They hadn't thought at all about the fact that all rules could be broken in times of crisis.

These people's faces all froze beneath Han Shuo's curses of "idiots", which then changed to contemplative frowns as Han Shuo continued in the vein of paying no heed to the lives of others. His words caused another round of impact to these students and teachers who were used to following the rules.

The commotion outside grew bigger and they made swift decisions when faced with a crisis of life or death. They no longer hesitated and ran over to the fiercest and most valiant battlesteeds with looks of resolution.

When the necromancy students and teachers had all occupied the best battlesteeds in the stables under Han Shuo's urging, they rushed out of the stables. This was when the light major students from the Academy and other clearheaded mages and archers finally made their way to the stables.

"Damnit, they're riding our battlesteeds." Irene's sharp eyesight immediately discovered that the handsome battlesteed, that Han Shuo was currently riding on, was the one that she had ridden just days before. She immediately voiced a loud complaint.

However, at this moment Han Shuo and the others were already riding on the fiercest battlesteeds in the stables and had rushed out with due haste. They ignored the curses from Irene and the others and only left behind silhouettes that moved further and further away.

"Bryan, where should we go now?" Fanny immediately asked Han Shou as soon as they'd left the stables and made it onto the chaotic streets.

The warriors had already retreated into the town of Drol and the orc wolf riders had rushed into town. Whirling their longswords mightily, the defenseless merchants were the first ones to suffer as they often lost their heads when the swords chopped down.

Because these wolf riders were riding giant wolves, they were in no hurry

to immediately pursue the escaping warriors and mages. They only followed the street and starting looting the first stores they found. There were large bags hanging from the bodies of the giant wolves and the resources of all the surrounding stores made it into the bags of the giant wolves.

“As long as it’s not in the direction of Zajoski City, it doesn’t matter where we flee to!” Han Shuo surveyed the surroundings and swept a glance at the eastern street. He noticed that there were fewer people fleeing on the northern street, and called out after a moment’s thought. “Follow me, we’ll head north.”

Because the town of Drol was about to fall, the most heavily fortified city in the southern part of the Empire, Zajoski City, became the ideal target in the hearts of the frantic escapees. Han Shuo observed for a moment and noticed that seventy percent of the people from the town of Drol were fleeing in the direction of Zajoski.

However, out of this seventy percent, there were only ten or so on battlesteeds. When the orc wolf riders had finished raiding the town of Drol, their first target was sure to be this crowd of people.

With giant wolves as steeds, the wolf riders’ speed was sure to be faster than those who were still on foot. Because the flow of people was seventy percent of the town’s inhabitants, the orcs were sure to send the most wolf riders after them. In this way, the ones most likely to die were the seventy percent of people escaping in the direction of Zajoski.

As soon as he’d started his calm deliberations, Han Shuo immediately realized that his thoughts were very clear. After a brief consideration, he immediately led battlesteeds with Fanny and the others racing to the northern street.

With the convenience of battlesteeds, Han Shuo and co. moved exceedingly fast. Han Shuo met two swift wolf riders, who’d come to the northern street, along the way. The bags on their giant wolves were bulging. They ignored Han Shuo’s crew and were about to rush into another store to loot.

Snorting coldly, Han Shuo lifted the reins and directed the battlesteed beneath him to change its direction, charging towards the two wolf riders, who were raising their longswords with no abandon.

The two wolf riders started. It seemed that they hadn't thought that someone would dare to take the offensive towards them. They withdrew the longswords that they've planned on slashing down on the shop's merchant and turned their bodies, abruptly splitting up. They waved the longswords in their hands and chopped towards the quickly approaching Han Shuo.

"Bryan, are you crazy?! Run!" Lisa, off in the distance, saw that Han Shuo's battlesteed had suddenly changed direction and was rushing towards the two wolf riders. She screamed out in panic and drew the attention of the necromancy students and teachers. They all involuntarily turned their heads and looked in Han Shuo's direction. Wielding a dagger in his hand as his horse charged, Han Shuo quietly chanted a magical spell, and a bone arrow abruptly materialized in midair, whistling as it flew towards one of the wolf riders. As the wolf rider waved his longsword to defend himself, the dagger in Han Shuo's hand was already rushing towards the other wolf rider.

The dagger drew a cold arc of light as it slashed the air and sank into bone with a soft sound. The dagger had passed through the longsword's defenses and pierced a bloody hole in the wolf rider's chest. At this moment, Han Shuo's battlesteed had arrived in due haste. He clawed at the reins and the horse abruptly halted in the midst of violent whinnies.

Han Shuo's left arm reached out and yanked up, suddenly dislodging the longsword from the orc, who was already dead. Wielding the longsword, Han Shuo's right hand sank down and a bloody hole suddenly opened in the head of the agitated giant wolf. The rioting giant wolf suddenly ragdolled as it fell to the ground.

With a flick of the sword, the large pocket hanging on the giant wolf suddenly shot out from the fallen wolf, landing directly on Han Shuo's battlesteed. Afterwards, Han Shuo's battlesteed changed direction and he charged with a face of cold cruelty at the other wolf rider, who had just

pulverized the bone arrow.

“Oh my word, did I see incorrectly? Bryan just cast the bone arrow magic. What the hell is going on?” Gene pulled tightly on his battlesteed’s reins and called out in with shock. The other students also bore a dumbfounded expression like similar to Gene’s, looking dully at Han Shuo like it was the first time they were meeting him.

“Damnit, what is Bryan doing?” Fanny had known that Han Shuo could cast bone arrow magic and thus wasn’t too surprised. What she was surprised about was that Han Shuo’s current actions were robbing the wolf riders after they had looted the stores.

# Chapter 55: A change in status

The other wolf rider, upon seeing Han Shuo rush over wielding a longsword, forcefully widened his eyes that rested beneath his furry forehead. He roared furiously, obviously unpracticed in the common language, “Tri... tricky humans, you are... looking for death!”

The giant wolf, beneath his legs, howled and the orc wolf rider whipped out a crossbow from behind him, raised it, and shot it at Han Shuo. It whistled with an ear-piercing sound as it flew towards Han Shuo’s neck.

His magical yuan churning quickly, Han Shuo focused his concentration. That sharply whistling crossbolt suddenly seemed to slow down in his eyes, as bizarre as the slow motion scenes in the movies that Han Shuo used to watch. In stark contrast to the crossbow bolt’s speed, was Han Shuo’s strong and speedy perception.

When the crossbolt had flown to about a meter away from Han Shuo, the longsword in his hand abruptly thrust out and it landed an unerringly accurate hit on the head of the bolt. A sharp crack resounded and the crossbolt suddenly exploded into pieces.

Even after destroying the oncoming crossbow bolt, Han Shuo’s speed, although still on the back of the battlesteed, wasn’t affected at all. Before the wolf rider had the chance to fire off a second bolt, Han Shuo had already raised his longsword and rushed in front of the wolf rider.

The cold arc of a blade flared out from Han Shuo’s right hand, wielding the sword. The longsword had been solid and heavy, but it was as light and graceful as a feather in Han Shuo’s grasp.

The orc wolf rider also raised its sword, but just as the two swords were about to clash together, a smaller, brown crossbow bolt suddenly flew out from Han Shuo’s right sleeve. The crossbolt whooshed as it flew past the orc’s longsword and sank into the orc wolf rider’s neck with a soft sound.

“Trea... treachery!”

Its mouth frothing with bloody bubbles, the orc wolf rider finally spat

out this word with much difficulty as the large hand, which had been holding up the longsword, suddenly lost strength. The heavy longsword brought down its fit and bulky body into falling off the huge wolf's back. It was obvious from the looks of things that it was dead.

"A race with low intelligence indeed. Heh!" Han Shuo's previously stern and cold expression vanished as he came to the side of the huge wolf with a face filled of traces of an evil smile. A flick of his longsword sent the bag on the huge wolf's body flying towards the battlesteed behind him. Afterwards, the sword stabbed downwards and the giant wolf also toppled over in a pool of blood.

"Kill, kill, kill!"

At this moment, a wave of figures suddenly materialized from the corner of the northern street. More than ten wolf riders were howling loudly as they desperately chased a band of mages and warriors. Amongst the escapees were Beacher and the others from the light major of the Academy, riding on inferior battlesteeds.

"Hurry and go!" Han Shuo immediately reacted after pausing momentarily. He lifted the reins in his hand and the battlesteed trotted out with dull, hasty clops as it changed directions once more to charge towards the north.

Fanny and the others were tongue tied as they watched Han Shuo's dog eat dog performance. Seeing Han Shuo suddenly rush out, they too understood that the situation was dire. They also urged their battlesteeds to follow behind Han Shuo, pathing their escape to the north.

Han Shuo's crew made their way to a large canyon after half a day's worth of frantic galloping on the back of their horses. The sides of the canyon were steep, and a vast river was at its end. Han Shuo and the others reined in their battlesteeds at the end of the canyon and gazed at the river's azure waters, suddenly sinking into a quandary.

"This should be the Empire's Nirolan River. We can make our way to the city of Balthazar in the southern part of the Empire after crossing the Nirolan River. Balthazar City and Zajoski City aren't too far apart.

Although it's not as heavily fortified as Zajoski City, it's sure to have a heavily armed guard. I think we'll be safe as long as we can make it to Balthazar City."

Gene creased his brow in thought as he looked at the vast Nirolan River and then suddenly spoke afterwards.

"In order to make it to Balthazar, we must cross the Nirolan River first, but this Nirolan River is so vast. I think we'll be unable to make it across without a ship ferrying us." Fanny's face was full of anxiety as she sighed while gazing at the azure river waters from afar.

Han Shuo hadn't said anything after reaching this place and only self absorbedly rifled through the two large bags on the battlesteed. The shops of the town of Drol were set up for the adventurers and mercenaries, so the shops mostly sold goods needed for battle.

Han Shuo took inventory and realized that out of the two bags looted from the two wolf riders, there were four crossbows and more than ten bolts of the highest quality, three daggers of high quality, two longswords and mage staffs of ordinary quality, and three sets of leather armor designed to be worn next to the skin. Apart from this, there were also a few bottles of healing medicine and all sorts of poisons.

Han Shuo first picked out the sharp dagger with a sapphire embedded in it and naturally concealed it close to his body. He then carefully put away the bottles of various poisons and finally poured out the weapons and armor out of the bags and onto the ground. He raised his head, looked at everyone, and said calmly. "Put these things away and prepare to fight!"

The necromancy students and teachers, who had been sighing and frowning in deep thought of potential strategies, all suddenly started at Han Shuo's words. Gene paused and suddenly remembered Han Shuo's performance just now. He exclaimed in surprise and stared at Han Shuo in question, "Bryan, did you use the bone arrow magic just now?"

Gene's question caused everyone except for Fanny to stare at Han Shuo with a face full of shock. Lisa even squealed with fright and pointed her right finger at Han Shuo with a face full of incredulity. "That's right...



Bryan, how can you use magic?"

"This isn't the time to discuss such matters. A portion of the orc wolf riders were headed this way. I think those damned wolf riders will reach here quite soon. We have a canyon in front of us and the vast Nirolan River beneath us. What we should do now is consider how to handle the orc wolf riders that are about to arrive." Han Shuo's expression was calm as he neatly arranged the weapons that had been within the bags, calmly explaining as he did so.

"If it wasn't for you leading us to this forsaken place, how would we be in such dire straits?" Bella glanced at Han Shuo disdainfully upon hearing his words and jeered at him with a cold expression.

His brow furrowing, Han Shuo's calm face suddenly grew cold as irrepressible sense of disgust and dislike grew involuntarily in his heart. He lifted his head to look at the mocking Bella and said, "Do you mean my decision was wrong?"

Bella had been about to open her mouth and say "precisely" when she suddenly realized that Han Shuo's gaze was sinisterly cold. Bella's body shuddered involuntarily upon seeing his gaze was like that of jackals and wolves sizing up their prey. She smiled fearfully and stammered, "I, I didn't mean that."

Nodding, a smile found its way onto Han Shuo face again as he smiled as though nothing had happened. "Since that's the case, everyone pick your weapon. Our mental strength is limited and the casting range of magic isn't as far as crossbows. I think we should first use weapons, and when the weapons are useless, then use magic to attack. Come, let's make some preparations and wait for those wolf riders to come to their deaths."

Han Shuo's performance now was quite like the style of someone in charge. This would have originally been a very comical scene. After all, he was an errand slave for the necromancy major and had no right to call the shots.

However, after experiencing the horrors of Han Shuo going berserk in the Dark Forest and his previous cold and cruel killing of the two wolf

riders, no one thought it was funny to follow Han Shuo's orders.

It was like they were all getting to know Han Shuo all over again. Even Fanny and Gene came docilely over and started to choose crossbows from Han Shuo's hands. No one raised any objections in defiance of Han Shuo.

Unbeknownst to anyone, the original errand slave Han Shuo had established authority amongst them, causing them to willingly listen to Han Shuo's directives.

# Chapter 56: The pain that accompanies the happy fate of a man

Steep hills bordered the sides of the large canyon with a passage that was five meters wide, right down the middle. This kind of location was the best for laying a trap for the wolf riders.

Since everyone had agreed with Han Shuo's plans, they all started busying themselves. Han Shuo didn't know much about how to set traps up himself. A group of people first used tough and tensile ropes to set up tripwires and snares along the passageway. Fanny and Gene then used advanced necromancy magics to release an acid bog behind the tripwires.

The acid bog spell was an advanced necromancy spell. It could transform a large area of land into a muddy and miry bog. When the acid bog was formed, it would immediately eat away anyone who ventured within, leaving behind only a pile of bones. This was one of the more diabolic advanced magics of the necromancy major.

However, a great deal of mental strength was needed in order to successfully cast the acid bog magic. The acid bog's range would differ according to each necromancer's mental strength. Fanny and Gene had teamed up, but only created a bog that measured five meters by five meters. Judging from how the two of them looked, they were already at their limit.

A few large boulders were placed on the top of the hills on both sides, ready to crash down on the arriving orc wolf riders. The bodies of the students and teachers of the necromancy major were all extremely frail and delicate, therefore it was naturally Han Shuo who completed the mission of moving the large boulders by himself.

After making these preparations, Gene, Bella, Bach, and a few others took cover and laid in wait on one side of the passageway. Han Shuo, Fanny, Lisa, and a few others were in charge of the other hill.

"You've changed a great deal now. If we make it back alive to the

Academy, your contribution will be the greatest. I'll be sure to report this to the school authorities and obtain some rewards for you!" Fanny's body was crouched behind a large boulder and patrolled her eyes over Han Shuo's body, whispering as she did so.

Han Shuo was in the middle, with Lisa on his left and Fanny on his right. The three were very close together and when Fanny spoke in a low voice, her breath smelled like the fragrance of orchids and directly breathed onto Han Shuo's right cheek. The faint perfume made Han Shuo's heart caper like a monkey and mind gallop like a horse. He suddenly felt that this time's danger was also full of gentle charm.

He scratched his head out of habit and smiled honestly. Turning his head to boldly stare at Fanny's charming features. Fanny's hair was tousled and messy at this moment, and her face was a bit pale after expending quite a bit of mental strength to cast the acid bog. This was in stark contrast to her usual alluring beauty and overbearing air, bringing out another type of beauty for Han Shuo to see.

"Damnit, I'm talking to you, stop staring at me!" Fanny grew angry when she saw that Han Shuo was staring at her, mesmerized and not paying any attention to her. This fellow is becoming even more bold... he even dares stare so insolently at me now.

"Heh heh, Master Fanny, you're so beautiful. It won't cost you anything if I stare at you, so why must you be so stingy?" Han Shuo flirted with a light laugh.

A sudden wave of pain travelled from Han Shuo's left arm. His face turned wry and he turned his head to cast a glance at Lisa. Upon seeing that Lisa was staring at him viciously, he hastily squeezed out a smile and said, "Of course, Lisa you're also very beautiful, heh heh."

Holding her head high with a light snort, Lisa glared at Han Shuo and said huffily. "Don't think that I can't take you down a notch now that you're stronger. Humph. Since we have some free time now, hurry and tell me how you came to have mental strength and even mastered the bone arrow magic. How many secrets have you not told me?"

“Eh, what secrets? I could master the bone arrow magic thanks to you. If it wasn’t for you using the Agony of the Soul and torturing me half to death, I would definitely still be as useless as before. Thanks to you!”

Her face saddening, Lisa suddenly hung her head and sighed lightly. She said in a low voice, “You still haven’t forgiven me. I know you’ve always hated me for using the Agony of the Soul on you, but I didn’t mean anything by it originally. I didn’t know either that it would almost kill you!”

“No, I really don’t blame you. Stop thinking crazy thoughts Lisa. It’s not like you don’t know my feelings towards you. How could I hold a grudge against you?” Han Shuo started and suddenly remembered his role and hastened to speak words of comfort to Lisa.

Just at this moment, Han Shuo’s right arm also felt the same pain and he turned his head to see Fanny’s slender jade fingers were also forcefully pinching him. A wave of wryness rose from his heart as he sighed silently, thinking that the happy fate of a man was indeed something that couldn’t be enjoyed. He asked wryly, “Master Fanny, what’s wrong now?”

Fanny also started slightly upon hearing Han Shuo’s words and thought, what’s wrong with me? What do the two of them talking have to do with me? How come I also couldn’t resist the urge to pinch him? She flung her head slightly and also snorted, then pasted a faint smile on her face and raised her voice slightly. “Lisa, what did he mean by the bit about his feelings towards you just now?”

A panicked expression suddenly appeared on Lisa’s face as she hurriedly waved her hands in concealment. “Nothing, nothing. Master Fanny, you must have misheard. Haha, isn’t that so Bryan?” She didn’t forget to throw a threatening glance at Han Shuo in warning after she spoke, indicating that you’re dead meat if you dare speak of it!

Nodding his head wryly, Han Shuo glossed over the matter. He smiled, “Yes, Master Fanny must have expended too much mental strength and something must have developed, causing interference with your hearing?”

“Is that so?” Fanny looked suspiciously at Han Shuo and asked with an

odd tone.

“Of course, of course. Oh right Master Fanny, when we return to the Academy, I’d like to remove my status as a slave. I’ve earned enough gold coins in the Dark Forest this time and don’t want to bear the status of a slave forever!”

“Don’t worry, if we can really safely return to the Academy this time, I will contact the authorities on your behalf. Not only will we remove your status as a slave, but I’m going to remove your status as an errand boy as well. You’ll be a student in the necromancy major in the future and I will personally teach you more advanced necromancy magics. With your potential, I think your future accomplishments will definitely surpass that of all the current students in the necromancy major!”

Fanny looked at Han Shuo with gratification and gave him a resolute promise. She thought privately, when he becomes a necromancy major student and if his magic increases rapidly, then he’ll be able to truly throw off his current shackles. At that time, maybe... eh. What am I thinking about? Looks like I’ve truly expended too much mental strength. Otherwise, why would I be thinking such crazy thoughts.

Han Shuo had had an overjoyed expression on his face, but at this moment his brow suddenly furrowed and he closed his eyes, concentrating silently for a moment. He suddenly called out to the other side, “Master Gene, be careful, I can already hear dull footsteps. I think the orcs’ wolf riders will be arriving soon.”

“Understood, you guys need to be careful as well. Bryan, Master Fanny and I have just expanded a lot of mental strength, so you’ll have to protect Master Fanny well!”

“Don’t worry, since Master Fanny is by my side, unless I die first, Master Fanny won’t suffer a bit of harm!”

Han Shuo felt more pain on his left arm as soon as he’d finished speaking. He knew immediately that Lisa must have taken action in her anger. He hastily turned his head to the left and explained to Lisa. However, he didn’t notice that on his right, Fanny’s gaze at him at this

moment had subtly gained a few hints of complicated emotions.

Finally, the dull footfalls slowly traveled in from the distance. Even the ordinary students and teachers of the necromancy major had heard those repressed, dull sounds and all involuntarily concentrated their attention, fully focused on how to spring the sudden attack afterwards.

“Damnit, why is it Beacher and the others from the light major?!”

Just as everyone was holding their breath in concentration and were about to roll the giant boulders down the hills, Han Shuo’s sharp eyes suddenly realized that the incoming people weren’t the orc wolf riders, but rather Beacher, Irene, and the others from the Academy’s light major, who happened to be fleeing in stricken, bedraggled panic. A few unfamiliar mages were mixed in, and then all rode shrilly whinnying battlesteeds that looked like they were about to collapse. Expressions of extreme weariness were on all their faces.

Fanny frowned and suddenly poked her head out from behind the giant boulder. Her slender neck stretched out as she yelled loudly, “Master Beacher, stop immediately. There are traps here that we’ve laid down to deal specifically with the wolf riders.”

Beacher and the others hurtling towards the tripwires hastened to stop themselves in that crucial moment after hearing Fanny’s words. Beacher lifted his head to look at the necromancy students and teachers on the two sides of the hill and immediately understood the situation. He shouted out, “The orcs’ wolf riders are right behind us. What should we do?”

“Give up the horses and make them continue running. Then walk quickly across, we’ll tell you where the traps are. Otherwise if you stay where you are, only death awaits you!” Han Shuo stuck out his head and called back calmly.

Beacher and the others only hesitated momentarily upon hearing Han Shuo’s words and then all moved according to his instructions. They dismounted, used daggers to prick the battlesteeds’ behinds and rushed them onwards after the horses’ had been pricked. Following that, their crew frantically traversed the tripwires and acid bog under Fanny’s voiced

reminders and swiftly climbed up the hills on the two sides.

Another wave of dull footfalls once again traveled into everyone's ears. This time, everyone knew that it was sure to be the orc wolf riders chasing in hot pursuit.

“Conceal yourself well and prepare to fight!” Han Shuo called out loudly as everyone carefully hid themselves, planning on giving these orc wolf riders, who were used to pillaging, killing, raiding and looting, a lesson in blood.



# Chapter 57: Killing and robbing

A dust cloud formed in the distance as dull footfalls sounded in everyone's heart like a dull drum. A row of gleaming longswords first came into view, followed one by one by the sight of the strong orcs' bodies straddled atop their giant wolf mounts.

These orc wolf riders had obviously already gone through a round of looting. The bags on the giant wolves beneath them were bulging at the seams. It looked like the shops in the town of Drol had surely been raided until not even a single shingle remained.

Perhaps it was because the wolf riders were carrying too many spoils of war, but the speed of the giant wolves beneath had obviously been affected. This was why Beacher and the others, who were riding spindly battlesteeds, had been able to make it here.

Behind the giant rock, Han Shuo gripped a tough and powerful crossbow, calmly focusing at the most stalwart orc who was leading the group. On his side, Fanny was also holding a crossbow and constantly changed the direction she was aiming at, resolute light sparkling in her eyes. It looked like when faced with death, Fanny also knew to steel her heart.

Lisa's hands were empty, but she, along with all the other students, had large boulders next to them. These boulders had been placed appropriately by Han Shuo earlier. All they needed was a strong push to send them rolling, and they were sure to wreak havoc and devastation that was even more frightening than the crossbows.

Accompanied by the howls of the giant wolves, a column of more than ten wolf riders were as swift as the wind and quick as lightning as they finally appeared at the entrance of the passageway. Their speed was ferociously fast and they hadn't expected that an ambush would be sprung on them. They all swung their longswords and yelled out wildly, spurring on the giant wolves and rushing over.

"Awoo awoo awoo."

Some of the leading wolves had their front legs suddenly checked by the tripwires as their front legs buckled and lost balance. They emitted desolate howls as the four wolf riders, carried forward by their momentum, suddenly flew off the backs of their giant wolves.

Papapapa.

The four orcs waved their arms wildly as they uncontrollably landed directly into the acid bog in front, landing with resounding, dull sounds.

The four orcs, who had landed in the acid bog, also emitted ghastly screams similar to their giant wolves. As they wailed like ghosts and howled like wolves, it was as if acid had been poured on their strong bodies. Their flesh, blood, hair, and even their clothes were all turned into bloody water and flowed quickly into the acid bog. The four orc wolf riders had turned into four enormous skeletons within the span of a brief moment.

These four orc wolf riders were only the first ones to be so unlucky. Three more wolf riders behind them were unable to stop their charge in time and also flew into the acid bog. They too turned into three skeletons in the blink of an eye.

“This acid bog is worthy of the title of advanced necromancy alright. Master Fanny, you’re amazing! You must teach me this magic when we make it back to the Academy!” Han Shuo said in low excitement to Fanny upon seeing that the acid bog was so malicious.

However, he suddenly realized that Fanny’s face was ghastly white after he’d finished speaking and noticed that her gaze towards the acid bog wasn’t quite right. He used his body to bump into Fanny and asked again, “Master Fanny, is everything alright?”

Fanny abruptly recollected her senses after being bumped by Han Shuo and said frantically, “No, nothing. This is the first time I’ve tried casting this acid bog magic ever since I mastered it and I really hadn’t thought that this magic would be so pernicious.”

Just as Han Shuo and Fanny were talking, the ten or so orc wolf riders had all crashed into each other in chaos and confusion because the front

had abruptly hauled on the reins, stopping their giant wolves, whereas the wolf riders in the back couldn't halt their charge. A few orcs fell off their giant wolves due to the impact.

But this way, the tripwires and the acid bog lost their purpose. The orcs attempted to regain their footing and formation as they called out in the din of voices and in the midst extremely crowded panic.

“Kill!”

At this moment, Han Shuo suddenly gathered his strength and roared out loudly.

Lisa and the others had already busily sharpened their weapons and were itching for action. When they heard Han Shuo's shout, they too yelled out raucously as they pushed the giant boulders beside them down the hill. More than ten boulders leveraged a momentum that had an imposing manner, which flared up at the skies, and alternately rolled or flew down at the orc wolf riders below, accompanied by enormous rumbling sounds.

Suddenly, the orc wolf riders, who had been the hunters, became the prey instead. Those rolling, large boulders became murder weapons that took lives and swiftly reaped the lives of the orcs. The orcs were already crowded like sardines and hadn't had the chance to properly reorganize their formation again. Faced with the descent of giant boulders, they immediately paid a heavy price.

Four giant rocks rained down on them and directly smashed six orcs, and their giant wolf steeds, into a blood mess. The rest of the large boulders followed the downhill slope of the hill with a ferocious momentum. When they crashed into the wolf riders, strings of agonized shouts and wails sounded out.

When this wave of giant rocks had finished, another fifteen wolf riders had died immediately. Another ten or so had been drawn into the chaos and suffered injuries of varying magnitudes. As these orcs screamed out in panic and fright, they suddenly discovered that the way back was also blocked off by large rocks. Many figures suddenly revealed themselves on

the sides of the hill slopes afterwards and were accompanied by curses and volleys of crossbow bolts and magic attacks.

“Crude and barbaric orcs! Die! All of you!” On the other side, Irene, from the light major, had stood up on the side of the hill and cursed in a low voice with a face full of disgust. She began chanting light magic afterwards and started attacking the orcs with Beacher. It looks like they had finally found a target to vent their frustrations on after facing such relentless pursuit from the wolf riders.

At this moment, there were still thirty of so orc wolf riders who were still alive in the passageway. However, these wolf riders had to face the various magic attacks from the two sides of the hills. Wielding his crossbow, Han Shuo would shoot calmly as soon as he'd focused on an orc. As long as those orcs were hit by Han Shuo's crossbow bolt, they would still fall down in the short term, even if they hadn't suffered a hit to a vital organ. They would never stand up again.

“Eh? How come the orcs that you've hit all never stand up again, even if they've only suffered a grazing shot? The ones I've hit, as long as I haven't hit a crucial part, suffer only minor discomfort?” On the side, Fanny creased her brow and asked in confusion after observing the situation for a bit.

“Heh heh, that's a given. I took some time earlier to sprinkle some poison dust on my quiver of crossbow bolts. They're absolutely done for if even a tiny bit gets on them!” Han Shuo accurately shot and killed another orc and explained faintly, as if nothing was amiss.

Fanny started when she heard his words, and then angrily pointed at Han Shuo, saying viciously, “You, you're a bit despicable alright. Where did you learn such evil methods? We can't use poisoned arrows even if two countries fight... this is an unwritten rule of the Profound Continent.”

Shrugging, Han Shuo said diffidently, “This is a fight between life and death. Being despicable has nothing to do with it. Killing them with the lowest price possible is the correct way, you adhere too stubbornly to outdated rules and ideas!”

“Yes, Bryan is right. These damned orcs burned, killed, looted, and raided in the town of Drol. They take advantage of us every winter to raid along the borders of the Empire. There’s no need to talk about any rules with them.” Off on the side, Lisa suddenly interjected at this moment, obviously siding with Han Shuo’s methods.

“Hmph, you two brats are both lily-livered. No wonder you’ve become close. Bryan, I’ll let it go this time. You can’t tell anyone what you’ve done once you return to the Empire, and you can’t do so in the future. Otherwise, if anyone finds out, they’re sure to send armed forces to suppress you.” Fanny rolled her eyes at both of them and suddenly admonished them severely.

Han Shuo understood Fanny’s good intentions. The poison powder sold in the town of Drol were all for the purpose of being used against the savage and violent magical creatures in the Dark Forest. Ordinarily, no one would dare use it against enemies like this in broad daylight.

However, Han Shuo only listened to Fanny’s reminders and was still quite disdainful internally. If it came down to the wire and his life was endangered, he would certainly still throw caution to the winds and use even more despicable methods.

Under the attacks of crossbow bolts and various magics, the remaining orc wolf riders could only use their crossbows to attack the ambushers on the sides of the hills. However, Han Shuo and the others had fully occupied the advantage of land and numbers. Under the continual onslaught of attacks, the orc wolf riders fell one by one into puddles of blood, obviously dead as a doornail.

When there were only five wolf riders left, they finally started to be afraid. The giant wolves were unable to climb past the giant rocks, so the orcs jumped down from the giant wolves, even giving up all the resources in the bags on the wolves’ bodies. They started retreating without a care for anything else.

“Oh no, they’re getting away. If they escape, there are sure to be more wolf riders that come by. Everyone chase after them!” Han Shuo’s facial

expression changed drastically upon seeing this situation and hastily yelled loudly, but his body remained where it was standing.

Everyone panicked after Han Shuo had spoken and rushed down from the slope, frantically chasing the fleeing orcs. The three warriors, that had been hiding, ran the fastest, racing down the rocky slope like they were on flat ground. They sped quickly after them, with a group of mages following them. Beacher was at the head as well as Gene, Bach, and some other necromancy students. They all raised their staffs and ran out.

Just as Fanny poked out tentatively with her body and was about to run out from behind the giant rock, Han Shuo suddenly reached out and abruptly wrapped his arm around Fanny's waist in a hug. He asked in a low voice, "It's so dangerous, why are you going?"

Fanny's slender waist was suddenly wrapped by Han Shuo's arm, causing her entire body to go numb. She turned her head to see that the other necromancy students, who were also about to walk out, were all looking oddly at her, particularly Lisa, she seemed to be repressing anger.

Fanny blanked and grew agitated when she recollected her wits. A red blush flew onto her face and she began struggling fiercely, saying angrily, "What are you doing, hurry and let go of me. Why are you holding me back?"

"They won't miss us, and don't we have more important things to do right now?" Han Shuo released his grasp and chuckled.

"What else could be more important?" Fanny and the others all asked, perplexed.

"Collect the spoils of war! The resources in those bags on the giant wolves are all dazzling gold coins when brought to a city in the Empire!" Han Shuo laughed heartily as his body had already quickly dashed down from the mountain.

Fanny, Lisa and the others were dumbfounded. They lost their hesitation when they saw that a couple other smart strangers were likewise rushing downhill. They all cried out happily and ran to the fallen wolf riders to collect the spoils of war, with nary a thought for their composure or

demeanor.

# Chapter 58: The function of skeletal warriors

“Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald’s call and reveal your existence!” Han Shuo suddenly started chanting a magical incantation as he ran towards the passageway.

An ordinary, skeletal warrior appeared in the passageway after his incantation had finished. Upon seeing the skeletal warrior materialize, Han Shuo immediately concentrated his mental strength and gave a command – rob them.

This skeletal warrior wasn’t the one that Han Shuo had refined with magical yuan. Its speed and strength paled far in comparison to the little skeleton. Its bones even creaked and rubbed against each other when it moved.

The ink-black, little skeleton with seven bone spurs had caused too much of a disturbance in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. If anyone were to find out that he had been the one to summon the little skeleton, it was bound to cause a string of trouble for him. Therefore, Han Shuo didn’t dare let the little skeleton appear at this moment.

“Everyone hurry, otherwise all the items will be taken by someone else!” The ones who’d stayed behind included Irene from the light major. When she noticed that Han Shuo and the others had raced down, she immediately called out and followed.

On the necromancy major’s side, Fanny, Lisa, and the others first started when they saw Han Shuo summon a skeletal warrior and then quickly recollected their wits. They bore expressions of glee and also started summoning skeletal warriors.

More than ten skeletal warriors were abruptly summoned by Fanny, Lisa, and the others. Under the commands from their mental strength, the skeletal warriors all reached out their bony hands and began to pick up the giant bags from the ground.



The resources within the wolf rider's bags had all been obtained through previous raids. Now that the orc wolf riders were all dead, these bags lacked a master and naturally became free game for whoever grabbed it first. On Han Shuo's side, the skeletal warriors lacking in battle strength were finally of some use. Although their speed was slow, a bag still dangled from the hands of every skeletal warrior.

As their masters, Han Shuo, Fanny, Lisa, and the others naturally didn't sit idly by. Everyone had a bag in their hands and Han Shuo had even grabbed four bags, looking like the cat who ate the canary.

Han Shuo and the others had salvaged eighty percent of the loot that the wolf riders had left behind in the passageway. The other strangers had managed to grab the other twenty percent. Weapons, armor, and medicines from the town of Drol were all highly valuable items. If taken to the Empire and sold there, they were sure to fetch high prices and rich rewards.

After commanding the skeletal warriors to line up in neat rows, Han Shuo looked at Fanny with a smile, "Master Fanny, with these items and our gains from the Dark Forest, I think the school authorities will look at our necromancy major with different eyes when we return to the Academy."

Fanny's mood was also exceedingly jubilant at this time and she had long since forgotten Han Shuo's earlier insolence. A gleeful expression was displayed on her face as her eyes flicked a glance at Han Shuo, saying lightly, "Perhaps not. Many of these things are from the shops of the town of Drol. Although the owners of those shops are now either fleeing or dead, if the Empire were to find out about the origins of these goods, they would confiscate them for sure."

Fanny's worries were not without reason. Han Shuo thought for a bit and suddenly remembered the merchant, Fabian, whom he had met in the Dark Forest. When the two had parted ways, Fabian had left a card with Han Shuo so that Han Shuo could find him and do business. Fabian was a member of the Boozt Merchant Guild and should have an appropriate way to properly dispose of the items if they found him.

When his thoughts traveled to this point, Han Shuo smiled confidently at Fanny and said, “Master Fanny, you need not worry. As long as we make it back to the Empire in one piece, I have ways to dispose of these items, which shouldn’t leave any traces behind.”

Fanny looked askance at Han Shuo and shook her head afterwards, saying with emotion, “Bryan, I realize that I can see through you less and less. How many secrets have you hidden from us... how would you have the methods to dispose of these items?”

Chuckling lightly, Han Shuo said, “Let’s speak of these matters later. I think our first course of action should be how to leave this place and speedily return to the Empire.”

Just as Han Shuo and Fanny were talking, Beacher and the others, including Gene, Bach, and those from the necromancy major on the other side, had returned from the distance they’d travelled. Judging from the relieved expressions on their faces, Han Shuo knew that the orcs had most likely met their impending doom.

Indeed, when Beacher and the others had walked over, he immediately said proudly, “Everyone relax, none of those orcs made it out. We can finally be at ease for a moment.”

He was halfway through his words when he suddenly looked around in surprise, exclaiming, “Eh, what’s going on?”

Apart from the corpses of the orc wolf riders and of the giant wolves in the passageway, all the bags had been split up by the remaining people. Particularly on Han Shuo and Fanny’s side, a row of skeletal warriors, each holding a giant bag, was especially conspicuous.

Fanny was a bit awkward, opened her mouth and didn’t know what to say. Finally, in her agitation, she couldn’t help but glare at Han Shuo and indicate that Han Shuo should respond.

Walking forward as if nothing had happened, there wasn’t a trace of awkwardness on Han Shuo’s face. He put down the two bags on his body and called out to the unfamiliar mercenaries, warriors, and mages who had just returned from afar. He smiled faintly, “These are all spoils of

battle, brave fighters come over and take some. Everyone will go their own separate way soon, but we've just repelled the orcs together just now, so let these items be a memento of our battle."

"Sure, alright!"

The ten or so adventurers, who had returned, all cheered simultaneously and ran over excitedly, adeptly picking through the resources in the bags.

Beacher and some of the other light major students had been about ready to join in their ranks when they saw Irene and the others also held stuffed bags in their hands. They started and began walking over to Irene.

"Little fellow, you're a swell friend. If you ever require the services of our Battlewolves Mercenary Company in the future, don't hesitate to speak up."

"Heh heh, I'm very happy to become friends with you. If you need any medicines in the future, just come find me."

These people all chatted and laughed in high spirits when they poked through the items as numerous cards with contact information made their way into Han Shuo's hands.

"Master Fanny, why are we giving those items over to them? What's wrong with Bryan?" A necromancy student, Athena, was watching Han Shuo's open bags with a look of pain as she asked huffily.

"His methods are absolutely correct. If we swallow all these resources ourselves, these people won't gain anything at all and will be sure to report this matter to the Empire. Perhaps they might even think of robbing us in their anger. We'd be in dire straits then.

Bryan has taken out only a small portion right now for them to choose what they will. Doing so also drags them down with us and shuts everyone's mouth. They don't have space rings and can't summon skeletal warriors like us for manual labor, so they can't take much at all. In the end, we still benefit the most and he's also won the friendship of these adventurers. The Bryan of now is truly becoming stronger and stronger!" Fanny's beautiful eyes had continually been focused on Han Shuo's figure,

who was talking and laughing with the adventurers as she explained to the perplexed Athena.

“He’s becoming more and more mysterious. I wonder where he’s learned all these random bits of knowledge, and his knowledge actually has some use!” Lisa looked at Han Shuo, remembering the secret way he’d taught her to round out her chest and whispered with a hint of emotion.

“Alright, since everyone’s taken their pick, let’s split up now. I won’t be shy if there are any ways in which I need your help in the future, haha!” Han Shuo was chattering happily with an air of familiarity on the other side. The four large bags on his body were basically empty.

These mercenaries and adventurers had all more or less benefited some and gained items they needed. As they looked at Han Shuo, they felt that he looked incredibly pleasing to the eye. Everyone left one by one after finally exchanging a round of pleasantries. Beacher and the others also left carrying their loot after coming by and thanking Fanny.

Gene finally spoke up in wistful regret when there was only Han Shuo and the others left in the area, “I would’ve stayed had I known earlier. If we hadn’t left, then the bags in the hands of the light majors would be ours for sure.”

Fanny had no comment for Gene’s regret and suddenly felt in that moment that even though he had quite a few years on him, his intelligence seemed to not even measure up to Han Shuo’s. An involuntary wave of contempt grew in her heart.

“Right, what should we do now?” Fanny’s eyes looked at Han Shuo and the question came naturally out of her mouth.

Raising his head to look at the vast Nirolan River, Han Shuo thought for a moment and said lowly, “There are a few towering trees in the canyon below. There are various sharp weapons in our bags and a few tensile bundles of rope. We’ll be able to swiftly construct wooden rafts if we fell a few trees. We’ll be able to travel the Nirolan River with the rafts and directly make it to Balthazar City.”

“I see, then why didn’t you tell the others just now?” Gene suddenly

asked upon hearing Han Shuo's words.

“What business is it of mine if they want to leave? Besides, when they leave, they'll be able to draw the orcs' attention away from us, decreasing our danger. Isn't this good?” Han Shuo smiled faintly and explained matter of factly.

Fanny, Gene, and the others were all dumbfounded by his words and privately reflected that Han Shuo was indeed different now. When he had been conversing and laughing happily with others, he'd been inwardly plotting against them already.

Gene, Bach, and Bella suddenly all looked at each other, thinking of what they'd done to Han Shuo in the past. A chill simultaneously gripped their hearts.

# Chapter 59: Gifting you a necklace

With the aid of the dark creatures, the operation of felling trees to construct wooden rafts only took half a day under Han Shuo's command before it was fully complete.

Five wooden rafts and ten wooden oars all entered the water with the efforts of the skeletal warriors. Everyone boarded the wooden rafts after all thirteen bags had been placed securely on them, and started rowing down the Nirolan River with oars in hand.

Han Shuo, Fanny, and Lisa were all on one raft, and Fanny had summoned a zombie warrior to row. The three of them lounged leisurely on the sturdy wooden platform, admiring the view of the Nirolan River in a satisfied manner.

It was already dusk, and the glow of sunset painted the sky. The deep, blue waters of the Nirolan River were calm, and a few bold fish leapt out to draw silver lines on the water surface. The towering trees in the distance were covered with leafy boughs, and a few unknown insects called out happily, putting everyone into a quiet and calm state of mind.

As Fanny and Lisa chattered and laughed quietly, admiring the view on all sides, Han Shuo sat cross legged on the wooden raft with his eyes closed, silently training his magical yuan, not giving up even a single second that could be used to strengthen and reforge his body, continuously opening up the passages in his body.

Fanny and Lisa originally had a belly full of questions for Han Shuo, but they didn't disturb him when they realized that he had closed his eyes and wasn't speaking. They actually felt moved by how studious Han Shuo was, thinking that it was no wonder he'd improved so quickly in such a short amount of time. Their beautiful eyes occasionally landed on Han Shuo's body, discussing something in low voices. It seemed that their topic of discussion must have certainly involved Han Shuo.

After a long period of silence, Han Shuo abruptly opened his eyes and looked around when he felt that the wooden raft had shuddered. He

discovered that the raft had made it across the Nirolan River and arrived in a lush area, thick with shrubbery and trees.

Fanny and Lisa giddily directed the dark creatures to move the spoils of battle from the wooden raft onto the shore. When Gene and company were all present and accounted for, everyone cheered and used mental strength to command the dark creatures, rushing towards Balthazar City after the direction had been set.

After walking for two days straight, the crew finally arrived at Balthazar city. They first found a large hotel and immediately began to shower and change, feasting on delicacies to their heart's content, and retiring happily for the night.

Han Shuo's treatment was now vastly different from what it had been when they'd first headed into the Dark Forest. He naturally enjoyed the most noble treatment, and shared his room with no one. Everyone had even undertaken the task of moving the resources to the hotel's specialized vault with their own hands. No one dared to let Han Shuo do it.

The next day, early in the morning.

Dondondon. Fanny lived next to Han Shou and he knocked on her door as soon as he'd gotten up.

"Who is it?" Fanny's lazy voice sounded from within the room.

"It's me." Han Shuo responded.

"Oh, wait a minute. I'll open the door for you after I've finished washing up."

Fanny opened her door after a while, wearing a thin, white, silk robe. The long, soft robe thoroughly accentuated her slender and well-endowed body. Her hair was messy and she lazily flicked a glance at Han Shuo, moving aside to let him in. She asked, "What are you doing here so early in the morning?"

Greedy staring his fill at Fanny, Han Shuo automatically sat at the round table after closing the door. He smiled and said, "Master Fanny, I

was thinking last night that the loot we hold is still too conspicuous in our hands. I wanted to come discuss with you how to dispose of it.”

“Mm. It’d also be a good thing if we disposed of these resources sooner. We’re not merchants and can’t very well bring these items back to the school with us, but these items come from the town of Drol. If we’re discovered by others, not only will we not receive any gold coins, but we may be in trouble as well. What should we do?” Fanny’s beautiful brows were creased faintly as she spoke after thinking for a while.

“If we had a space ring, we’d be able to resolve this problem. Master Fanny, although space rings are precious, there’s still got to be a price for them. How much would a regular, smaller space ring cost?”

“Typically only space archmages have the ability to refine a space ring. The materials needed to refine a space ring are also quite precious, therefore, the prices for space rings are all quite high. Even a space ring that is of a slightly inferior quality will run for at least one or two thousand gold coins. It isn’t something that just anyone can afford, so you’d best not think these random thoughts.”

“Master Fanny, as an adept mage, most of your necromancy students are from noble families, so how come you don’t have even a space ring?”

“Heh heh, although I’m an adept mage, I rarely leave the Academy under normal circumstances. My income every year is only a few hundred gold coins, so where would I have the spare change to purchase a space ring? The necromancy major is the weakest major. If these students all came from large noble families, then they wouldn’t join the necromancy major. Besides, they haven’t graduated yet, why would their families buy a space ring for them!”

Han Shuo nodded and basically understood the gist of things after Fanny’s explanation. It looked like the necromancy students and teachers were all paupers. No wonder they were all so excited when faced with this batch of resources.

“So that’s the case, a space ring costs one or two thousand gold coins. Heh heh, looks like I should get a space ring first.” Han Shuo thought



about the two thousand gold coins saved in his crystal card, rubbed his chin for a while as he mused, then spoke as if deep in thought.

Rolling her eyes at Han Shuo, Fanny was out of sorts. “What gold coins would you have as an errand slave? If you had that much money, would you have been sold and become an errand slave for the necromancy major for six years?”

Chuckling, Han Shuo said, “Times have changed, who says I’ll be poor forever? Don’t worry, I have my ways to get a space ring.”

When he had finished saying these words, Han Shuo surreptitiously looked to the left and right under Fanny’s astonished eyes and took out an agate necklace studded with a ruby. The necklace sparkled with a faint, red hue and the ruby was glittering and translucent, an obviously valuable gemstone.

“Master Fanny, this is for you!” Han Shuo saw that Fanny was staring at the necklace in his hands, entranced. He laughed lowly and gave the necklace to Fanny.

At first, she was abruptly joyful, and then blushed hotly. When she’d recovered herself, she hastily shrank back and said, “I, I can’t accept it. Right, where did you get this?”

“From the orc wolf rider’s bags of course. I have sharp eyes and nimble fingers and saw that a bag was sparkling with red light, and thus discovered this agate and ruby necklace. I thought that since Master Fanny is such a beautiful person, if you were to wear this necklace, it would be sure to display you in an even more charming and alluring light. So I put it away to give specifically to you.” Han Shou’s expression was quite normal as he spoke lightly.

“This item is too precious, I can’t have it, you keep it for yourself!” Fanny’s beautiful face was flushed red as her beautiful eyes stared closely at the necklace, but her mouth stammered words of refusal. It looks like that although she greatly liked it, she hadn’t fully lost her reason.

“Take it, I have no use for it as a man. Besides, you’ve taken care of me all these years, and I’ve been very thankful to you all along. I finally have

the chance to repay you, I'd be very sad if you rejected it." Han Shuo was quite serious as his normal, silly, honest look had disappeared. He spoke quite resolutely.

"I really can't, you already saved me last time and you've helped me a great deal along the way. How could I accept your things. Ooh, although last time in the pool, you..." Fanny rambled a bit as she seemed to remember Han Shuo's mischief at the pool. Her face flushed a delicate and charming scarlet as she flung an eyeroll at Han Shuo.

Her beautiful figure almost lured Han Shuo's soul away. His thoughts racing, Han Shuo hastily stood up with a strong sense of righteousness. He smiled, "You must accept this or I will always feel ashamed and uneasy. I have other matters to attend to, good day."

Han Shuo didn't wait for Fanny to deny him again after he'd spoken, and directly pulled open the door to leave. His footsteps gradually faded away into the distance.

Fanny was panicking in her heart as her eyes landed on the agate and ruby necklace. Her expression was indescribably odd. Her eyes would be resolute one second, and tender the next. Then her face would flush angrily as another, complex emotion continuously played out on her face.

# Chapter 60: We also have a space ring

“This, this space ring... where did you get it?” Fanny looked askance at Han Shuo and asked in shock.

“I bought it.” Han Shuo responded faintly and glanced at the necromancy students, whose eyes were green, full of jealousy and admiration. He added, “I bought it for 1,800 gold coins in the city’s magical items shop. This space ring can hold up to a small room’s worth of items.

“Of course I knew that you bought it, but I’m asking how you came about 1,800 gold coins?” Fanny’s astounded expression remained as she glared fiercely at Han Shuo in question.

Apart from Fanny, all the other teachers and students of the necromancy major were also present. All of their minds short circuited as they couldn’t quite comprehend why Han Shuo suddenly had so much money.

“Did, did you sell all the spoils that we looted?” Bella blanked for a moment, suddenly remembered something and exclaimed softly. She hastily went through the battle loot that they had stored in the room.

Snorting coldly, Han Shuo flung a disdainful look at Bella, mocking her, “Then you need to take a good look to see if I’ve filled my own pocket with public funds. Huh. All 13 bags are still here, untouched. Do you have eyes or not?”

“Then where did your gold coins come from?” Gene was also looking oddly at Han Shuo, his eyes roving greedily over the space ring on the index finger of Han Shuo’s left hand, thinking I’m a necromancy teacher and I can’t afford a space ring. Is there any logic left in this world if you, an errand slave, has one before even me?

“That’s not the point, I have a space ring now, so take inventory of all the items in the bags and I’ll put them away. When we get back to the Academy, I’ll be in charge of selling it and then we’ll distribute the gold coins after we get them.” Han Shuo smiled a deep and mysterious smile and said faintly to Gene.

“Master Fanny? What is your opinion?” Gene paused, turned his head to look at Fanny, and asked her opinion.

“Mm, let’s do it this way then. Bryan’s accomplishments have been the greatest in us being able to grab these items. Since he has a way to dispose of them, let’s do it according to what he’s said. After we receive the gold coins, Bryan gets 40% and we can split the rest evenly.” Fanny mused for a moment and proposed with a creased brow.

“Why is it that he gets 40%? We also put our effort forth too?” Bach immediately raised faint dissent upon hearing Fanny’s words.

“Indeed indeed, he’s just an errand boy, so he shouldn’t receive so many gold coins.” Bella had finished counting inventory and hastened to assent.

Scratching his head, Han Shuo wore an honest smile as he raked his gaze over the two. He chuckled, “Then your meaning is...?”

Bach and Bella had met many troubles at Han Shuo’s hands during this entire expedition and had long since understood that Han Shuo’s dumb, honest exterior was just a facade. His methods against enemies were brutal and cruel, and Bach and Bella had long since witnessed them. Seeing the honest expression appear on his face again, the two of them felt their scalps go numb and stammered, not daring to say much.

“Alright alright, Bryan don’t scare them. Then it’s decided. If it weren’t for Bryan, you guys wouldn’t even be alive at this point. Besides, we were the ones who gained these resources, you guys all went to chase after the orc wolf riders and didn’t do anything. You’re the ones with the least right to speak.” Fanny rolled her eyes at Han Shuo first, then placed her hands on her waist and lectured Bach and Bella with an arrogant air.

“Since this is the case, I’ll store these items into the space ring first. We’ll hire horses to directly head towards Zajoski City. I’ve asked around and the orc wolf riders seemed to have left after ravaging and pillaging all the nearby villages. I think we shouldn’t run into any further danger.” Han Shuo swept his gaze at the assembled and spoke lazily.

When Han Shuo saw that Fanny, Gene and the others had all nodded in agreement, he released a tendril of mental strength and activated the

space ring. With Han Shuo using his two hands afterwards, the thirteen bags all disappeared one by one into thin air. The blue space ring on his left hand flashed with blue light thirteen times.

Under the admiring and envious gazes of the necromancy students and teachers, Han Shuo stored the battle loot into the space ring. He discovered that after storing thirteen bags, the low-level space ring was already at max capacity and could no longer store anything else.

The group of people took out more gold coins afterwards, rented a few battlesteeds, and left Balthazar City. They made it back to Zajoski City in the span of two days.

Using the transportation matrix in Zajoski City, everyone returned to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force in the city of Ossen. Gazing upon the familiar buildings in the academic surroundings, a joyous feeling of being reborn again arose in the hearts of the necromancy teachers and students as they'd been delivered from great danger.

“Bryan, you no longer have to deal with the errand duties of the necromancy major anymore. I’m going to have a talk with the school authorities right now to dispel your status as an errand boy and a slave, allowing you to become a true necromancy magic apprentice.” Fanny spoke to Han Shuo after she’d gotten over her elation of returning to the Academy.

Han Shuo’s heart also gave an ecstatic lurch upon hearing Fanny’s guarantee and a faint smile made its way onto his face. After the trials of the Dark Forest, Han Shuo’s entire being had undergone a significant change. He had a deep appreciation for the fact that his errand boy and slave status would directly impact his actions in the future. Now that he could not only dispel both of these statuses, but truly become a student, he was naturally elated.

“Understood Master Fanny, I will dispose of the resources within the space ring. I’ll come back here to find you after I resolve all of these matters.” He smiled at Fanny and then thought for a moment, fishing out three gold coins from his pocket and giving them to Lisa. “If you see Jack,

please give him these gold coins for me.”

Lisa looked oddly at Han Shuo, put away the gold coins and said, “Looks like you’re pretty good to that little fatty. I really wonder how you got so much money all of a sudden. Three gold coins are enough for Jack’s family expenses for a year. You’re quite generous.”

No matter if it was the Bryan from before or the current Han Shuo, they’d always been on good terms with little fatty Jack. Now that Han Shuo had money, the first target of his charity would be Jack. The three gold coins weren’t much to Han Shuo now, but would undoubtedly be a huge sum for Jack. This would also count as repayment for Jack’s help during these days.

After leaving the Academy, Han Shuo took out the card that Fabian had given to him and hired a carriage to travel to the southern part of Ossen, heading towards the address on the card.

“Boozt Merchant Guild.” The carriage traveled for quite a while before stopping. The groom’s voice sounded from outside.

Walking down from the carriage, Han Shuo handed over two silver coins and sent the groom on his way. He then took in the Boozt Merchant Guild. Two warriors, wielding long spears, stood on either side of the dark, black metal doors. A row of houses towered in the distance, and it was apparent from the presentation that wealthy people lived inside.

“Kid, what are you doing sneaking around here?” One of the guards, in front of the doors, called out a bit impatiently when he saw Han Shuo looking around randomly.

“This is the Boozt Merchant Guild right? I’m here to call upon Mr. Fabian.” Han Shuo blanked, swept his gaze over the guards, and responded faintly.

“Fabian? Haven’t heard of him. Does such a person exist within our merchant guild?” The guard had a stony face as he asked the other guard.

“I think so, and he seems to work for the young miss. He’d just returned from the Dark Forest a few days ago and made quite a large haul.” The

other guard responded. Pausing, the first guard looked suspiciously at Han Shuo and weighed him from head to toe, with a few hints of contempt appearing in his eyes. He asked arrogantly, “And what business do you have with him?”

“I’m here to talk business.” Because his status as an errand slave had yet to be lifted and the fact that they had hurried without stopping to return to the Academy, the errand boy uniform, that Han Shuo was wearing, was tattered and in pieces. It was obvious that he was being looked down upon.

“Business, haha. That’s funny. Do the likes of you look like you’re here to do business? Our Boozt Merchant Guild is a famous guild in the Empire. I think you must be in the wrong place.” The guard laughed loudly and jeered.

Just as Han Shuo was about to become angry, an ornate carriage suddenly stopped in front of the guild doors. After two tall, bulky warriors dismounted, a young beauty stepped out from the horse carriage.

The girl was tall and slender with a head of brown hair, wearing a dress embedded with diamond fragments. She looked classically elegant and gorgeous, but a faint trace of aloofness was on her stunning face. She had the naturally proud demeanor of someone born to a higher station in life.

“What is the matter?” The girl stared coldly at the guards after she’d gotten out, speaking with a cool voice that was pleasing to the ear.

“Young miss, he says he wishes to see Master Fabian. I felt that he was suspicious because he was looking around surreptitiously and is also wearing tattered, cheap clothing. I was questioning him.” One of the guards bowed politely and explained.

“You know Fabian?” This stunning girl creased her brow and flung a glance at Han Shuo, asking distantly.

Han Shuo’s eyes had been boldly roving over the beautiful girl’s body when he abruptly came to himself after he heard the question. He immediately nodded, “Yes, I conducted a deal with Mr. Fabian in the Dark Forest. My name is Bryan and I’m sure Mr. Fabian will remember me.”

“Bryan... Bryan. I think I’ve heard Fabian mention you. Since this is the case, why don’t you come in with me?” She didn’t look at Han Shuo again after she finished speaking and just walked inside.

Han Shuo glared fiercely at the two guards at the doors and said in a low voice, “Idiots with no eyes!” He then laughed and swiftly walked inside.



# Chapter 61: Embroiling innocent bystanders in trouble

There was water flowing through an artificial mountain in the Boozt Merchant Guild and the environment was classically elegant and luxurious. A hallway, paved with oval stones, ran through the entire building. Guards wielding longswords and javelins would walk by periodically. It would seem that the defense of this merchant guild was quite serious.

While he had been in Balthazar, Han Shuo had sought information about the Boozt Merchant Guild. He understood that this Guild specialized in trade. To put it simply, the Boozt Merchant Guild leveraged the footholds they had in all the merchant guilds in the Empire to purchase resources and materials from all over the empire and then resold them to places in need, earning their profits from the price margins.

This load of weapons and medicines from Drol would definitely be disposed appropriately if handed over to the Boozt Merchant Guild. This was why Han Shuo had come in search of Fabian. Therefore, he was absolutely looking for the right person.

After traversing three hallways and walking for a few minutes, just as Han Shuo was reflecting that this Boozt Merchant Guild was quite large, the young miss of the Guild stopped outside a loft.

“Farmer, go get Fabian. Giles, you stand guard at the door. Mm. You’re called Bryan right? Come with me.” The girl looked around a bit when standing before the door to the loft and then issued orders to the two strong warriors behind her.

Han Shuo didn’t chatter idly and followed the girl inside after nodding. Soft carpet met his feet and priceless drawing scrolls lined the walls. The room was decorated in an opulent and grand way with a vast chamber inside. A round table was placed in the center, and several chairs were placed around the table.

The girl found a chair and sat down, then creased her brow without saying a word, as if contemplating something. Several strands of brown hair landed on her translucently white, clean forehead, setting off her fiercely furrowed brow and beautiful cheeks. She had lost a few traces of the aloof arrogance she'd held earlier and gained a few hints of melancholy.

She didn't play host to Han Shuo and he wasn't shy about things either. He spun a chair around and sat down, taking in the room's decorations, as if nothing was out of the ordinary, sneaking a few glances at her every now and then.

After a short while, that fatty Fabian came walking in with a fawning smile on his face. When he'd shut the room door, he quickly strode in and bowed in greeting to the girl. "It's so wonderful that Miss Phoebe has returned safely!"

"Mm. This person has come to find you and says that he wants to do business with you. I also have to discuss a few things with you and so I brought him directly here." Phoebe nodded her head and said to Fabian.

"Heh heh, so it's Bryan. It was thanks to you that I was able to escape from the evil hands of those forest trolls last time in the Dark Forest. I thought I would never see you again. Who would've thought that you'd come find me a few days after I'd returned to the Empire. What kind of business would you like to do this time?" Fabian had plastered on a professional smile and asked Han Shuo enthusiastically.

"I have a load of resources with slightly murky origins. I was wondering if you'd be willing to purchase them off me?" Han Shuo hadn't planned to say much with Phoebe sitting there, but then he thought for a moment and noticed that even Fabian seemed to follow Phoebe's orders. It looked like there was nothing to hide and so he spoke candidly.

"Heh heh, this is definitely not a problem. Anything dirty that makes its way to our Guild will become clean. Don't worry!" Fabian turned his head to look at Phoebe in the distance and only responded with a sudden smile after he saw Phoebe nod slightly.

Since that was the case, Han Shuo had no further need to conceal things and released a tendril of mental strength, withdrawing the thirteen bags from the space ring. He spoke after placing them in the room. “These are the items. Come have a look and see how much it’s worth.”

Originally sitting there with cold aloofness, Phoebe’s eyes swept a sharp gaze in their direction as Han Shuo took the items out one by one. She suddenly said, “These items come from the town of Drol, don’t they? Judging from the bags holding the items, they should be the tools in which the orc wolf riders use in raiding. Have you seized all of these from the hands of the orc wolf riders?”

Looking at Phoebe in surprise, Han Shuo thought privately that this girl’s eyes were sharp indeed. She had guessed the particulars of the situation with just one glance. No wonder she was the young miss of the Boozt Merchant Guild. Nodding his head, Han Shuo didn’t conceal this information either. He smiled lightly and said, “Correct. I’ve seized these items from the hands of the orc wolf riders.”

Phoebe had been wholly uninterested in Han Shuo prior to this, but her eyes lit up as soon as he’d finished speaking and she stared intently at him, sizing him up. She then opened her mouth and asked in astonishment, “You mean to say that you were the one who seized all these items from the hands of the orc wolf riders?”

“Young miss, Bryan is a very strong mage swordsman. He was the one who singlehandedly scared off all the forest trolls who had encircled me and were attacking me.” Fabian hastened to explain to Phoebe upon seeing that she seemed to doubt Han Shuo’s strength.

Phoebe was even more surprised with Fabian’s words, and her sharp eyes patrolled over Han Shuo’s body. Even Han Shuo felt his heart tighten in worry when she looked at him like that, like some of his secrets would be picked up on.

Coughing lightly, Han Shuo laughed dryly. “I wasn’t the only one who seized items from the orc wolf riders, but I’m in charge of them now. I think you guys should know to take inventory and then give me a fair

price, so we can quickly conclude this matter.”

“Alright, Fabian take inventory of these items.” Phoebe nodded and looked at Han Shuo strangely. She didn’t seem to anticipate that Han Shuo would honestly admit that he hadn’t seized these items himself.

An exceedingly soft sound suddenly made its way into Han Shuo’s ears at this moment, like that of a longsword slowly being drawn from its sheath. Han Shuo’s heart leapt as his expression changed slightly. He raised his head to look at the dim roof and said with a cold face, “Who’s on the roof?”

Phoebe and Fabian’s face immediately changed drastically with his words, but three crossbow bolts had already flown towards the three of them with an ear-piercing hiss before the former had a chance to react.

Han Shuo had originally been enraged because he’d thought that Fabian and Phoebe wanted to kill and rob him, but when he saw that the three crossbow bolts were shooting towards each of the three of them, that was when he realized that that couldn’t be the truth.

The ear-piercing sound at which the three crossbow bolts were slicing through the air with indicated how shockingly high the force and speed behind these bolts were. They were obviously fired by experienced experts. Han Shuo’s facial expression was uncommonly calm at such a crucial moment like this. He leaned backwards and swiftly dodged the bolt aimed at him. His right hand had already drawn out his dagger as he chopped at the other bolt, which had been aimed at Fabian.

The bolt, that had been aimed at Fabian, broke apart with a sharp crack as Han Shuo’s right hand became abruptly numb under the extreme force of impact. His entire right arm twinged with pain. This allowed Han Shuo to understand that the force behind this crossbow bolt was incomparably fierce and vicious. If an ordinary person had been holding the dagger during the impact, his whole right arm would have probably been shattered to bits.

Don.

Phoebe suddenly fled in Han Shuo’s direction with a face full of panic

and fright. The chair she had been sitting on had already been pierced through by the crossbow bolt. The bolt had cleaved through the chair and was directly nailed onto the carpet. There was an even more durable floor beneath the carpet, so it was clear to see just how frighteningly strong this bolt's force was.

“Assassins! There are assassins!” Fabian screamed shrilly in this moment and shoved Han Shuo hard in Phoebe's direction. He called out urgently. “Bryan, hurry and protect the young miss. As long as you can save our miss, I will pay you an additional five hundred gold coins. Please!”

It looked like Fabian knew that Han Shuo wasn't the type to play hero and save a damsel in distress. His first thought was to use gold coins to buy off Han Shuo in this critical moment.

Just as Fabian's shrill scream rang out, three sharp cracks sounded from the roof as three inky-black figures suddenly materialized and three longswords, sparking with dark green light, had started cleaving down at Phoebe and Han Shuo. That bone-deep chill made Han Shuo feel awful, like his flesh had been abraded by the blades of the swords.

Dark green fighting aura, this meant that the attackers consisted of three senior knights!

Han Shuo understood that with his strength, it would be difficult to fight one senior knight face to face. Facing off against three senior knights would likely lead to death. The purpose of the three people were obviously to kill everyone in the room. Even if he threw up his hands and retreated now, he would be hard pressed to escape such a fate. The only way out was to delay things until reinforcements arrived.

His magical yuan churning speedily, Han Shuo's body suddenly moved. Phoebe had already moved to front of him at this time. Han Shuo reached out his hand and grabbed her right hand, pulling her into his embrace. He held Phoebe's body and suddenly fell to the ground, abruptly rolling beneath the round table in the chamber.

Pilipala sounded violently from the top of the round table. The sturdy, round table broke apart into pieces over Han Shuo's head. Three sharp

blades shot directly at Han Shuo and Phoebe after demolishing the round table.

At this moment, Han Shuo's necromancy incantation was already complete and the bone dagger wielding little skeleton also materialized out of thin air. It rushed directly towards the first assassin. Beneath the table, Han Shuo lifted his left hand and the crossbow bolt hid in his sleeve shot abruptly at another assassin.

# Chapter 62: I like this big trouble

Of the three longswords that had been about to stab into Han Shuo, one of them split off to handle Han Shuo's small skeleton. Another changed direction midway to ward off Han Shuo's crossbow bolt, and the remaining one pierced towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo pushed out with the hands wrapped around Phoebe and sent Phoebe rolling in Fabian's direction. His right hand clasped tightly around the dagger's handle, Han Shuo suddenly rushed out from behind the shattered round table. His magical yuan flowed onto the dagger and drew a pale purple arc in thin air, aiming for the longsword that was rushing at him.

A metallic sound rang out along with a dull grunt from Han Shuo. His dagger-wielding right hand went numb again, and the forward momentum of his body was halted. He fell involuntarily down beneath the table as the assassin's body also shuddered and fell onto the shattered table.

He had been wielding a sword with his right hand, but the collision just now seemed to have frozen his hand through usage of the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" from Han Shuo's dagger. His longsword suddenly swapped to his left hand and his ice-cold eyes swept over Han Shuo. The longsword stabbed forward again and a wave of wild fighting aura flowed into Han Shuo's body through his chest taking advantage when he was off balance.

The bone-piercing pain immediately spread throughout Han Shuo's entire body. When the dark green fighting aura surged into Han Shuo's chest, the magical yuan churned furiously and broke it into thousands, tens of thousand of strands, deathly entangling that cloud of fighting aura, preventing the fighting aura from spreading to other areas.

Even so, Han Shuo still spurted out a mouthful of fresh blood and he fell down with unsteady steps. The assassin was now full of confidence upon seeing that Han Shuo had been filled with fighting aura from his sword. He didn't bother with another glance at Han Shuo after seeing he'd been

hit, and directly turned his back to deal with Phoebe and Fabian, who were on the other side of the room.

Except, there was no way that he could have realized how durable and strong Han Shuo's body was after countless reforging from magic. Add to that the wondrous effects of the magical yuan, what was originally a definitely fatal blow couldn't take Han Shuo's life at all.

In the moment that he'd turned and was about to leave, Han Shuo suddenly sprang up from where he'd fallen on the floor like a ghost. A tendril of frosty light emanated from the dagger in his right hand, abruptly stabbing towards the assassin's back.

The assassins were senior knights alright. He hadn't lost his sense of vigilance, even in such a critical moment. He turned his body in that critical, crucial moment and the longsword in his left hand once again sent out dark green fighting aura, blocking Han Shuo's stabbing dagger with a clang.

Except, he'd defended against Han Shuo's dagger, but not Han Shuo's sniper shot. The crossbow bolt in his left sleeve shot out and fiercely pierced through the assassin's remote, merciless left eye. As he wailed out in agony and reached out his hand to cover his left eye, the dagger in Han Shuo's hand moved and a line of blood floated out from the assassin's neck. He fell listlessly, but solidly to the ground.

At this moment, Han Shuo's left hand wiped away the fresh blood that was leaking from the corners of his mouth and tightened his grip on the dagger, calmly taking in his surroundings.

The little skeleton wielding the bone dagger had actually started fighting one of the assassins. After countless refinements by magical yuan, the little skeleton was so strong that it was almost a bit perverse. The speed of its evasions and dancing bone dagger was extraordinarily high.

Even when its body had been hit, the inky black skeleton only wavered slightly. The little skeleton would regain its footing whenever it stumbled backwards and came forward with another attack, making the assassin at his wit's end.



On the other side, the assassin, who had broken the crossbow bolt that Han Shuo had shot towards him, had already dashed at Phoebe. Fabian was stricken with panic and fear and hollered frantically, “Be careful young miss, Bryan help!”

Han Shuo started and with one glance, knew that it was too late to save Phoebe. He sighed lowly and was about to command the little skeleton and find a chance to slip out when something outside his expectations happened.

Phoebe’s eyes, in her panic stricken face, were calm and aloof. When the dark green light from the assassin’s sword came crashing down on her, when, unbeknownst to anyone, a thin, long dagger suddenly appeared in her hands. A milky white aura suddenly flared out from the dagger in Phoebe’s hands like a blossoming lotus flower. A milky-white fighting aura interwove with dazzling sword light, thoroughly swallowing up the assassin.

“Ah ——” A desolate wail sounded. When the dazzling, milky-white sword light faded away, it was as if the assassin had been pierced by a thousand sharp weapons. His entire body was pockmarked and blood flowed out from a hundred holes.

Not only was Han Shuo astounded, but even Fabian and the last assassin facing off with the little skeleton was also dumbfounded.

It was no big deal if Han Shuo and Fabian were shocked, but when a break in the assassin’s concentration appeared, his left arm was directly hacked off by the little skeleton. He cried out in agony, and Phoebe suddenly threw out the dagger in her hand when he was about to escape. The dagger sank into the assassin’s waist and the last screaming assassin abruptly made no sound, falling solidly to the floor.

“Young... young miss, you... you’re a swordswoman?” Fabian’s mouth had fallen open greatly, tongue tied as he pointed at the coldly aloof Phoebe. He stammered out his question.

Swordsmen were also similarly divided as knights: Swordsman apprentice (pale-blue fighting aura), swordsman-at-arms (dark blue

fighting aura), journeyman swordsman (pale-green fighting aura), senior swordsman (dark green fighting aura), swordmaster (white fighting aura), great swordmaster (silver fighting aura), and divine swordmaster (gold fighting aura).

Han Shuo also hadn't thought that Phoebe had always been concealing her strength. It looked like Fabian didn't know either. Phoebe was actually a swordswoman at an even higher level than that of a senior knights. With her strength as a swordswoman at her age, it would shock many if news of this was leaked.

"Looks like I went to unnecessary effort!" Han Shuo laughed faintly as he chanted an incantation. The little skeleton, wielding a bone dagger standing there blankly, suddenly vanished without a trace.

"No, without your help, I wouldn't have been able to kill all the assassins from 'Shadow Ghost' by myself. I would have been able to defend against them, but I wouldn't have been able to prevent their escape. Therefore, your aid was great help to me. I'm very grateful to you!" Phoebe glanced at Han Shuo and spoke seriously.

Phoebe's brow furrowed as she mused deeply after a moment, suddenly looking oddly at Han Shuo. She asked, "Mister Bryan, why didn't I feel any fighting aura from your body when you made a move just now? And if I didn't see incorrectly, you've also trained in necromancy. Except, I've never known that a skeletal warrior could have the same battle capabilities as a senior knight. Mister Bryan is truly an amazing person!"

What a sharp woman. Han Shuo flung a glance at Phoebe and said with an enigmatic tone, "Miss Phoebe has the strength of a swordmaster at such a young age. The truly amazing person here is you. Compared to yourself, I'm just a misfit."

"You're too humble." Phoebe responded to Han Shuo and didn't ask further. Turning to look at the still shocked and bewildered Fabian, she said softly. "Fabian, take inventory of the items he's brought us. Bryan's saved us this time, so we must give him a good price."

A serious expression appeared on the previously dumbfounded Fabian's

face after he heard Phoebe's words. He looked oddly at Phoebe and then at Han Shuo, finally lowering his head to count the items on the ground.

"Niece Phoebe, my niece Phoebe, are you alright? What's wrong?" A loud exclamation came from afar at this moment, coming closer with the sound of hurrying footsteps.

Phoebe's usually aloof face suddenly displayed an expression of hate and disgust. It reverted back to normal in a second, with even the faint trace of a smile on her face. She said harmoniously, "Uncle Grover, I'm fine, thank you for your concern."

A band of five guards broke down the door with a sinister-looking, thin old man in the front. He was wearing luxurious clothes, first swept a look around the room, assessing the situation, before displaying an anxious expression. "I've just heard your cries for help and saw from afar that the two warriors in front of your door were on the ground. I came as fast as I could. It's good that nothing has happened to you, it must've been your dead father who protected you."

"I've caused you to be concerned Uncle. However, it wasn't my dead father who protected me, but that this noble warrior who saved your niece's life. Otherwise, your niece's life would have long since been taken by these killers." Phoebe displayed an expression still lingering in fear as she pointed to Han Shuo in her explanation.

Han Shuo watched Phoebe and Grover's conversation with a cold eye and closely observed everything. He'd formed a slight understanding in his heart. He'd also clearly seen the hate and disgust on Phoebe's face earlier.

He'd discovered that when Grover had come in, his attention had been placed wholly on the three assassins in the chamber first. He'd only expressed his concerns to Phoebe after he'd assessed the situation. This already explained that relations between the two were not as harmonious as they appeared on the surface.

"Thank you warrior! I will be sure to reward you well!" Grover exclaimed, looking at Han Shuo upon hearing Phoebe's words. His eyes continuously raked over Han Shuo's body, seeming to want to completely size him up.

“Uncle, thank you for your good intentions, but Phoebe would like to personally thank him for saving my life. I’m fine now, Uncle is always overworked and overtired for the sake of the Merchant Guild everyday. You should go back and rest earlier!” Phoebe spoke seriously and bowed as she spoke to Grover.

“Alright, alright. As long as you’re alright. I’ve been investigating the origins of the killers for you lately. Be at peace good niece. When I find out who’s behind all this, I won’t let him off so easily. Mm, you must be even more careful in the future. I’ll be heading back now.” Grover put on a hypocritical show of affection and turned, leading his men out the door. When he reached the door, he suddenly turned and looked at Han Shuo. “Brave fellow, what’s your name?”

“Bryan!” Han Shuo bowed slightly and smiled urbanely as he answered.

Nodding, Grover said, “Bryan, mm. Good name, good name. I’ll remember you!”

Grover finally left the room after saying this.

“I think I’ve gotten myself into big trouble thanks to your purposeful actions. Miss Phoebe, how do you intend on compensating me?” The faint smile on Han Shuo’s face withered away when Grover left, and he stared coldly at Phoebe.

“Apart from the money for these resources, I will pay you three thousand gold extra. Three thousand gold is enough to buy quite a few lives, what do you say?” Phoebe laughed faintly, speaking softly as a wise and farsighted light shone in her eyes.

Han Shuo’s heart shuddered as his face became adorned with a smile once more. He spoke in satisfaction, “I like this big trouble!”

## Chapter 63: Snobbish base person

Han Shuo knew in his heart what three thousand gold coins meant. This was indeed enough to buy a lot of lives. Even when he understood that he had been inexplicably embroiled into a sticky situation, his original anger was instantaneously crushed by gold coins when Phoebe mentioned the astronomical price of three thousand gold coins.

“Don’t be happy too early. At this point, I think you can probably guess what’s going on without further words from me. The person who’s purchased murder and wants ‘Shadow Ghost’ to kill me is my ‘dear and beloved’ Uncle Grover.

My uncle has wealth that speaks louder than others. There are many skilled talents by his side who can make you die unknowingly. Besides, after the events of today, my uncle is sure to tell ‘Shadow Ghost’ that you were the one who killed the three assassins. ‘Shadow Ghost’ is a killer organization that is renowned for seeking revenge for the smallest grievances. I think you’ll have many troubles ahead of you.” Upon seeing Han Shuo’s satisfied smile, Phoebe thought for a moment and felt that she had to speak up and warn Han Shuo.

“Heh heh, this has nothing to do with me. When I leave the Boozt Merchant Guild, I’ll hide myself well. Whether it’s ‘Shadow Ghost’ or your uncle, none of them will be able to find me. It won’t be that easy for them to kill me.”

Han Shuo had already thought of these matters when he accepted this matter. After he left the Boozt Merchant Guild, he would immediately conceal traces of his movement. After he’d given the gold coins to Fanny, he’d directly asked for some time off and made use of the transportation matrix hidden within the space ring to train at the cemetery of death for some time. He’d be able to avoid Phoebe’s troubles in this way.

“I see, I’m at ease then since you’ve made plans already. I’ve pushed everything onto you because I didn’t wish to reveal my strength too early. Otherwise when ‘Shadow Ghost’ sends even stronger assassins, I would be

hard pressed to handle them even with my strength as a swordmaster.”

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, “I understand. Since you’ve already paid gold coins for me to be your scapegoat, then I, naturally, have nothing to say. I have absolutely no interest in the internal affairs of your Boozt Merchant Guild. If there’s nothing else, can you take inventory of my items? I’ll leave after receiving the gold coins.”

“Alright, Fabian, take out the items in his bags and look them over.”

Fabian had calmed down by now and upon hearing Phoebe’s words, immediately walked towards Han Shuo’s thirteen bags and took out the items within the bags one by one, counting them up. He finally said respectfully to Phoebe, “Miss, these items should be worth about four thousand gold.”

“Plus the three thousand gold I promised you, that makes seven thousand gold in total. Are you satisfied?” Phoebe looked at Han Shuo remotely and asked.

“No problem, I think we will still have many opportunities to work together in the future. Except, this Boozt Merchant Guild doesn’t seem to be too safe. Can we switch to a different location next time we do business?”

Phoebe’s black eyebrows creased in a pleasing manner upon hearing Han Shuo’s words. She nodded afterwards, saying, “That old thing’s confidantes are arranged all throughout the Guild, I haven’t dared to live here for extended periods of time. The old thing has dared to start something within the Guild this time, this means he’s becoming emboldened, secure in the knowledge that he has a strong backing. It looks like he must’ve bribed the others within the Guild.

Fabian, find me a new place to live. We move out today. I can no longer live within the Guild. I will communicate as quickly as possible with the other founding members of the Guild. As long as I prove my abilities to do business and obtain the support of the other founding members, we can then harry that old thing off the stage.”

“No worries miss, I’ve thought of this already. I’ve already found a new

place for you to live before you returned today. The new residence is on the north street, next to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Many of the Empire's nobles and aristocrats live there. I think even if the 'Shadow Ghost' wanted to run rampant, they would have to think twice before committing any atrocities there."

"Very good, we move out today then. When that old thing is out of the picture, I will be sure to treat you well!" Phoebe nodded with satisfaction and smiled at Fabian.

"It's my honor to serve you miss!" Fabian shed tears of joy and gratitude as he bowed, and took out a card and gave it to Han Shuo afterwards. "This is our new address, you can come find me if you have any further business. You've saved my life twice, so I will be sure to give you the fairest prices. Mm, give me the crystal card and I'll transfer the seven thousand gold into your account."

When Fabian had transferred the seven thousand gold into Han Shuo's crystal card and Han Shuo had verified that all was in order, he finally nodded in satisfaction and with a slight smile. "Since our business is concluded, I'll be on my way now. I'll be sure to find you if there's any more business to be conducted in the future. Farewell, to the both of you!"

"Be careful along the way and make sure you're not followed by anyone!" Phoebe bore her customary remote expression and suddenly passed on a reminder when Han Shuo was about to leave.

When Han Shuo had left the room, Phoebe finally said huffily in a low voice, "This snobbish base person, where is he from? He grabbed my hand and hugged me, but only thought about his gold. He didn't even apologize damnit!"

"Eh... Miss. You didn't mention this incident either and so I thought you didn't mind at all!" Fabian smiled with embarrassment upon seeing Phoebe's face change drastically with Han Shuo's departure.

"Hmph! I am a girl who's been educated in the courtesies and graces of nobility. How could I bring up this matter first? I feel that this fellow only has money in his sights. Not only did he not feel the least bit guilty, but he

seemed to think that I owed him something. What an incredibly wicked person.” Phoebe complained angrily and then took in a breath, asking Fabian with gritted teeth. “Right, this person is also quite odd, where does he come from?”

Shaking his head with a wry face, Fabian responded, “I don’t know that either, just that I happened to bump into him in the Dark Forest. I paid him two hundred gold coins to save me from the forest trolls. I gave him our Guild’s address after he conducted a business transaction with me for the items from the forest trolls. I really don’t know anything about him.”

“I see. Mm, notify me if he comes to find you in the future to conduct more business. I’ll personally transact with him.” Phoebe creased her brow and thought for a moment, clamping her teeth slightly and leaving these instructions with Fabian.

“Understood, miss!” Fabian agreed trustworthily.

After walking out from Phoebe’s, Han Shuo made ample preparations to handle Grover’s possible revenge at any time, but perhaps due to the sudden death of the three killers from “Shadow Ghost”, Grover hadn’t had time to make other plans and so not only did he not run into any motions of revenge along the way, but even the guards he had seen earlier had all vanished without a trace.

However, when Han Shuo walked out of the Boozt Merchant Guild’s front door, the two guards he’d cursed at before seemed to have been waiting for Han Shuo. When Han Shuo appeared, the two of them looked at each other and directly blocked the door. One of them looked at Han Shuo wrathfully and asked, “What did you say when you walked in just now?”

“I said the two of you are idiots with no eyes. What about it?” Since he knew that these two were on Grover’s side, it wouldn’t harm the relationship between him, Fabian, and Phoebe if he pummeled them. Han Shuo naturally unceremoniously cursed at them, confident in his knowledge that he had firm backing.

“Die!”



The two of them shouted angrily and came at Han Shuo directly, waving their fists.

Laughing coldly, Han Shuo's body suddenly dashed forward and arrived in front of them before their punches had landed. His left and right hands pressing down on their chests, the activation of the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire", and a faint cloud of magical air respectively tinged purple and red sank into their chests.

Giving way to a long laugh, Han Shuo had already taken great strides out before they'd had a chance to react, swiftly leaving the Mystical Glacial Spellfire. Although the two clouds of purple and red magical air wouldn't take their lives, it was enough for the two to be in agony for quite a while.

After leaving the Boozt Merchant Guild, Han Shuo's extraordinary senses allowed him to sense that there seemed to be someone following him. He raised his attention to the highest and weaved rapidly within large streets and small alleyways, constantly changing his directions and barrelling towards areas with a lot of people.

After quite a while, when Han Shuo felt that no one was following him, he found a random clothes shop and obtained a new set of clothes. He then hired a carriage and started out in the direction of the Academy.

# Chapter 64: A new identity

Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, necromancy major.

After the trials of the Dark Forest, the necromancy major had obtained rich rewards. The ability of the students to handle matters had also similarly increased. When Fanny talked with the school authorities and displayed the magical creature cores that the necromancy major had obtained, she immediately received high compliments from the school dean, Emma.

Emma was a woman who was around seventy years old and majored in space magic. She had long since advanced to the realm of archmage and had once accomplished distinguished achievements for the Empire. Her reputation was quite illustrious within the Empire and she was highly valued by the king.

Within the training fields of the necromancy major, Emma was wearing a loose-fitting black magic robe, gazing upon the necromancy students and teachers benevolently. She smiled faintly and said, “The necromancy major has had a very successful outing in the Dark Forest this time. It’s said that you have greatly helped the Empire by destroying so many of the orc’s wolf riders. Master Fanny, I hope you lead the necromancy major to another level and revive the glory days of yesteryear for necromancy magic. I’ve agreed to all your requests, and the children also need to work hard.”

“Thank you for your kind attention Dean Emma. I think after this time’s outing, the students of our necromancy major should have understood the importance of strength. I think they’ll be even more studious and industrious when studying magic in the future and become competent mages for the Empire, being able to contribute to the Empire earlier.” Fanny’s face was serious as she gravely promised Emma.

“Oh right Master Fanny, why isn’t the fellow that you’ve continuously complimented here? I’d love to meet this magical creature!” Emma looked at Fanny with a smile as she asked gently.

“Bryan is traveling on some business, I think the principal will surely have the chance to meet him in the near future. He is a mage with very high potential. I can guarantee that it won’t be long before Bryan will become a very strong mage of the necromancy major.”

Emma nodded her head in gratification and smiled, “I look forward to his growth and hope that you will all rally the necromancy major to its past glories.”

After she’d said those words, Emma’s body twisted like that of a reflection in water, giving others an exceedingly unrealistic feeling. White light flashed afterwards, upon which Emma vanished without a trace.

“As an archmage of space magic, Dean Emma has already grasped the true meaning of space magic and can directly transfer her body through short distances. Don’t be shocked everyone!” Gene hastened to explain after seeing the students emitted astonished gasps after seeing Emma suddenly vanish.

“Amazing magic indeed!” Han Shuo voice came from outside the training fields as he strode in shortly after his voice had sounded out.

“Eh, it’s Bryan. The dean wanted to see you just now... why didn’t you come back earlier?” Lisa immediately exclaimed softly after seeing Han Shuo appear.

“There will be plenty of chances later. I’ve already disposed of the resources from the orc wolf riders. I’ve sold them for a total of four thousand gold. I took one thousand, you guys can split the rest. Who has a crystal card?” Han Shuo didn’t waste time with idle chatter after he arrived and immediately opened his mouth to ask.

“Four thousand gold, oh my gosh. Those resources fetched such a high price! If I’d known they were so valuable, I wouldn’t have gone to chase the orcs that ran away!” Bach cried out in astoundment as he berated himself with a face full of regret.

Even Fanny and Gene had expressions of shock, not to mention Bach. They hadn’t seemed to anticipate that this batch of resources would be so valuable. Smiles crept across all the students’ faces when they heard there

were gold coins to be had and they all displayed expressions of joy.

“I have a crystal card. Here, take it.” Fanny directly gave her crystal card to Han Shuo after a moment of surprise.

Crystal cards could conduct transactions through the mental brand on the cards, in addition to the slot located on the card. It was exceedingly convenient. When Han Shuo received Fanny’s card, he realized that Fanny had already approved the transaction and transferred the three thousand gold coins from his card into Fanny’s card.

When Han Shuo returned Fanny’s crystal card to her, Fanny also gave a card to Han Shuo. “This is your new student ID. You’re no longer a slave or an errand boy from this day henceforth, but a magic apprentice in the necromancy major of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. You can borrow books from the library with this ID and practice necromancy magic in the training fields as well as officially attend classes in the necromancy major.

The tuition for this year is fifty gold coins, but I’ve already paid it for you. You can officially make use of all the resources of the necromancy major now. I’ve also arranged your new quarters. Bryan, I hope you can cherish this opportunity and thoroughly leverage your potential to foster and enhance your necromancy magic!”

Han Shuo felt heartfelt great pleasure after accepting the student ID from Fanny’s hands. He said to Fanny, “Many thanks to Master Fanny, I will try very hard in the future. I’d like to go borrow some books from the library now and will take my leave. Please disburse the rest of the gold coins to them.”

After leaving the training field, Han Shuo brought the student ID and travelled to the library. Little fatty Jack was currently organizing the books in the library, and immediately cried out with glee upon seeing Han Shuo appear. “Oh, goodness, Bryan you’re finally back. I almost can’t recognize you anymore. You’re taller and stronger than when you left, and even seem to have gotten more handsome.”

“Heh heh, hello Jack. Has Borg and the others bullied you during the

time while I was gone?” Han Shuo was also rather happy to see little fatty Jack. He dragged Jack to a corner and started questioning him.

“No, maybe because you taught them a lesson last time, they’re a lot more well behaved now.” Jack chuckled, paused and looked around. He lowered his voice and asked, “Bryan, did you really give Lisa three gold coins to pass on to me?”

Nodded, Han Shuo said with a smile, “Of course, I’m a student of the necromancy major starting from today onward. You didn’t believe me when I said I was going to learn magic before. Heh heh, this is my student ID, do you believe me now?”

“Oh my gosh, how did you do it? This is too incredible!” Jack held Han Shuo’s student ID and looked at it, emitting a cry of astonishment again.

“Alright alright, I’ll give you another fifty gold coins. Don’t stay here as an errand boy any longer, but you must absolutely be careful and don’t let anyone know you have so many gold coins on you. Otherwise, you’ll be in big trouble. These gold coins will help you live an easy life. If you run into any trouble in the future, you can come find me at the necromancy major. I’ll settle things for you.” Han Shuo took out another fifty gold coins from his space ring and shoved them into Jack’s pockets, speaking in a low voice.

“Fifty gold coins, fifty gold coins...” Jack sank into a momentary stupor as he listened to the gold coins clink in his pocket. He stood there dumbfounded, continuously muttering to himself, seeming to have forgotten even Han Shuo’s existence.

Fifty gold coins was such an enormous sum to Jack that he had never thought of it before. Han Shuo could absolutely understand his reaction.

He didn’t bother responding to him and left Jack with a slight smile. He came alone to the section where necromancy books were kept and selected “Beginner Magics of Necromancy”, registered it at the door, and left.

After leaving the library, Han Shuo returned to the warehouse, leaving after he stored the other two books in his space ring. Han Shuo planned

on using the transportation matrix within the space ring and headed directly to the cemetery of death for training. Therefore, whether it was the warehouse or the new dorms that Fanny had arranged for him, someone must know about either of them so it would definitely not be safe to set up the transportation matrix there.

After creasing his brow and thinking for a bit, Han Shuo directly headed to the mountains behind the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force and walked to the cemetery there. Not only was it quiet there, but people and beasts basically didn't come and go through here. Some of the tombs were even more secluded, and he wouldn't have to worry at all if he set up the transportation matrix there.

Arriving at the random tombs on the mountains in the backmost land of the Academy, Han Shuo searched for the most isolated tomb and even moved a large piece of rock to the tomb's entrance. He moved the large rock after he went inside, sealing off the tomb entrance.

After finishing these tasks, Han Shuo took out a candle from his space ring and lit it. He discovered that apart from being a bit damp, the tomb was still relatively clean. The various racks of broken bones on the ground was absolutely not sinister to Han Shuo training in necromancy magic, but he rather felt that they were familiar and warm.

Tidying up the inside slightly, Han Shuo thought carefully and finally summoned out the little skeleton. Using the dagger within the tomb, he cleared a new, small area within the tomb. This new area was in the blind spot of the tomb, and Han Shuo could only enter it when he turned to the side. Although the space inside was a bit bigger, it could only contain Han Shuo alone, similar to the closet of an ordinary room.

Observing everything carefully, Han Shuo finally took out the six magical sticks when he confirmed that this area was secure enough. He arranged them according to the diagram of the six pointed star, standing in the middle of the diagram and activating the matrix with his mental strength when all was done.

White light flashed by and Han Shuo opened his eyes to discover that

he'd already appeared within the Dark Forest, inside the large magical matrix in the center of the great hall within the mysterious cemetery of death.

“The mysterious cemetery of death is a country that belongs to me alone in the future!” Han Shuo gazed around his surroundings and muttered in satisfaction.

# Chapter 65: A quick way to train

In the vast expanse of the southern reaches of the Dark Forest, near the cemetery of death.

There was a raging waterfall that flowed down with grand, magnificent momentum into an expansive deep pool below. There was a bubbling stream that ran off the side of the pool and forked into three directions. The towering trees by the side of the pool were luxuriantly green and all sorts of bizarre and exotic large stones could be seen everywhere. Fish could be seen swimming in the clear, crystalline pool waters.

The silvery sheen of flowing water cascaded down like the Milky Way, concentrating in the pool below and emitting loud roars. The water flowing down like a long river spewed violently, crashing down onto the random rocks below and giving cause to impressive traces of water, splashing down on all four sides.

There was a hard piece of round stone in the corner, slightly off to the side of where the waterfall crashed down. A naked person sat on the round stone and the muscles on his body were evenly fit and full of energy. His legs were crossed as he sat on the round stone, using his body to withstand the violent force of the strong cascade of water.

The agitated water currents sounded out with loud pilipala sounds when they landed on the surface of his body. His body wavered slightly, the expression on his face was cold as the meridians on his body bulged and pulsed. A faint, black light seemed to sparkle over his flesh and skin.

This person was naturally Han Shuo. After he'd arrived at the cemetery of death, his first order of business was to thoroughly digest the fighting aura that the "Shadow Ghost" killers had left in his body.

After his magic level ascended from the "solid" realm to the "open passages" realm, Han Shuo's body had been reforged again. Even the behavior of the fighting aura within his body had also changed. Previously when he had visited the Boozt Merchant Guild, the fighting aura that had cleaved its way into Han Shuo's body had always been enclosed by the



magical yuan. Han Shuo had originally thought that things would proceed as they'd always had, with the magical yuan slowly being absorbed as Han Shuo went about his business.

However, the truth proved that Han Shuo's judgment was wrong. The fighting aura wasn't digested and absorbed by the magical yuan like he had suspected. On the contrary, the magical yuan seemed to be slowly and purposefully loosening its restraints, letting this cloud of fighting aura continuously run rampant within Han Shuo's meridians, causing continuous damage to Han Shuo's meridians and even breaking a few bones beneath the stress.

Logically speaking, this should have been a very painful matter. However, Han Shuo astonishingly discovered that the meridians and bones, that had been damaged by the fighting aura, once again underwent some sort of change. The reforged meridians had become more tensile and widened compared to before, and the magical yuan circulated at a much higher speed here than compared to the other areas of his body. The bones were also similarly much more durable.

After understanding this, Han Shuo discovered to his great joy that if he continued training at this speed, then according to the rule of magic rebuilding after a breakthrough, the training speed of the "open passages" realm would be several times faster than the speed of normal training.

Whilst he was remarking with emotion that practicing magic was indeed a path of masochism and death, Han Shuo happened upon this waterfall. According to the importance of building up one's body while practicing magic, Han Shuo suddenly had the unique thought of utilizing the waterfall's force to practice magic. The truth proved that Han Shuo's thought was absolutely correct.

Just as Han Shuo was using his physical body to withstand the force of the violent waterfall on one hand, while experiencing the pain brought about by the fighting aura wreaking havoc in his meridians on the other, the speed of his magic training progressed at an astonishing pace. The meridians that were ravaged and broken by the fighting aura all became incredibly, pervertedly stronger.

The force within the center of the waterfall was the greatest, Han Shuo had only tried it for a brief moment before seeing stars from the enormous force. He held on for three seconds before almost fainting dead away. In his resignation, he could only rely on a corner to train in which the waterfall wasn't too violent, hoping that once his physical body was strengthened, he would be able to stand in the most wildly raging center to withstand the largest amount of the waterfall's force.

He caught fish to bake a meal when he was hungry, and used the rest of his time to practice magic. After who knew how long, Han Shuo suddenly realized that the training speed of the "open passages" realm had slowed down again after the fighting aura, that the assassin had left in his body, had disappeared completely.

"Looks like I need to think of another way to hurry and breakthrough the open passages realm. It doesn't seem to be the thing to do in order to keep training so slowly." Han Shuo muttered to himself as his body was as agile as a large fish, flying through the pool beneath the waterfall.

His two hands probed out like lightning in the pool, grabbing two strange looking fish. He swam back to shore, put his clothes back on, and took out his fire starting implements to bake the fish. When Han Shuo had eaten his fill and planned on returning back to the cemetery of death, his ears heard the faint sounds of footsteps.

Han Shuo's senses were now more and more perceptive. He focused his concentration and then shot swiftly towards the origin of the sound. There was danger lurking in every corner of the Dark forest.

Not only were there high level magic creatures, all sorts of exotic races and numerous adventurers on exploration, Han Shuo had even seen a silvery, long dragon one day, flying to an even deeper portion of the southern region of the Dark Forest.

Dragons were the mightiest existence in this world. Legends said that their bodies were as tough as iron rocks and their mastery of incredibly powerful magic was high. It was an exceedingly strong advanced magical creature that was a level higher than a level one magic creature. Every

dragon boasted of unparalleled power, and the appearance of a dragon often meant that treasure existed nearby. Every warrior that could slay a dragon received the respect and admiration of all.

Of course, with Han Shuo's current strength, he wouldn't be so foolish as to go be some dragonslayer, but the appearance of the silver, long dragon had alerted Han Shuo to the fact that an even more frightening region existed deeper within the Dark Forest.

After a while, Han Shuo arrived at the scene where the sounds had originated. After he'd taken in his surroundings, Han Shuo smiled involuntarily. Who would've thought he'd run into familiar faces here.

Ten swarthy dwarves with long, braided mustaches standing only a meter tall were wielding iron hammers, pickaxes, and spades used for mining ore and using them to fight against thirty or so forest trolls. Two dwarves had already been hit by long spears and lay on the ground, dead. The dwarves were all flushed red. Although they knew they wouldn't win against their enemies, none of them retreated and fled. They all stayed where they were, doing battle against the forest trolls.

Han Shuo no longer professed complete ignorance of the wondrous races of the Profound Continent. Dwarves possessed extraordinary beer brewing abilities and were even more adept at forging weapons. Their personalities were conservative and valued beer as much as they valued their lives. Their temper was stubborn and fiery, but once someone gained their friendship, their generosity would know no bounds.

Looking at the dwarves still raising their hammers and pickaxes, hollering and shouting bravely, wholly unafraid of death, even though they were no match for the forest trolls, Han Shuo actually felt a bit kindly disposed towards these dwarves.

Han Shuo also thought that the two areas in which dwarves were proficient in may be of some use to him, so he only thought for a brief moment before suddenly rushing out, slashing quickly with the dagger in his hand, resulting in the fall of one of the forest trolls.

When Han Shuo was standing between the forest trolls and the dwarves

and had summoned the little skeleton after chanting an incantation, the green face of the forest troll leader turned very ugly indeed, fearfully calling out, “That evil human has brought the demon back. Retreat, retreat!”

These forest trolls were obviously very afraid of the little skeleton with seven bone spurs on its back. As soon as they saw the dagger wielding little skeleton appear, they actually broke up in an uproar under direct orders of the forest troll leader.

“Mighty warrior, I, Bennett, thank you for your help.” After the forest trolls had left, one of the strongest dwarves, who wielded a metal hammer, raised it in the manner of the trolls to express his gratitude.

“Not a problem. I very much admire your staunch fighting spirit. Right, why were these forest trolls attacking you?” Han Shuo spread out his hands and spoke with humility and politeness.

“Huuh. Those greedy scoundrels are robbers. They never put themselves to work and only think of how to rob others. They wanted us to forge weapons for them for free so that their pillaging would go more smoothly. We refused their request and those dastardly robbers harassed us endlessly and killed our kin.” Bennett blew out his mustache and said huffily.

Nodding, Han Shuo added, “So that’s the case. They once wanted to rob my merchant caravan. These dastardly scoundrels are evil indeed!”

“Noble warrior, you’ve saved us. We want to use fine beer to express our gratitude. Please follow us back to our village!” Bennett looked at Han Shuo as he expressed an invitation out of friendliness.

# Chapter 66: Operation of the Original Demon Cave

Just as Han Shuo was privately celebrating with himself and was about to open his mouth and accept, another dwarf suddenly intervened and said, "Bennett, the village chief said that we can't bring humans into the village, have you forgotten?"

"But Benson, he saved us from the hands of those forest troll scoundrels!" Bennet looked at the dwarf and responded.

"I know, but we must listen to the village chief or we'll be punished." Benson said stubbornly.

"No problem, no problem, I won't be going. It's very nice to meet you. I have been adventuring in this area lately, perhaps we'll run into each other again. Farewell." Han Shuo understood that he couldn't be overly hasty when dealing with dwarves. It wouldn't be the matter of a second to receive their approval and friendship, so he immediately opened his mouth to speak up.

"Dear friend, we are truly sorry. This is a wineskin of beer that we brewed. Please treat it as a token of our gratitude. I hope you can forgive us." Bennett took out a wineskin and handed it over to Han Shuo, speaking apologetically.

Han Shuo had hoped that they would forge a decent set of weapons in return, but he naturally wouldn't express this now. He smiled and accepted the wineskin, humbly expressing his understanding and left along with the little skeleton.

If his magic could be trained to the true demon realm, Han Shuo would naturally be able to refine magical weapons on his own, but if Han Shuo wanted a decent weapon right now, obtaining it through the dwarves was actually a good method.

There was a magical treasure called Demonslayer Edge. It was a bit longer than a dagger, but a bit shorter than a sword. Its two edges were

cuttingly sharp without parallel, and its tip a keen triangular spine. After activating it, the Demonslayer Edge would reap enemy heads in mid flight. It was an incredibly frightening weapon left behind in Chu Cang Lan's memories.

With Han Shuo's current magical training, he definitely couldn't refine iron items and directly create the magical treasure Demonslayer Edge. However, Han Shuo wanted to use the dwarves to forge a prototype, and then slowly improve on it with his magic first. When he found the appropriate materials and his magical training had reached an appropriate stage, he would start over and refine it from scratch a couple of times, forming a perfect Demonslayer Edge.

After returning to the cemetery of death, Han Shuo stopped in the empty plot of land in front black moat. There were bone fragments all over the ground. The cemetery of death never saw the light of the sun because of the enchantment, and the sky was shrouded in a thick cloud of grey clouds. Han Shuo felt quite close to the surroundings, and that the thick gloom inside was very suited to necromancy creatures.

"Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald's call and reveal your existence!" Skeletal warriors slowly appeared in front of Han Shuo one after another as Han Shuo continuously chanted the skeletal warrior incantation.

Han Shuo finally felt that his mental strength had been slightly depleted when five skeletal warriors had appeared in the open space. He stopped his summoning at this moment.

Although Han Shuo's mental strength had greatly improved compared to before, he was limited by his ability to control them, so including the little skeleton, he could control six skeletal warriors. After releasing his mental strength, Han Shuo gave a command and the six total skeletal warriors started moving, bone daggers in hand, according to Han Shuo's commands.

A few oddly shaped deep pits and gullies slowly formed on the ground according to Han Shuo's mental manipulations and the dance from the

bone daggers of the skeletal warriors.

The gully in the middle connected these deep pits like a long line, and when looking at it from afar, the gully-connected deep pits looked like the grimacing face of a ghost that was roughly six meters wide. The deep pits formed the nose, eyes, and ears of the grimacing ghost and it looked a bit sinister and evil.

The “Original Demon Cave” was a matrix left behind by Chi Cang Lan for the refinement of “original demons”. 18 specters needed to be placed within the “Original Demon Cave” for them to slaughter and swallow each other through the operations of the matrix. Only the three most powerful specters would survive in the end and they would be refined into “original demons” after the operation and concentrated refinement of the “Original Demon Cave”.

The “Original Demon Cave” needed to operate for at least 36 days, and it would continue to absorb the yin qi from the heavens and earth during this time. The refiner would need to feed it six drops of fresh blood every day and inject magical yuan into it. When the “Original Demon” was formed, it would have a direct mental link with the refiner and could soundlessly invade the opponent’s body. When the “original demon” made its way into the enemy’s body, it would automatically eat away at the enemy’s vitality and blood.

In Han Shuo’s memories, demonic practitioners called the “original demon” one of the “demon generals”. according to their own level of training, demonic practitioners could refine four “demon generals” that were of different levels. They were respectively divided into – original demon, yin demon, mystical demon and spirit demon.

Of these four, the original demon was actually the lowest level general and its method of refinement was the easiest. It only needed the yin qi between heaven and earth and the fresh blood of the demonic practitioner.

Of course, because of this, the power of a small demon general such as the “original demon” was also the weakest. Many things could harm it.

Flames and ice could demolish it, even if it entered an enemy's body, as long as the enemy possessed enough true yuan and magical yuan, they could also kill it from within their body.

However, with Han Shuo's level of training, he could only refine such minor demon generals. Not only was his current level not up to the task of refining stronger demon generals like the "mystical demon", but he also temporarily didn't know the method to.

Han Shuo refined the "original demon" in order to use them as a scouting tool on one hand, and on the other to render some assistance to Han Shuo when they invaded an enemy during battle. The enemy would at least have to split their concentration to deal with the "original demon", and in that way Han Shuo would have the opportunity to act. If the enemy was too weak, then just the invasion of the "original demon" would be enough to kill him.

When the "Original Demon Cave" was complete, Han Shuo commanded the skeletal warriors to clean up the "Original Demon Cave". Relying on the round green ball and the same method as before, Han Shuo trained his mental strength for a night and on the second day, exhausted all of his mental strength to summon eighteen "wraiths", placing them all within the "Original Demon Cave".

"wraiths" were from another dimension and on the same level of existence as the "specters" that Han Shuo already understood. After learning necromancy magic, Han Shuo didn't need to venture out to collect these "wraiths" at all. He merely needed a simple incantation to take care of it all. This was truly exceedingly convenient.

When the eighteen "wraiths" had entered the "Original Demon Cave", a chilly wind suddenly whipped around the surroundings and currents of cool presence aggregated from all over the cemetery of death and into the "Original Demon Cave". The concentration of the yin qi greatly exceeded Han Shuo's expectations.

At this moment, Han Shuo suddenly remembered that whether it was necromancy magic or his training of magic – they all walked the path of



evil. These two roads were both different and evil cults in their respective worlds. They had much in common, and it was half the effort with twice the results when they were used in tandem, saving Han Shuo much effort.

When the “Original Demon Cave” had absorbed enough yin qi, the grimacing outline of the ghost face that formed the “Original Demon Cave” suddenly seemed to become alive, twisting with endless changes. Spheres of black air rose from the seven orifices of the ghost’s face.

When he saw this scene appear, Han Shuo immediately understood that all was as his speculations. The “wraiths” could act as pseudo “specters” and become the foundational material of the “Original Demon Cave”. As Han Shuo bit his finger and dropped in six drops of fresh blood in the “Original Demon Cave”, and after he infused it with his magical yuan, the eighteen “wraiths” suddenly sank into a berserk fervor and emitted ghastly screams. Continuously battling and slaughtering each other to vie over the six drops of fresh blood.

“Done. Now I just need to wait 36 days for three yin demons to form!” Han Shuo smiled as he looked at the “Original Demon Cave” and turned his head to look at the skeletal warriors on the side. He suddenly realized that the magically refined little skeleton seemed to be attracted to the “Original Demon Cave”. It set one foot into the “Original Demon Cave” without Han Shuo’s orders and lay lazily within one of the deep pits. It actually crossed it two calf bones and displayed an odd posture.

That odd posture looked like – enjoyment!

Han Shuo was dumbfounded as he sent out his mental strength and was prepared to command the little skeleton to leave the “Original Demon Cave”. However, he felt the little skeleton’s joy in his heart, greatly startling Han Shuo. He glanced with a look of surprise and shock at the little skeleton leisurely relaxing in the “Original Demon Cave”.

After a while, Han Shuo was still unable to understand what was going on. He observed the “Original Demon Cave”, discovered that it was still operating as usual, and that the “wraiths” were still killing each other within it, seemingly unaffected. Han Shuo shook his head, muttering, “The

little skeleton is becoming odder and odder. Ah forget it, it doesn't look like it affects the matrix operations. I'll just leave him be."

He murmured to himself as Han Shuo walked to the cemetery of death, planning on studying the book of "Beginner Magics of Necromancy". He wanted to proceed on two fronts and breakthrough both simultaneously.

# Chapter 67: Sharing in the secrets of the dwarves

Han Shuo stayed within the cemetery of death for the next couple of days, studying the book of “Foundational Magics of Necromancy” on one hand, while looking after the “Original Demon Cave”.

Utilizing the round green ball, that most likely originated in the cemetery of death, Han Shuo would receive a large increase in mental strength whilst experiencing a high degree of agony and pain in his mind.

Except, with his increased usage of the round green ball, Han Shuo could clearly feel that his mental strength was no longer growing as speedily as before. It looked like this strange round green ball couldn't help him continuously. As the number of times he used it increased, the benefit that Han Shuo received continually decreased.

One day, Han Shuo meditated for a while and left the cemetery of death after infusing the “Original Demon Cave” with his blood and magical yuan.

After investigating the vicinity in which he met the dwarves last time, Han Shuo finally found traces of a dwarf. He followed the dwarf tracks while maintaining his composure. After walking for a while, he finally discovered that the dwarf tracks had stopped in front of a highly concealed cave entrance.

There was luxuriant shrubbery near the entrance of the cave, and the surroundings had obviously been fixed up. If it weren't for a dwarf moving aside the large patch of leaves, Han Shuo wouldn't have been able to discover that there was a cave here.

After observing the cave entrance for a while, Han Shuo noticed that several dwarves had appeared nearby again. They were holding iron spades and hammers as they filed into the cave. After a short while, the dwarf who'd given Han Shuo the bag of beer, Bennett, was helped out of the cave by two dwarves. He seemed to have been injured.

A soft sound came from afar. Han Shuo's ears were sharp and could immediately tell that it was likely the sounds of magical creatures approaching. He crouched on the branch of a big tree and waited for a while. Shortly after, he saw two Windblade Wolves slowly approach in the distance.

His thoughts moving, Han Shuo snapped one of the dry branches off the big tree and threw it towards the shrubs next to the cave entrance. The sound of the dry branch falling to the ground obviously attracted the attention of Windblade Wolves. The two moved according to the noise and padded softly, quickly as they changed direction, heading for the cave entrance of the dwarves.

When Bennett and the other two dwarves looked around their surroundings after hearing the movement, the two Windblade Wolves had already appeared in their range of vision.

"Oh, damnit. It's Windblade Wolves. Let's hurry and return back to the cave!" The injured Bennett threw out an involuntarily complaint upon seeing the two Windblade Wolves appear and decided to head back into the cave.

"Bennett, it's too crowded inside. If these two Windblade wolves follow us into the cave, then the ones inside will be in danger." One of the dwarves shook the hammer in his hand as he heard Bennett's words.

Bennett thought for a moment after hearing his words, "Mm, then we'll kill these two damned Windblade Wolves at the door."

"No way, it's impossible for the three of us to do so. I think we should let the dwarves within the cave stop mining for now and join forces to kill the two Windblade Wolves." The dwarf said.

Just at this moment, Han Shuo suddenly jumped down from the big tree and arched his body on the ground, dashing out like lightning. After he revealed himself in the far off shrubbery, he nimbly dashed towards the two Windblade Wolves. The dagger in his hand was like a bolt of cold lightning as it shot towards one of the Windblade Wolves. Han Shuo followed closely behind with the speed of cheetah, facing down the other

Windblade Wolf with his bare hands.

The two Windblade Wolves had been staring at the three dwarves as fiercely as a tiger does and had their backs to Han Shuo. The back of one of them had already taken a hit from the fierce strike of Han Shuo's dagger. The other Windblade Wolf turned around and sent a blade of wind whistling towards Han Shuo. While performing his high speed dash, Han Shuo suddenly changed direction and magically evaded the wind blade's attack, his body already dashing to the front of the Windblade Wolf.

The Wolf that had released the wind blade didn't give any impression of weakness as it raised its sharp claws, pouncing towards Han Shuo when it saw that the enemy was at hand. A crossbow bolt from the left sleeve first shot towards the claws of this Windblade Wolf, with Han Shuo slamming down on its head using a fist interspersed with with the glacial air from the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire".

With a shrill scream, the Windblade Wolf fell stiffly to the ground, like a block of frozen meat, cold air emanating from its body.

On the other side, the dwarves suddenly flung out the sharp axes in their hands, aiming for the other Windblade Wolf. However, the strength of the two dwarves was visibly subpar to Han Shuo's. The thrown axe wasn't traveling too fast, and the injured Windblade Wolf could actually still evade it.

However, although it could evade the axes from the two dwarves, it couldn't dodge Han Shuo's crossbow bolt. The Windblade Wolf finally couldn't escape and fell down listlessly.

"Oh, Brave friend, you've saved Bennett again! How could I possibly thank you?" The injured Bennett cried out involuntarily upon seeing Han Shuo dispatch of the two Windblade Wolves, calling out loudly to him.

After relieving the Windblade Wolves of their magical cores and pelts in a practiced manner. Han Shuo waved his hand and smiled, "You shouldn't thank me, these two Windblade Wolves were my prey to begin with! Not only did I not help you, but it was your two friends who helped me with their axes!"

“You’re too polite. Eh, do you not want the bodies?” One of the dwarves asked in astonishment upon seeing Han Shuo take only their magical cores and pelts, but displayed complete disinterest in the corpses.

“Yes, I only need the Windblade Wolf cores and pelts. This way, I can sell them for a good price.”

“Then, dear friend, could you give us their bodies?”

“Of course, but, what do you want them for? They’re not worth much.”

“The bodies of Windblade Wolves can be used to prepare food.” Bennett looked strangely at Han Shuo and explained. “To us, the flesh of the Windblade Wolves is a very sumptuous delicacy!”

Han Shuo had also eaten Windblade Wolf meat before, but he’d found it dry and hard to chew. It didn’t seem to be a delicious type of meat... who would’ve thought the dwarves would be interested. Han Shuo rather thought it was odd upon hearing Bennett’s words, but the dwarves weren’t human, perhaps their habits were different from human habits, Han Shuo thought.

“Right, what are you doing here?” Han Shuo asked.

“This is a mining cave that we’ve discovered. There are some copper and iron ores inside. However, it often collapses inside and large stones will crash down from above. The process of mining has been exceedingly difficult and dangerous, a lot of tribesman have already been injured. A tribesman was smashed to death yesterday. I was also accidentally hit just now and thus had to come out.” Bennett seemed to be kindly disposed towards Han Shuo as he blurted out the secret that the dwarves were concealing without hesitation.

The other two dwarves had wanted to stop Bennett, but realized that Bennett had already finished before they’d had a chance to speak. They blew on their beards and glared at Bennett, as if admonishing his undiscerning mouth.

“So that’s the case. If you don’t mind, I can help you with the mining. I think with my help, a lot of the dangers will decrease for you guys.” Han

Shuo's thoughts raced as he proposed with a smile.

"No, it's too dangerous inside. You'd be smashed by the rocks if you went inside. If you happened to run into a widespread collapse, you wouldn't be able to walk out from there and would be trapped to your death." Bennett offered a reminder out of good faith.

"Don't worry, I won't be taking action myself. I'm a necromancer and can summon necromancy creatures. There won't be any problems if the necromancy creatures go in and mine for you." Han Shuo smiled.

"I see, then let me go in and discuss with them to see if they agree." Bennett thought for a moment, responded, and walked back into the cave with the two dwarves helping him walk.

After a while, one of the dwarves walked out and said politely to Han Shuo, "Noble friend, we are willing to share the secrets of this cave with you. Please come in and mine this cave with us!"

Happiness making its way to his heart, Han Shuo said humbly, "Thank you for your trust, I'm very happy to work together with you."

After he spoke, the dwarf dragged the bodies of the two Windblade Wolves into the cave and, along with Han Shuo, covered up the cave with tree leaves, finally walking into the cave with Han Shuo afterwards.

# Chapter 68: Black iron ore bestowed from the gods

It was narrower inside the mining cave than Han Shuo had thought. The dwarves had shorter statures and could walk around with ease, but Han Shuo found it a bit inconvenient. Even with the light from oil lamps along the way, it was still rather gloomy inside the cave.

After a few minutes of walking, Han Shuo had to start stooping his body. The farther down they walked, the danker and more humid it got. Broken shards of stone could be found all over the ground, and when Han Shuo discovered that it was becoming difficult to progress even when stooped over, that was when the three dwarves finally stopped.

The dwarves ahead held metal spades and hammers in their hands, exerting themselves to the utmost as they mined. The sounds of tapping rang out continuously. When they discovered that Han Shuo had come in, they all involuntarily stopped their motions and measured up Han Shuo with suspicious gazes.

“The cave will become more and more spacious as we make our way past this narrow juncture. Although there are more iron and copper cores inside, rocks rain down from above when we transport the ores. There was a collapse a few days ago, and we spent an enormous amount of effort to reopen the path.” Bennett leaned back somewhat tiredly on the hard rock wall as he looked at Han Shuo when explaining.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “Alright, make some space for me. I’m going to summon the skeletal warriors and have them go inside to mine the ore.”

In accordance with Han Shuo’s instructions, the dwarves cleared out of the area, starting from those furthest inside the cave. When there was no longer any dwarves within the cave, Han Shuo started the necromancy magic incantation. Seven skeletal warriors, in a row, appeared within the passageway, completely blocking it off.

Han Shuo had only been able to control six skeletal warriors originally,



but now that he had meditated using the round green ball, his mental strength had improved again and was now able to manipulate seven skeletal warriors simultaneously.

“Put your iron spades and hammers on the ground. I’ll command the skeletal warriors to use your tools and mine the ore inside.” After the seven skeletons had appeared, Han Shuo looked at and spoke to the dwarves who had retreated.

The dwarves hesitated upon hearing Han Shuo’s words, and then flung out the mining tools in their hands one by one upon Bennett’s persuasion. Han Shuo manipulated the skeletal warriors, commanded them to cast out the bone daggers from their hands, and pick up the mining tools on the ground instead. Each of them arched their bodies and slowly plodded into the depths of the mining cave.

A “wraith” was released and floated into the depths of the cave along with the skeletal warriors, according to Han Shuo’s instructions. With the aid of this wraith, Han Shuo could observe the environment surrounding the wraith. With the wraith leading the way, Han Shuo could observe the sights of the depths of the cave as if he were there in person.

It was as the dwarves had said, the skeletal warriors had to stoop and slowly thread their way through an exceedingly narrow entrance, after which the space became increasingly larger. Except, there were no light facilities inside. Thus, Han Shuo was unable to clearly see all of his surroundings.

As the “wraith” and the skeletal warriors covered a large distance, to the point where Han Shuo felt that he would no longer be able to manipulate these dark creatures, he issued the mission to start mining ore. According to the “wraith” vision intermediary, Han Shuo focused his concentration and manipulated the seven skeletal warriors to start tapping and hitting the ores around them.

Loud rumblings noises sounded out, accompanying the skeletal warrior’s movements. After a short while, Han Shuo could clearly feel via the “wraith” that because of the skeletal warriors’ digging, the rocks at the top

of the mining cave had started to shift. Some large rocks actually fell down after a while, directly smashing the skeletal warrior in a pile of bone fragments.

Focusing his concentration, Han Shuo closed his eyes and stood in front of the dwarves, carefully manipulating the skeletal warriors. He sent the “wraith” floating to the top of the cave and observed the loosened rocks with utmost care. He would hastily send the skeletal warriors dodging to the side whenever the rocks fell.

After proceeding like this for a while, another skeletal warrior was directly smashed to smithereens by another large rock. Han Shuo’s mental strength was severely depleted and he felt a wave of vertigo in his mind. He immediately understood that he had over exhausted his mental strength and hastily commanded the remaining five skeletal warriors to stop mining ore, pick up the ore fragments that they’d extracted, and start moving them backwards.

When the five skeletal warriors started moving the ores on the ground one by one to the narrow pass, the dwarves on Bennett’s side cheered and started walking to the pass without waiting for Han Shuo’s instructions. They picked up the ores from there and moved them safely to Han Shuo’s side.

After this went on for a few minutes. Han Shuo felt that his mental strength could no longer sustain the skeletal warriors’ continued actions and so immediately and decisively chanted an incantation again, sending the remaining skeletal warriors and the “wraith” back to the other dimension.

At this moment, the cave opening in front of Han Shuo was already filled with dozens of large and small pieces of ore. The dwarves cheered as they fell over each other to free the ore from the surrounding rocks, placing the ore into the packs behind their backs.

“Oh, dear friend, because of your help, our haul today is greater than the amount of ore we’ve obtained in a week. These adorable iron and copper ores can be used to forge beautiful weapons after they’ve been refined.

What a joyful happening.” Although Bennett was very tired due to his injuries, he was in extraordinarily fine spirits now as he gazed upon his companions jubilantly knocking off the excess rock and picking up the ores. He excitedly expressed his gratitude to Han Shuo.

The other dwarves picked up the ores with great delight, laughing heartily as they took out the wineskins that they always carried with them, happily pouring beer down their throats, emitting hearty “glugging” sounds.

“Oh, goodness, what’s this, what’s this?” A dwarf suddenly screamed shrilly, attracting the attention of all the other dwarves as they all surged up to this dwarf.

Han Shuo was also similarly surprised and glanced involuntarily at this dwarf, but he had already been surrounded by the other dwarves, completely blocking Han Shuo’s vision. He speculated to himself, was something the matter?

Just as Han Shuo’s mind was rife with suspicion, Bennett suddenly lost his composure and laughed wildly, even throwing the wineskin of beer into the air as he cut a caper. Exceedingly elated, charged yells came out of his mouth, “Black iron. Damn, black iron. I am sure this is black iron. Oh my gosh, there’s black iron inside. The chief will go crazy when he finds out about our find!”

The other dwarves also flushed thoroughly red upon hearing Bennett’s words as they too danced wildly, raising their hammers to crazily hammer at the walls on all sides. The loud sounds they raised rather gave Han Shuo a fright.

Han Shuo heaved a private sigh of relief upon hearing Bennett’s words, understanding that the dwarves must have obtained a marvelous metal to be so crazy with excitement. He too was happy on the inside.

After a while, Han Shuo asked after the dwarves, who were finally began to calm down, “Bennett, what kind of ore is this black iron? Is it very precious?”

Bennett nodded repeatedly like a little chick pecking at rice, saying

excitedly, “Of course, exceedingly precious. Precious to the utmost! The density and hardness of black iron is the highest amongst all ores, but its weight is the least amongst all metal. It also never rusts, and can change color through adding other materials. It’s the most supreme material in crafting weapons, and a gift bestowed upon us from the gods!”

Han Shuo was about to congratulate them when something suddenly flashed through his mind and a patch of memories flooded in. He suddenly realized that according to the properties of this black iron, the black iron, according to Chu Cang Lan’s memories, was actually a precious material used to forge magical treasures – Mystical Metal.

“What a pity there’s only a small piece. Looks like there’s only enough to forge a small dagger.” After expressing his excitement, Bennett looked at the black iron in the dwarf’s hand and said with a bit of regret.

“Bennett, don’t be dejected, there’s bound to be more black iron inside. Perhaps we’ll be able to mine a larger piece next time, that way we can forge the sharpest weapon!” The dwarf Benson said.

“Dear friend, thank you so much for your help. We are willing to share our mining cave with you. Can you continue to help us? We are willing to share the ore that is mined.” Bennett turned a face full of desire towards Han Shuo and pleaded after hearing Benson’s words.

“I’m very happy that you trust me so, and am also quite willing to help you, but I’m too weary today and need to rest a night. I’ll come back tomorrow and continue helping you mine, alright?” Han Shuo chuckled privately to himself and said humbly to Bennett.

“Of course, of course. We’ll be here early tomorrow morning with the village chief. I hope you can stop by again!” Bennett hastened to reply.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, “Then I’ll see you tomorrow!”

Han Shuo didn’t leave with a single piece of ore after saying this and walked in a natural and unrestrained manner to the mouth of the mining cave, leaving behind a few widely excited dwarves continuously taking large gulps of beer.

# Chapter 69: Obtaining the friendship of the dwarves

When his mental strength was depleted, the replenishment he received from meditating came at a noticeably faster pace compared to his normal training conditions. When Han Shuo returned to the cemetery of death and meditated for a night, his mental strength was once again filled to the brim. Thus, Han Shuo deduced such a conclusion.

However, for necromancers, they would be unable to release any sort of magic if they had no mental strength. This would undoubtedly place them in a very precarious position. Therefore, no mage would expend all of their mental strength in one shot under normal circumstances.

Since the dwarves were willing to share the mining cave, Han Shuo couldn't help but form other plans. There seemed to be high amounts of metal and copper ore inside the cave. Therefore, it would take quite a while for the dwarves to excavate the entire cave.

For Han Shuo, he could absolutely leverage summoning creatures to increase the speed of mining. If these copper and iron ores were shipped to the Empire, they were sure to fetch rich rewards for Han Shuo, particularly the black iron ore inside. According to Han Shuo's understanding and the dwarves' expressions today, Han Shuo understood that these black metal ores were very precious resources, and perhaps could be sold for whopping prices.

There should be quite a few dwarf villages in the Dark Forest, and there weren't too many dwarves in this group. All of them combined probably didn't need this much metal and copper ore. Since this was the case, Han Shuo made some other plans in his heart.

After infusing fresh blood and magical yuan into the "Original Demon Cave", Han Shuo left the cemetery of death early in the morning and rushed in the direction of the mining cave.

Han Shuo had thought that he had arrived early enough, but he

discovered that the dwarves had already arrived by the time he arrived at the entrance of the cave. There was double the usual amount of dwarves today, and it seemed like they had been up all night long due to their excitement. Their eyes were all bloodshot, but their spirits were still highly stimulated.

One of them had a grizzled beard and was leaning on a staff, in the middle of solemnly relaying instructions to the other dwarves. All the other dwarves, which included Bennett, all listened respectfully to his admonishments.

Purposefully letting the sound of his steps attract the attention of the dwarves, Bennett immediately raised the iron hammer in his hand and called out when he saw Han Shuo appear, "Hi, dear friend, we've waited for you for a long time!"

When Han Shuo had walked close, the old dwarf with the grizzled beard bowed in the manner of humans to express his thanks to Han Shuo. He said benevolently, "Brave and strong friend, thank you for your repeated help. I am Chief Calvin of the dwarf village, and am very pleased to make your acquaintance."

"I'm called Han Shuo and am very honored to obtain your trust!" This place was far from the Academy and no one knew of his identity. Han Shuo therefore used his true name to interact with the dwarves.

"Brave Han, your name is quite marvelous. I've never heard of anyone using such a name. Heh heh, the children say that you're a man worth trusting. Our village is willing to share the secrets of this mining cave with you. I just hope that we can coexist in harmony in the future!" Calvin first looked at Han Shuo oddly, seemingly befuddled by his name, but his face then became wreathed in smiles and continued to talk.

"Then, I think we can begin working." Although Calvin was neither in a rush nor too leisurely, the gazes of the other dwarves all flitted towards the cave behind them, obviously exposing their eager thoughts. Han Shuo did not speak further and directly proposed to start working.

"No rush." Calvin thought and stared at Han Shuo. "Han, why are you

helping us like this? We are willing to share the mining cave with you, but why didn't you take half of the iron and copper cores yesterday?"

The elderly indeed thought more, and it seemed that the dwarves weren't an exception. Han Shuo looked at Calvin, was silent for a moment and explained. "First, I also had a bone to pick with the forest trolls. Not to mention I was conquered by the death-defying battle spirit displayed by Bennett and the others. That's the reason as to why I helped them the first time.

In addition to this, they actually helped me fight off the Windblade Wolves. Those two Windblade Wolves were actually my prey, and helping you mine ore in the cave is just a small matter. I don't know how to forge weapons, and I don't think I'll have any use if I take the iron and copper ores. That's why I didn't take any when I left. Elder Calvin, you must believe me, I really don't have any other dubious motives."

"Yes chief, Han is a great friend and he's not like the other humans." Bennett suddenly spoke up and said to the old dwarf.

Nodding, Calvin bowed towards Han Shuo, saying humbly, "My apologies Han, I'm older and have seen too many wily humans. That's why I questioned you. I hope you don't mind."

"Your way is correct, I completely understand your concerns!"

"It's difficult for us to mine the ore further inside these caves with our strength alone. Since we're willing to share our secret with you, we're willing to share all that is inside with you, including the black metal bestowed by the gods. We're willing to share everything equally with you and hope you don't reject it, otherwise we'll truly be embarrassed." Calvin thought and made this solemn promise.

Upon hearing his words, Han Shuo thought that although the dwarves were stubborn and possessed fiery tempers, they were indeed a race worth befriending. Han Shuo became a bit shamefaced about his own intentions after hearing Calvin's promise. He thought deeply for a moment, "Please be at ease elder, I absolutely agree with your suggestion. In addition, when I have enough black metal, may I sincerely request that you forge it into a

weapon for me?”

“No problem Han, be at ease. If there is enough black metal, I will personally supervise them and create a weapon worthy of your use.” Calvin promised with a smile.

“Alright, I think we can begin working!” Han Shuo finally set aside his plans, thinking that his plans for the Demonslayer Edge were finally in motion. He smiled as he headed into the cave with the dwarves.

After a half day of mining, Han Shuo’s mental strength was depleted once again and he left the cave in utter exhaustion. Today’s haul was even richer than yesterday’s. Apart from large amounts of iron and copper ore, they had once again obtained two pieces, one large and one small, of black metal. Han Shuo magnanimously handed the bigger piece over to the village chief and threw the smaller piece into his space ring.

At the entrance of the cave, the dwarves packed everything away neatly and shouldered the ores with smiles that brightened their faces, planning on carting today’s haul back to the village.

“Dear Han, what kind of weapon do you wish to see forged?” Calvin asked before he left.

After thinking for a while, Han Shuo took out his dagger and drew a sketch of the Demonslayer Edge on the ground. He pointed at the weapon outline on the ground and explained to Calvin, “This type of weapon would be nice. I would like the best and the sharpest, would you be able to complete it?”

Calvin squinted his eyes and stooped down, observing the Demonslayer Edge sketch for a while. He spoke in deep thought, “I’ve never seen a weapon like this, I think this will be interesting. There should be no problem in creating it, but if you would like the best and the sharpest, we would need a few more materials. Our village likely doesn’t have enough of them in supply.”

His thoughts racing, Han Shuo thought of the Boozt Merchant Guild and privately thought that he really was going all out for this Demonslayer Edge. He said, “Please tell me what other materials are needed, elder. I will



find ways to collect all the missing or insufficient materials. I need a high grade weapon.”

“Do you have pen and paper?”

“Of course!” Han Shuo took out the pen and paper he had prepared before going to the cemetery of death from his space ring and handed it to Calvin. “Don’t worry about the insufficient materials. I will find a way to gather all the materials together as quickly as possible.”

“Then alright.” Calvin nodded and started noting down a list of materials on the paper. When he finished, he handed it over to Han Shuo, saying, “Han, as long as these materials are gathered, I can assure you that I will forge a weapon with an unparalleled edge for you.”

“When the amount of my black metal is enough to forge this weapon, I will think of a way to collect these materials. I will be here earlier tomorrow to help mine the ore,” Han Shuo said as he left the mines.

Just like this, Han Shuo spent his subsequent ten days with the dwarves, mining the caves.

When Han Shuo had obtained enough black metal and the dwarves had all obtained a rich haul, Calvin proposed temporarily halting their mining operation and said that they should start forging these ores into weapons. They could mine again in the future when they ran out of weapons.

Han Shuo had already obtained the dwarves’ trust during this time and accepted Calvin’s invitation to visit their village and drink heavily in celebration. Thus, he knew the correct way to their dwellings.

After Han Shuo infused fresh blood and magical yuan into the “Original Demon Cave” earlier than usual. He then made direct use of the transportation matrix to leave the cemetery of death.

# Chapter 70: Help me kill two lackeys

Han Shuo appeared directly within the secluded tomb, located in the mountains behind the Academy through use of the transportation matrix, in the blind spot that he had dug.

He put away the six magic sticks and removed the stone slab that blocked the entrance of the tomb before walking out of the tomb. The sky was only just brightening hazily, and Han Shuo didn't walk towards the Academy. Rather, he took his bearings and circled the area, walking directly to the northern street according to the directions indicated on Fabian's card.

The northern part of the city of Ossen contained many tall, ornate buildings. Many of the Empire's nobles and aristocrats lived here. The city's defense guard was also found in the highest numbers here, and there were many armored guards, wielding various weapons, patrolling early in the morning. Han Shuo cleaned up his clothes and wiped off the dust he had just acquired, walking towards the northern street, according to Fabian's instructions, afterwards.

Han Shuo stopped in front of a house after a while. There were no guards at the door and it didn't seem as conspicuous as the ones around it. Han Shuo walked up to the front door, gathered his concentration, and looked around him, finally knocking when he concluded that no one was paying attention to him.

Last time in the Boozt Merchant Guild, Phoebe had killed the assassins from "Shadow Ghost" and shifted the blame onto him. When Grover left the chamber, his expression was apparent that he was harboring resentment in his heart. According to Phoebe's explanation, whether it was "Shadow Ghost" or Grover, both had associates who could kill her at anytime. Therefore, Han Shuo had to be extremely careful when returning to the Empire this time. He was deathly afraid of attracting "Shadow Ghost" or Grover's attention.

After a while, a butler with warm features opened the door and gazed at

Han Shuo, bowing with a smile. “Good morning sir, whom are you looking for?”

“My name is Bryan, and I’m here to discuss some matters of business with Fabian!” Han Shuo also responded politely.

“Mr. Bryan! I’ve heard Fabian speak of you, please follow me!” The butler immediately turned his body sideways upon hearing Han Shuo’s name and invited him in.

When Han Shuo had walked in, the butler stuck out his head, carefully observed for a while in front of the door, and finally closing the door tightly afterwards. He was quite cautious and prudent as he led Han Shuo inside.

The buildings inside were still quite ordinary. It all seemed rather dull when compared to the luxury of the Boozt Merchant Guild. The surface area of the buildings were far less expansive and spacious than those of the Boozt Merchant Guild.

The butler led Han Shuo into the main lobby after walking for only a minute. An ordinary looking maid served tea and snacks, after which she said, “Please wait a moment Mr. Bryan, I’ll go get Fabian for you.”

When the butler left, the maid also left the lobby after pouring a full cup of tea for Han Shuo. After a while, the chubby Fabian walked in from outside the lobby, laughing heartily. Bright and clear laughter rang from his mouth, but his face looked a bit wan and his spirits didn’t seem too good. He seemed to have been going through a difficult time lately.

“It’s Bryan! It’s so good to see that you’re safe and sound.” Fabian pulled out a stool for himself after entering and laughed loudly.

“I too am very glad to see you unharmed. I hid after leaving the Boozt Merchant Guild last time, so whether it’s ‘Shadow Ghost’ or Grover’s men, they’ll all be unable to find me. Therefore, you don’t need to worry about me at all, but you on the other hand, you don’t seem to have been living that well!” Han Shuo sized up Fabian as he spoke slowly.

“Don’t mention it, Grover is becoming more and more domineering

lately. Our lives have become a bit difficult. Right, what business would you like to discuss this time?” Fabian sighed and said with some resignation.

Han Shuo didn't want to pay attention to the old scores between Grover and them, and Fabian wasn't willing to truly discuss his feelings in detail. He thought for a bit and said, “I've come to find you this time not to sell any resources, but to purchase a few rare materials from you.”

“Oh, what rare materials?”

“Take a look at this list, I need all the materials on it. How many gold coins would this cost?” Han Shuo handed over the list that Chief Calvin of the dwarf village had written out to Fabian and asked.

Fabian took the list from Han Shuo's hands and looked carefully at it, thinking for a bit before saying to Han Shuo. “Bryan, even I don't know some of the materials on this list. I'm afraid I can't make the decision. If you don't mind, I'd like to ask our Miss Phoebe to discuss with you?”

Han Shuo was startled, thinking did Calvin ask for some very precious items? He mused for a bit and nodded, “Alright, it's the same if I talk to Miss Phoebe. I have urgent need of these items, when can I see her?”

“Our miss is right here. I'll go request her instructions, please wait a moment.” Fabian rose and left Han Shuo with these words before leaving the lobby.

Phoebe swept a nonchalant gaze over Han Shuo after she entered, making him feel a bit befuddled. She found a seat and thoroughly perused the list that Han Shuo had brought. She furrowed her brow slightly as she lifted her head to look at Han Shuo, “These materials should be for the use of forging weapons. Some of the items within are very rare indeed. You've come to the right person to purchase them.”

Joy flooding his heart, Han Shuo kept a calm expression on his face and randomly tapped his right finger on the table. He said lightly, “What's your price?”

Nodding, Phoebe's wise eyes sparkled cunningly as a slight trace of a

beautiful curve marked her slightly tightened lips. She said, "With the exception of the black gold ore, we can sell all the other ingredients to you. Particularly because you helped us last time, I'll even give you a discount. It will only cost you 3,500 gold. This price is absolutely fair."

3,500 gold! Han Shuo's heart leapt in shock. He hadn't thought that the ten or so missing ingredients that Calvin had listed would be so pricey. And judging from the connotations from Phoebe's words, this price was already quite low, and that the Black Gold ore seemed to be of some difficulty.

His brow furrowing slightly, Han Shuo thought deeply and said, "3,500 gold is no problem, but is your Guild unable to obtain black gold ore?"

"Black gold ore is the same as black iron ore, they're materials of the utmost quality used for forging weapons. The price of these kinds of ore is beyond your imagination. A piece of black gold ore the size of a fingernail can fetch the price of 5,000 gold on the marketplace. Under normal circumstances, there is no supply for both black gold and black iron ore, at any price.

I have a piece of black gold ore the size of my thumb in my possession, but I only gained this piece of black gold ore at extreme effort. I was planning on forging the best sword for my respected teacher when I collected enough material, that's why I've kept it all this time. Therefore, even though this piece of black gold ore can satisfy your needs, I will not sell it to you no matter how high a price you offer." Phoebe's face was solemnly grave as she said resolutely to Han Shuo.

Phoebe was a swordswoman, and Han Shuo could figure out with even his toes what kind of level of character her teacher would be. The kinds of swords used by such a character would naturally be uncommonly sharp. As Phoebe had reached the level of swordmaster at such a tender age, she must not have been taught at an ordinary academy of magic and force. Phoebe was a mysterious character indeed.

However, Han Shuo truly needed the black gold ore. He wanted to create the best possible Demonslayer Edge in one go, and naturally needed the

exact amount of the rarest materials. If he was short on the valuable black gold ore, then the quality of the Demonslayer Edge would decrease greatly. This was what Han Shuo didn't wish to see the most.

His brows locked tightly, Han Shuo pondered hard and finally asked Phoebe, "Apart from you, who else would have black gold ore in their possession?"

"Don't wish for the stars. I think even if someone had some, they would cherish it like treasure and wouldn't sell it to you." Phoebe looked at Han Shuo's anxious expression with interest, a hint of a faint smile curving at her lips as she said with some pride.

Han Shuo felt an involuntary wave of depression when he heard these words, but suddenly detected Phoebe's unintentional hint of a smile at her lips when he was shaking his head and sighing. His thoughts spun furiously as Han Shuo thought silently. He finally stared straight at Phoebe and asked lowly, "Miss Phoebe, if you're willing to give the black gold ore in your possession to me, you can name whatever condition you wish!"

Phoebe started and looked at Han Shuo in some surprise. She then frowned and pretended to turn the matter over in her mind. She finally said with some reluctance, "I can bear the pain of giving up something I value very much because you helped us last time, but you must help me with another task..."

"Help in doing what?" Han Shuo privately thought that Phoebe had indeed been scheming early on. Although he felt angry, he didn't let it show on his face and responded with a grave face.

"Fight by my side and assist me in killing the two lackeys most loyal to Grover – Darnell and Yuna, those two b\*tches that should be hacked to death by a thousand cuts!" Frost grew on Phoebe's charming face as she spoke through gritted teeth.

"What are their strength, respectively?" Han Shuo's face was calm as he asked.

"Darnell is a senior swordsman and his strength is almost at the level of breaking through to swordmaster, while Yuna is a fire adept mage and her

strength is extremely frightening. The two are a couple who are beyond depraved and exceedingly shameless. They basically do not spend long amounts of time apart from each other. They currently both live within the Boozt Merchant Guild. If you're willing to aid me, I have a sixty percent chance of assassinating them without a sound!" Phoebe's body abruptly straightened, highlighting the soaring twin peaks in front of her chest as she spoke excitedly.

"I promise to help you!" Han Shuo didn't hesitate as he spoke in a low voice.

# Chapter 71: A moment of grace before the prelude of assassination

After spending an entire day preparing, Han Shuo and Phoebe took a carriage at dusk to the Boozt Merchant Guild in the southern part of the city.

Han Shuo and Phoebe sat shoulder to shoulder within the carriage. Two primitively simplistic crossbows, decorated with intricate carvings, were placed in front of the two. In addition to this, there was a dagger that sparkled with cold light.

“This crossbow and dagger will be of much better quality than the ones you obtained from the orc wolf riders last time. I’m giving all of these to you for free.” Phoebe held a clean piece of silk in her hands, carefully wiping away at the longsword in her hands as she spoke coldly to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo played with the crossbow and dagger in his hands, so delighted with them that he could hardly bear to put them down. He was quite satisfied with Phoebe’s generosity and said with a light laugh, “Don’t count on me too much for this operation, I’m not as strong as you think I am. My main purpose is to keep a lookout and act as your supporting assistant. You’re still going to be the one who has to take action.”

“I know, just listen to my orders later. I’ll be telling you what to do then.” Phoebe rolled her eyes at Han Shuo and said with some anger.

Han Shuo took out a small bottle from within his space ring and carefully poured some powder onto his fingertip, very cautiously coating the tips of both the dagger and crossbow bolts. He hastily and repeatedly cleaned the fingertip that had been covered by the powder.

Phoebe was a bit curious about Han Shuo’s actions and slightly shifted her body closer to where he was sitting, proceeding to stare at and observe his actions for quite a while. She finally asked, seemingly perplexed, “What are you doing?”



A strand of fragrance, similar to the scent of orchids, wafted into Han Shuo's mouth and nose as Phoebe moved closer to him. He involuntarily flicked a glance at her as his heart suddenly lurched. Phoebe was like Han Shuo today, dressed in tight-fitting, black, nightwalker clothes. The tight nightwalker clothing caused Phoebe's marvelous body to become visible without a doubt. She had a pair of exquisitely chiseled cheeks, and stunning beauty which blossomed from the movement of her clear eyes. All of which caused Han Shuo to have a heart like a capering monkey and a mind like a galloping horse.

I already have Fanny... although this Phoebe is pretty, her personality is too cold and she comes with too much dangerous baggage. Han Shuo said silently to himself and turned his head away afterwards, continuing to concentrate on coating the dagger and crossbow bolts. He responded diffidently, "Nothing much, just applying some poison powder to my weapons."

"Despicable! Shameless! This goes against the regulations of the Empire. If anyone were to know of your actions, you would be in great trouble!" Phoebe's face was full of contempt as she spoke coldly.

"Doesn't matter... what we're about to do today isn't the most honorable task anyways. Besides, no one will find out about this. Heh heh, you're my accomplice and even I don't believe that you're dumb enough to rat yourself out." Han Shuo cackled a low, evil laugh as he spoke with a trace of pride.

Phoebe was a bit suffocated by her anger upon hearing Han Shuo's words, but since she had looked to him for help, she could only snort coldly and couldn't say much else.

When Han Shuo had applied poison powder to all the crossbow bolt and his dagger, he thought for a moment and pulled a few iron needles from his thigh. He spared no trouble and was exceedingly patient as he also applied the same poison powder to the iron needles. Phoebe once again snorted lightly, seeming to hold Han Shuo's methods in high contempt.

When he'd settled everything appropriately, Han Shuo put away all his

weapons and looked at Phoebe, asking, "Right, why are you not directly attacking Grover and are attempting to kill his two ineffectual lackeys instead?"

"Grover has some critical items belonging to the Guild in his possession, he's put those items in a trusted mistress. If Grover dies, his mistress is sure to publicly reveal those items. This would be of destructive impact to us. So before I kill Grover, I must find his mistress first and regain control of those items." Phoebe glanced sideways at Han Shuo, explaining with some reluctance.

The larger a merchant guild was, the more likely shady dealings would occur. Take the resources that Han Shuo had seized from the orc wolf riders for example. These items had originally belonged to the shops of the town of Drol. The Empire had long since had an official regulation that if citizens obtained such resources, they must be turned in.

Fabian and Han Shuo's transaction had already violated the Empire's regulations. If the Empire were to find out about the methods of the Boozt Merchant Guild, the Guild was sure to find it hard to escape their inevitable punishment. For a guild like the Boozt Merchant Guild, there were surely more similarly illegal transactions. It looked like this critical matters was handled by Grover. No wonder Phoebe didn't dare to act rashly against Grover.

The two discussed some of the details in low voices until the horse carriage suddenly stopped unbeknownst to anyone. The groom at the front said softly, "Miss, we've arrived at the back door of the guild."

"Let's go!" Phoebe glanced at Han Shuo and took the lead in alighting. Han Shuo poked his head out to look around and then hopped off as well.

"Miss, hurry inside. Be careful. Grover has just taken a few strong men and left the guild. I don't know where they've gone. They always return at the end of the night." An old man in the Boozt Merchant Guild was guarding the back door and hastily turned his body to the side to allow Phoebe and Han Shuo to enter when he saw them arrive..

"We've caused you to go to great efforts!" Phoebe said to the old man.

She glanced at Han Shuo as they rushed inside the guild. Han Shuo followed tightly behind Phoebe as he, too, quickly moved forward.

“Although the Guild is mostly controlled by Grover’s men, I can mobilize a few older men, and this is all because Grover isn’t aware of my relationship with them. There are many guards inside, so we must be careful and cautious. Otherwise, not only will the assassination fail if we’re discovered, but it would be hard to even escape with our lives.” Phoebe was exceedingly familiar with the Boozt Merchant Guild as she evaded quite a few areas with guards when she lead Han Shuo with a fast pace. She didn’t forget to remind Han Shuo during this time.

It was completely dark now. There was no moon tonight and thick layers of dark-colored clouds completely absorbed all light. The few lights along the hallways of the Boozt Merchant Guild were unable to shine out too far.

Phoebe had the strength of a swordmaster alright. Her agile body greatly surprised Han Shuo. Her body flew soundlessly and her speed was exceedingly fast.

His magical yuan churning madly, Han Shuo was greatly astounded by the extraordinariness of his senses when he calmed down. The black night was completely unable to obstruct his range of vision. Even without the illumination of lights, Han Shuo could clearly see the fish swimming in the pools beneath the artificial mountains in the far distance. He could also clearly hear the footsteps coming from quite a distance away and the rustlings of low voices within passing rooms.

Han Shuo’s calm walk was also agile and fast beyond comparison. He was like a hunting cheetah, searching for his prey, following soundlessly behind Phoebe.

Suddenly, Han Shuo quickly approached and grabbed Phoebe, abruptly hauling her body and stuffing themselves into a crack in the surrounding artificial mountains.

The crack in the artificial mountains was exceedingly narrow, and their chests were tightly mashed against each other as they squeezed inside.

Han Shuo could feel the fully rounded peaks in front of Phoebe's chest. Her charming face was infuriated as she glared fiercely at Han Shuo, her eyes seeming like they could spit out fire.

"Shh!" Extending a finger to make a silencing motion, Han Shuo's eyes rolled rapidly, indicating to Phoebe that there was an unexpected situation.

The wrath on Phoebe's face still didn't dissipate upon Han Shuo's actions. A trace of bashful red flooded Phoebe's slender, white neck and nape. Their two thighs were somewhat enmeshed and rubbing against each other, they could even feel each other's heartbeat through their connecting chests. A strand of of ambiguous atmosphere started to emanate between the two of them.

Seemingly too shy to look at Han Shuo, Phoebe's cheek made its way next to Han Shuo's ear as she said in an incredibly low voice, her breath like orchids, "I will kill you if there isn't anything going on."

Han Shuo's expression was wry as he regulated his breathing and concentrated, not saying anything. He felt the exceedingly light footsteps draw near. His breathing became slower and he even slightly shook his head, wanting to warn Phoebe of danger. Who knew that because Phoebe was pursing her jade lips in a low whisper to Han Shuo, Han Shuo's shake of his head actually caused Phoebe's tantalizing lips to directly plaster themselves onto Han Shuo's cheeks.

Just as Phoebe's breathing was uneasy and about to erupt into rage, Han Shuo turned his head with extreme difficulty and used a very resolute gaze to tell Phoebe to be careful.

Phoebe had the training of a swordmaster after all, and the strength of her mental state was quite strong. She merely inhaled a deep breath at this critical moment and immediately calmed her rapidly beating heart. However, because of her deep breath, the full peaks in front of her chest involuntarily lifted, rising so that Han Shuo almost lost control and moaned.

"My wind screen truly felt a disturbance and I came here at the fastest

speed possible. Why didn't I discover anything? Have I been too careful lately?" The murmuring sound of a man talking to himself sounded out, not too far away from the two.

Exceedingly light footsteps only slowly sounded in the vicinity after the voice came into earshot. If Phoebe hadn't raised her concentration to the utmost, it would have been exceedingly difficult to detect these footsteps unless the man had been quite close by.

Since he was a wind mage, he could indeed use enhancement magics of the wind major to greatly decrease the weight of his body. His walking speed would be faster than normal mages and warriors, and his footsteps would be even more lithe with no sound. No wonder that even with Phoebe's strength as a swordmaster, she was able to detect his movement only after he drew near.

This person surveyed the surroundings, finally departing without a sound while Han Shuo and Phoebe remained on tenterhooks.

However, Phoebe didn't dare take reckless actions this time. She was deathly afraid that her judgment would be flawed. Her pair of clear eyes bore straight into Han Shuo, as if wishing to gain some clues from Han Shuo's face.

After a while, Han Shuo exhaled lightly and said lowly, "He's gone!"

As soon as his voice sounded, Phoebe used her hands and legs together to firmly squirm out from the crack of the artificial mountains. She lowered her head and said lightly with a fierce tone, "I'll let it pass this time, but the next time something like this occurs, find a more spacious place, otherwise I won't let you off."

Phoebe circled around the area after she'd finished speaking and was about to head in another direction. She walked two steps and realized that Han Shuo was smiling wryly, having yet to catch up. She stuck her hands on her waist and lightly rebuked, "You don't want the black gold ore anymore?"

"Coming!" Han Shou responded and followed with some resignation, thinking when can I find a spacious hiding place when things go south!

They didn't meet with any more unexpected twists afterwards. Phoebe led Han Shuo on a longer path, avoiding a few waves of guards and finally making it into Darnell and Yuna's room.

"Let's set things up, make our preparations, and wait for this dog couple to come back!" Phoebe immediately spoke through gritted teeth upon entering the room, seeming to want to vent her frustrations from earlier on the two of them.

Therefore, Han Shuo and Phoebe started working busily, preparing to assassinate Grover's loyal lackeys who were about to return.

# Chapter 72: An alarmingly breathtaking completion of an assassination

Phoebe and Han Shuo had set up the room accordingly after a while.

“Why were you able to so miraculously discover traces of the wind mage Ellis when he made his way over?” Phoebe creased her brow, perplexed, and looked at Han Shuo in inquiry as she was inspecting the inside of the room.

Han Shuo was stooped close to the ground at this moment and carefully collected some sawdust from scraps of wood. He conscientiously stored it within his space ring and responded without lifting his head. “This is my business and has nothing to do with you!”

Snorting lightly, Phoebe shut her mouth, but couldn’t help but observe Han Shuo’s actions after a while. She gave an involuntary cry of astonishment, “Were you a killer before? How come you are so steady and cautious right now, and even possess such extraordinary perception?”

If it was Han Shuo’s original personality, he naturally wouldn’t face any matter with such a steady and cautious mentality, but his magical training forced him to continually exist in a state of enduring inhumane pain, unconsciously creating Han Shuo’s firm and indomitable personality.

After the trials of the Dark Forest and Claude’s death, Han Shuo’s careful prudence and steadiness had been unconsciously and soundlessly trained into being. Add to that his extraordinary perception – this truly gave Han Shuo the characteristics of a professional killer. No wonder Phoebe would dare to ask.

“No, do you think I’m you? Tonight, I’ve been operating under your watchful instructions ever since we entered the Guild up until our preparations just now. I think that you certainly wouldn’t have grasped such methods if it weren’t for certain experiences. Looks like you were the one who was a killer before, otherwise why would you be so well-practiced?” Han Shuo finally cleared the sawdust from the bed panels and

raised his head to rake Phoebe with his eyes.

“You’re the one who was a killer before!” Phoebe rolled her eyes coldly at Han Shuo. She continued to say, “However, my honored master has passed onto me knowledge of these matters. The particulars of assassinating someone was also one of my required subjects of study.”

“Oh. Looks like your master was a very proficient killer!” Han Shuo said diffidently.

“Shut your mouth, don’t you dare slander my honored master. My honored master is a true swordsman. He wouldn’t do such things!” Phoebe’s face was even colder as she glared ferociously at Han Shuo.

It was at this moment that faint footsteps could be heard approaching from afar. Han Shuo’s brow knitted as he carefully discerned them. He said to Phoebe, “They should be coming back, I can hear them!”

Phoebe also focused on her hearing and listened. She only heard the sound of footsteps draw near a few breaths after Han Shuo’s warning had sounded. She looked at him in shock and said in a low voice, “No matter how strong or weak your strength is, you’re already quite frightening just based on your foresight and extraordinary senses.”

Han Shuo didn’t respond and moved according to Phoebe’s earlier instructions. He crouched down, turned to the side, and rolled underneath the bed. Upon seeing that Han Shuo was in position, Phoebe scanned the four corners of the room with her beautiful eyes and suddenly sprang upwards. Leveraging the chandelier in the room, she hid herself in the shadows of the rafters.

Holding his breath and concentrating, Han Shuo slowed down the frequency of his breaths and heart rate, until he was appeared to be dead. His mind completely clear, Han Shuo rifled through his mind, going over the items they had set up in the room once more in his mind, then placing all of his concentration on the people arriving.

At this moment, footsteps sounded at a volume in which even normal people could hear. The coy laughter of a man and woman flirting sounded from far out the room door, accompanied by various sounds of them



making out.

The room door creaked open as the two of them slowly walked in, slowly approaching the bed under which Han Shuo was concealed.

“Darling, were you feeling that itchy today that you had to be so wild at the banquet tonight? Who’s caught your eye now?” Darnell laughed softly as he teased Yuna.

“What’s my business is mine, are you a beast that only knows how to think with your lower body? You only have that b\*tch Phoebe in your heart now. If it wasn’t for you wanting to do something last time, we would’ve completed Grover’s mission and killed that b\*tch. Her guards got there in time because of your mistake, we almost didn’t get out in time.” Yuna berated Darnell. She’d already sat down on the edge of the bed.

“Heh heh, her skin is as smooth as silk and her face seems like it was exquisitely sketched by a painter. It’s said that she hasn’t had a man yet. Wouldn’t it be such a pity for her if such a beauty doesn’t experienced the manliness of my strength before she dies?” Darnell leered.

At this moment, Han Shuo’s concentration had been raised to the utmost. Although Darnell and Yuna couldn’t detect Phoebe waiting in ambush, Han Shuo could hear her heartbeat and breathing quicken. It looked like she was exceedingly furious. He gave an internal start of surprise and concealed himself even more carefully, ready to act, in case Phoebe sprang the ambush earlier than planned.

“Damned lecher, you’ll die beneath the crotch of a woman someday!”

“Heh heh, I’ll let you die beneath my crotch first!”

The shifting sounds of clothes being taken off slowly spread throughout the room, mixed in with Darnell’s depraved laughter and Yuna’s light panting sounds.

Sucking and kissing sounds followed after as Darnell’s depraved laughter and Yuna’s moans grew louder and louder. The wooden bed above Han Shuo’s head became a small boat in the midst of large waves as it rocked endlessly. A wailing moan, like someone crying, suddenly

emerged from Yuna's mouth, followed by the sounds of repeated smacking sounds and heavy pants fillings the ears, mixed in with Yuna's uncontrollable wails in between.

Beneath the bed, Han Shuo could hear the sounds from above and could feel the bed swaying. He knew, without needing to see, that the depraved couple above him had started their battle. His blood boiling, Han Shuo couldn't help but imagine the scene going on just above him, and he desperately wanted to climb out and take a good look. His body had long since uncontrollably risen in a certain male fashion.

An exceedingly light breathing sound came within Han Shuo's earshot. He started, and immediately detected that this sound came from Phoebe, who was still up in the rafters. He wondered if she was furious or also similarly affected.

Han Shuo could only hear the sounds from beneath the bed, whereas Phoebe had to continuously keep an eye on the two. She probably had caught a huge eyeful of their motions. Because even the slightest break in concentration wouldn't be allowed during an assassination operation, Phoebe couldn't even move her gaze away from the two. According to Darnell's words, Phoebe was still a maiden. This type of stimulus was probably more effective to her than to Han Shuo, who was stuck underneath the bed and unable to see anything that was going on.

After a while, just as Han Shuo noticeably heard Phoebe's breathing hitch higher and was afraid that she would be unable to further conceal herself, but the movements of the depraved couple above him became more and more intense. Enormous panting and moaning sounds grew louder as the movement of the bed frame grew bigger. Things had obviously reached the climax.

Just at this moment, a light sound pierced the air. Han Shuo's entire body tensed when it sounded, immediately knowing that Phoebe had already made her move. He focused all the concentration in his body.

"Ow!" Yuna cried out in pain and abruptly yelled out, "Assassin!"

Before Yuna has even finished saying the word "assassin", the dagger in

Han Shuo's hand was already aimed at a hole, that had been previously bored through the bedframe, and he stabbed it ferociously through the hole.

A ghastly wail ten times more desolate than Yuna's suddenly sounded out from Darnell's mouth, like a pig being slaughtered. The minds of the two quickly cleared up from the original heights that they had almost scaled. They screamed continuously as they jumped from the bed and made for the room outside, the cries of agony never once ceased to flow from their mouths.

Han Shuo had already rolled out from beneath the bed after his stab. He raised his head to see that Phoebe's body was enveloped by the black nightwalker cloak, and that a ball of milky-white aura was flaring out from the longsword in her hand. The ball of aura was lustrous and brilliant in the dimness of the room. It dazzled so brightly that one could barely keep their eyes open, and it closed in on Darnell and Yuna, who were attempting to make their escape.

Han Shuo lifted the crossbow in his hand and realized that both were completely naked when he aimed and fired at Darnell. There was already a crossbow bolt stuck on Yuna's snow-white left thigh, and she gritted her teeth with pain as she moved, her body was obviously not as agile as before. Darnell was even worse off, as the lower half of his body was a mess of blood and flesh. He wore a devastated expression of tragedy, wailing continuously like a wolf.

Who would've thought that this dagger would stab directly into Darnell's private parts. No wonder his cries were a lot more desolate than Yuna's, Han Shuo thought in happy viciousness.

The crossbow bolt flew out like lightning and shot towards Darnell's back. Darnell could actually still detect the danger from behind him when he was in the throes of horror and fright. Dark green light flared from the longsword he had long since wielded and demolished Han Shuo's crossbow bolt with an abrupt spin.

A wall of water suddenly appeared after a hastily muttered incantation.

The dark blue wall of water enveloped their two heads and turned Phoebe's milky-white fighting aura into a sky full of rain, watering their two bodies.

But the appearance of this wall of water was timely and won a few seconds of time for the two. The two screamed and ran for the outside of the room, but halfway through the room, the hanging chandelier suddenly crashed down, forcing Darnell to halt his steps again and smash the chandelier to the side.

Phoebe had already descended from the rafters by this time and Han Shuo had just fired his crossbow. They rushed the two at the same time like cheetahs. Phoebe had planned on finishing off Darnell, but displayed a trace of panic and disgust when she saw his naked body. She shifted her sights and longsword to Yuna.

The crossbow in Han Shuo's hand fired again and was then flung to the side. Just when Darnell had demolished the crossbow bolt, Han Shuo's dagger was already rushing to greet him. Darnell had already sunken into a crazed frenzy and due to the pain and heartache of losing his manhood, he increased his fighting aura to the maximum and clashed with Han Shuo's dagger.

Pffsht.

A mouthful of fresh blood splurged out as Darnell's wild fighting aura rushed into Han Shuo's body. Although he had the restraints of the magical yuan, it still wasn't enough to fully defend against it. Han Shuo stumbled a few steps backwards after that clash.

Upon seeing Han Shuo hastily retreat after clashing with this sword, Darnell wanted to crazily pursue Han Shuo, but he suddenly discovered that the longsword in his hand was boiling hot, and that the skin of the right hand, that was grasping the sword was suffering from extreme burning pain. He immediately flung out the longsword in his shock.

"Hurry and run!" Yuna called out at this moment.

A water serpent had appeared at some time and had surrounded Phoebe, attacking fiercely. Except, part of its body would be severed whenever

Phoebe waved her sword, turning into watery mist before it even hit the floor.

Darnell glared viciously at Han Shuo, but didn't pursue him further. He covered his lower body with his left hand and continued rushing out the door.

At this moment, Han Shuo's ears caught the sound of faint footsteps coming from afar. Agitated internally, he once again rushed towards the two. Phoebe had also destroyed the water serpent by now and chased the two with speed that was on par with Han Shuo's.

Han Shuo and Phoebe both understood that if they didn't kill these two now, they would no longer have the chance to once they left the room. Therefore, they strived with all their might to keep the two in the room.

At this moment, a prearranged prop was curiously effective. Han Shuo had made some modifications to the table legs of a round table set in front of the door. In their unparalleled haste, the two didn't circle around the round table, but actually leap towards it, intending to use it as a lever to quickly leave the room.

The unexpected happened. Their two bodies landed on the table, and the table legs all broke with a sharp crack as they were unable to hold the weight of the two bodies that had suddenly landed on it.

The two of them had already used all their strength to begin with, planning on using the table as a stepping stone to push off of, but the table collapse caused their bodies to lose balance. With the sudden lack of a support, their bodies followed the table in a wobbly fall.

Han Shuo and Phoebe had both arrived at this moment. Phoebe's sword stabbed out, her aura already enclosing the two.

The two had just regained their balance when they saw that they had been fully surrounded by Phoebe's fighting aura. Darnell suddenly pulled Yuna and, under her terrified and panic stricken eyes, thrust her straight into Phoebe's attack. He didn't even turn back to look at Yuna as he gave no second thoughts about anything else, rushing out of the room.

However, the poison powder that Han Shuo had applied to the dagger finally took effect. Darnell's footsteps suddenly became as heavy as a thousand tons after he took two steps. Han Shuo swiftly closed the distance before he had time to react and waved the dagger again, taking his life.

After killing Darnell, Han Shuo's eyes fell on the space ring on Darnell's fingers. He reached his hand out for it, but felt that it took a bit of effort to do so.

Time was of the essence and Han Shuo ended up chopping off Darnell's middle finger with a slash of the dagger. He put away the finger with the space ring and turned his head to see that a bloody hole had opened in Yuna's chest. Phoebe seemed to have killed her.

"Let's go!" Han Shuo called out softly, rushing to Phoebe's side. A light fragrance suddenly emanated from Yuna and Phoebe's direction. Han Shuo took in a breath, but paid it no heed. He only saw that the look in Phoebe's eyes were a bit strange, and rushed at the girl, who was staring off into space.

He used the same method to break off the ring finger on Yuna's left hand, taking her space ring as well. He grabbed the crossbows that had been discarded with a smooth motion, and grabbed Phoebe, and with a mighty leap, using a hole that had opened in the roof previously, and made their escape along the roof.

# Chapter 73: Pervert, what have you done to me?

Around midnight, Han Shuo and Phoebe had just left when Grover brought a pack of Boozt Merchant Guild guards and barged into the room.

“Who did it, who did it? I’ve spent so many gold coins to keep you guys in vain. Not a single one of you discovered that an assassin had snuck in. If the target was me, then it likely wouldn’t be those two on the ground.” Grover immediately started bawling furiously upon entering the room, yelling at the people behind him.

“Mister Grover, this assassin was very proficient. He managed to avoid my windwall and assassinated both Darnell and Yuna in such a short amount of time. This proves that the killer’s strength is absolutely beyond our imagination.” A mage with long hair and a somewhat ugly expression said to Grover after observing for a while.

Exhaling lightly, Grover looked at the long-haired mage and said in an apologetic tone, “My apologies Ellis, I was a bit out of line.”

The wind mage Ellis was still expressionless, and looked at the dead Darnell’s left hand with some surprise. He went, “Eh?” And walked up to the body, noticing that the left hand was missing a finger. Ellis asked, perplexed, “The left middle finger, on which Darnell wears his space ring, has been chopped off. What’s going on?”

“Not only Darnell, but Yuna as well. Could it be that this killer killed them because he wanted to rob them?” Grover was also a bit confused and asked after hearing Ellis’ words.

“Impossible.” Ellis denied decisively and looked around the surroundings, explaining. “If the assassins wished to kill them for the sole purpose of robbing them, then he never would’ve picked these two, because the two of them together are the most difficult to fight against. Not to mention there are many valuable items within the Guild. If he only wanted valuables, he wouldn’t have needed to do anything to them. With

the abilities demonstrated by the killer, he absolutely could have obtained more from the Guild without making a single sound.”

Grover thought for a bit after his words and nodded. He said with a darkened face, “If he wasn’t in it to murder for gain, then it must have been thanks to my dear niece Phoebe. It seems like she finally couldn’t bear it longer after enduring things for so long.”

“Indeed, Phoebe must be behind this. Darnell and Yuna both tried to assassinate Phoebe once. Although they retreated when they didn’t succeed, I feel that Phoebe must know that it was the two of them.

After all, Darnell’s gaze towards Phoebe was simply too lecherous and unique. Even I, an outsider, could tell. As the one involved, Phoebe must have had an even better understanding of things. The fact that we’re fine, and they’re the only ones who have died is enough to explain things. Except, it seems that the killer is a bit greedy. Otherwise he wouldn’t have remembered to take their space rings in such dangerous circumstances. When did such a character appear beside Phoebe?” Ellis furrowed his brow and said slowly while turning things over in his mind.

Grover started and mused deeply for a while. His face suddenly darkened and he said coldly, “I know who. It must be that “Bryan” who killed those three assassins from ‘Shadow Ghost’ a while back. I heard the guards say that this person came to do some business with Fabian and thus needed some money. Since his strength is enough to kill three of the senior swordsmen sent by ‘Shadow Ghost’, then he would have the strength to kill Darnell and Yuna.

Damnit, how did Phoebe get her hands on this kid. I don’t know where Phoebe’s hidden him. He hasn’t appeared by Phoebe’s side since he left the Guild last time. I’ve sent people to surveil where he is, but have still been unable to find traces of him. This will be quite difficult.”

Nodding, Ellis concluded. “Looks like it is him. I think we should get rid of this person first at all costs. Otherwise we may be killed by him in due time.”

“Alright, pass my orders on, not to kill Phoebe for now. Put forth all



effort into finding this person. He's ruined my plans twice, and I'm going to make his existence a living hell." Grover's face was sinister as he spoke coldly.

At this moment, Han Shuo, deeply hated by Grover, had already brought Phoebe far away from the Boozt Merchant Guild and was rushing towards Phoebe's quarters in the northern part of the city.

Something was odd with Phoebe, as she seemed a bit out of it. Her body was sluggish and hot to the touch. Han Shuo was dragging her in his haste to cover distance. The two of them were dressed in nightwalker clothes and chose to thread through small alleyways in the dark of the night, staying completely out of sight.

But as they neared the northern part of the city, the city guards started appearing more frequently, forcing Han Shuo to continuously hide and evade. Phoebe had still known to make good time when dragged behind Han Shuo, but at this moment, her steps started to drag as her body grew hotter and hotter.

With no alternatives, Han Shuo flung Phoebe onto his back, completely disregarding whether or not she agreed. In order to avoid the attention of the city guard, Han Shuo temporarily gave up his idea to send Phoebe back to her quarters and took her to the cemetery behind the Babylon Academy of School and Magic instead.

It was the quietest place he knew, and no one patrolled there. Add to that, Han Shuo was exceedingly familiar with the area, and that was why this was the first place he thought of in a time of crisis like this.

When Han Shuo had circled past the northern part of the city with Phoebe on his back and made it past some narrow roads into a forest patch, he suddenly felt that Phoebe, on his back, was tearing at her own clothes and her two hands were roving unconsciously over Han Shuo's body.

Astonished, Han Shuo's body suddenly stopped. After relaxing, Han Shuo could clearly feel the well rounded mounds in front of Phoebe's chest pressed against his back, the wondrous sensation of them closely mashed

against his well defined back. A blaze of fire suddenly ignited from his chest, uncontrollable like the sparks of a fire. Add to that Phoebe's restless hands were still unconsciously moving all over Han Shuo's chest, and it finally grew so stimulating, that Han Shuo could no longer control himself.

He swung Phoebe down from his back and suddenly held her marvelous body in his hands. He thrust Phoebe's body onto a tree nearby, and Han Shuo's two hands moved in tandem, kneading the forbidden areas of Phoebe's body.

Even with the nightwalker clothes separating them, Han Shuo could see feel the wondrous curves of Phoebe's bodies. Her well-rounded chest kept changing shape beneath Han Shuo's ministrations and when his hand roamed over Phoebe's slender legs and pert bottom, the amazing, strong stimulus attacked Han Shuo's senses, making him want to experience it even deeper.

Phoebe had yanked her own face mask off, and at this moment her eyes were glassy, filled with the tempting lure of desire. Her stunningly beautiful face burned to the touch and brought with it a heart leaping beauty. The faint fragrance emitted by the breaths between her open mouth made Han Shuo's heart caper like a monkey and mind gallop like a horse. He was about to lose himself in it entirely.

Han Shuo's right hand tore off a piece of Phoebe's nightwalker outfit near the chest. The snow white expanse of her breasts immediately blossomed in front of Han Shuo's eyes, along with a dot of pinkish red.

Han Shuo finally couldn't contain himself and he lost control of the strength in his right hand.

"Oh... ow."

At this moment, a small, feeble protest came out from Phoebe's small mouth. Her beautiful brows quirked vaguely because of the pain coming from her breasts, finally unconsciously mouthing a weak sign of pain.

Calmness blindsiding his mind, Han Shuo abruptly came to his senses. When he looked at Phoebe, he also recalled that he too had taken in a

breath of that odd scent earlier. He immediately understood that Phoebe had fallen victim to an aphrodisiac, and also reflected that his loss of rational thought was likely because he had taken in a breath of the same toxin.

His thoughts spinning furiously, Han Shuo measured up his potential gains and losses and resolutely gathered Phoebe in his arms again, furiously dashing out to the front.

Han Shuo was very familiar with this area and came to a winding creek after not too long. The creek was quite narrow, and he wasn't sure where it led to either, but he knew that this river was very shallow due to often frequenting in the area.

As soon as he reached the river, Han Shuo walked directly into the waters, still holding Phoebe. Because it was almost winter, the weather was exceedingly frigid. The river waters were even more icy in the middle of the night, and when Han Shuo carried Phoebe into the water and splashed some water onto her head, Phoebe suddenly sneezed a few times.

Han Shuo also submerged his head into water and when the ice cold water covered his head, it chilled his previous urges. His body's reactions also completely calmed down.

"Achoo... achoo..."

After Phoebe sneezed a few times, her mind slowly came back to her senses due to the effects of the cold river water. When she spat the cold water out of her mouth, the blush on her cheeks slowly disappeared and her glassy stare slowly disappeared.

"Where is this, why I am here? Achoo!" Phoebe looked around in confusion and sneezed again. When she lowered her head to sneeze, Phoebe abruptly realized that the two well-rounded peaks of her chest were exposed to the night air. The snow-white expanse of her skin and the dots of red at the peak greatly affected Phoebe.

Pa! Han Shuo's face had already suffered from a slap.

Phoebe's face held anger that was almost madness in its ferocity as she

screamed shrilly at Han Shuo, "Pervert, what have you done to me?!"

Han Shuo truly did feel a bit apologetic towards Phoebe at this moment, and he stammered, unable to speak clearly as he gazed upon a girl who was about to lose her mind. Phoebe suddenly broke out in loud sobs when she saw Han Shuo's reaction, instantly losing her usual cold arrogance and demureness. She gave no thought to anything else and began beating at Han Shuo with her fists and feet. Water splashed every which way in the creek and drenched Han Shuo.

But because Phoebe had suffered from such a great shock at this moment that she seemed to have completely forgotten that she was a strong swordmaster. She was more like a bad-tempered shrew, beating Han Shuo in a disorganized fashion without any fighting aura whatsoever.

If Phoebe had used fighting aura, with her strength as a swordmaster, even with Han Shuo's small accomplishments in magic, would cause him to be gravely injured, if not dead after her string of blows, but these types of attacks felt like scratching an itch when they landed on Han Shuo's strong body, not hurting in the slightest.

Han Shuo endured Phoebe's venting with a wry expression. When the strength behind her fists decreased more and more and she herself became tired, Han Shuo laughed wryly, "We were both under the influence of an aphrodisiac, but your body is still clean."

Phoebe came to her senses after Han Shuo spoke and halted the motions of her hands. She stood in front of Han Shuo with a distance spanning two fists, sizing him up with slightly puffy eyes, as if afraid to endure another shock. Her voice trembled as she asked, "Truly? You really didn't do that to me?"

Nodding his head firmly, Han Shuo held up his right hand in resignation and solemnly promised her, "I swear that I really didn't do anything inappropriate to you."

A trace of relieved joy suddenly appeared on Phoebe's beautiful, tear-streaked face. She was about to open her mouth and say something when she suddenly saw the nudity of her chest and hastily pulled the

nightwalker outfit up, covering her naked breasts. She lifted a head full of anger and glared at Han Shuo, roaring lowly through gritted teeth, "Then can you explain to me why the front of my clothes were ripped open?"

Shrugging his shoulders, Han Shuo said with a face full of innocence. "What does that have to do with me? You're the one who lost your mind and started ripping off your clothes. I controlled myself tightly and brought you here, using cold water to revive your senses. I am an honorable gentleman, don't misunderstand me."

"Screw your honorable gentlemanliness, you despicable, shameless, profit-seeking knave! You held my hand last time and hugged me without even a word of apology. You purposely took advantage of me in the crack of the artificial mountains in the Guild and didn't apologize. You've gone even further now, I'm going to chase you to the depths of hell for this!" Phoebe's face was full of wrath as she made threatening gestures and rushed at Han Shuo. Phoebe had obviously activated her fighting aura after coming to her senses this time.

Han Shuo was startled and knew that Phoebe had most likely remembered her clothes being torn in front of her was from his hands. He hastily turned and scrambled up the river bank, protesting his innocence along the way. "Miss Phoebe, listen to me. I also took in a breath of the aphrodisiac, causing my emotions to get out of control, but when I came to myself I immediately took you to this river. The heavens and earth are my witness, I really didn't take advantage of you.

When you were still under the influence, you also touched me all over and took advantage of me. Apart from you, no other girl has ever touched me before. I'm still a virgin. I'll have scars deep in my heart after being violated by you. I've also suffered losses, let's say that we're even for this matter. Don't pursue it any further..."

As Han Shuo ran away bedraggedly, words shot out of his mouth like bullets. It was as if he'd returned to the time when Chu Cang Lan had brought him to the moon and he'd let the old man have it with his words when Han Shuo lost his composure. Except, it was insults last time, and explanations this time.

“Shut up, you petty villain who should die a thousand, ten thousand times. Stop saying nonsense.” Phoebe’s clothes were drenched through at this time and her wet hair exuded another type of allure, but her motions with her sword in her hands were quite violent.

“Forget it, count me unlucky. I’ll be leaving now and will come find you for the black gold ore after you’ve calmed down. Farewell.” Han Shuo knew that there was no use in talking to Phoebe at this time. A woman who’d lost her senses was the scariest magical creature in the world, not to mention one who was a swordswoman. The danger of this to Han Shuo was on par with that of a super magical creature, like a dragon.

Sighing inside about how unlucky he was, Han Shuo didn’t dare slow down his footsteps as he quickly rushed out, making for the direction of the cemetery and slowly leaving Phoebe, who was unfamiliar with the terrain, far behind.

# Chapter 74: The little skeleton that wants to soar and fly

The first glimmers of dawn appeared in the sky after using the transportation matrix to return to the cemetery of death.

One full day and night had elapsed since his departure, and he hastened to move to the “Original Demon Cave” and infuse more fresh blood and magical yuan, finally breathing a sigh of relief after he did so.

The operation of the “Original Demon Cave” must not be halted for even a day. If fresh blood and magical yuan weren’t infused everyday, then the work of the previous twenty some odd days would be in vain.

Planting his butt firmly on the ground, the fighting aura that had rushed into his body from Darnell’s blow finally slowly started rampaging through his body. A sudden impact brought an upwelling of blood to Han Shuo’s throat – he almost spat out a mouthful of fresh blood again.

Happy instead of startled, he abruptly stood up and threw his head back in laughter. He quickly strode out of the cemetery of death, towards the waterfall that he used to train his magic. Han Shuo braved the long river rushing down and sat down in his usual place. His body wobbling strongly in the beginning, Han Shuo quickly sank again into his training mode.

For the next seven days, apart from infusing the “Original Demon Cave” with fresh blood and magical yuan at periodic intervals, Han Shuo stayed beneath the waterfall to train his magic.

Han Shuo’s strength improved in spades in the midst of harsh training. Leveraging the fighting aura that Darnell had left within his body and the violent force of the waterfall, Han Shuo reforged the meridians and bones of his chest, waist, and stomach. When Han Shuo felt that Darnell’s fighting aura no longer remained within him, he could clearly feel that his own body had emerged in an unprecedentedly better state.

In the next few days, Han Shuo halted all magical training and spent his time looking after the “Original Demon Cave” and studying the “Beginner

Magics of Necromancy”. He was now fully able to recite the latter from memory, and had basically committed it to memory.

Han Shuo had noted the parts in which he didn’t understand. As he continued to use the round, green ball to meditate, his mental strength grew with each passing day. Under his continual experimentation, he finally released the “Agony of the Soul” magic one day. Han Shuo was overjoyed and elated at that time. He understood that over the accumulation of several months and his greatly increased mental strength, he had finally graduated from the ranks of magic apprentice to being a novice mage.

A novice mage in necromancy could grasp the three magics of “Agony of the Soul”, summon zombies, and bone spears. Except after trying for quite a while, Han Shuo had only happened to cast “Agony of the Soul” by mistake. He was unable to release the other two magics of summoning zombies and bone spears no matter how he tried.

He connected that fact to the other of not being able to understand many parts of the “Beginner Magics of Necromancy”. Han Shuo understood that only perusing books was not the fastest nor best way to increase his knowledge of magic. It looked like he should look for Fanny and inquire about the areas he didn’t understand, as well as pick up the weapon forging materials that Phoebe had promised him, along with the black gold ore.

But before he’d return, Han Shuo still planned to finishing refining the “original demon”. The Original Demon Cave had been operating for a full 34 days and would be complete in two more days. Han Shuo was in no rush to leave immediately, and thus went to the dwarves’ village to socialize with them.

He came back to the mining cave again and mined for the entire day, obtaining a small piece of black iron ore and a couple pieces of iron and copper ore.

Han Shuo understood from Phoebe that black iron ore was a very rare and very valuable ore. He could often only obtain a very small piece after



mining for an entire day. Therefore, he directly stored the black iron ore within his space ring. When he returned to the cemetery of death afterwards, he threw all the iron and bronze ores into a space storage room within the great hall.

“Haha, this is interesting indeed. With these three “original demons”, I have three extra pairs of eyes. If I let them loose, I will no longer be afraid of being followed and ambushed. If I use the three “original demons” to assassinate others, it’ll be an absolute nightmare for my enemies!” Han Shuo laughed wildly as he repeatedly used his will to release and withdraw the “original demons” from and into his body, practicing tirelessly.

At this moment, the little skeleton, that had been lying in the “Original Demon Cave” all along, suddenly stood up, slowly climbing out of the pit. The seven bone spurs on its back actually started flapping furiously as its body shot towards the sky with a strong push from its legs.

The seven bone spurs on its back were divided into two rows, like the wings of an insect, with the remaining one pointing down at its butt like a tail. As it shot towards the air, it capered shakily, with the two rows of bone spurs whirring furiously and its tail wagging continuously. It seemed to be the steering wheel of a bike in helping him move agilely through thin air.

When the tail-like bone spur moved to the left, the little skeleton’s body would also shift to the left. When the bone spur waved to the right, the little skeleton’s body would fall to the right. It looked quite amazing!

Han Shuo was gobsmacked as he looked at the little skeleton descend in a wobbling fall, his face full of shock. He didn’t know how to react in the span of that moment.

After a while, the little skeleton fell from midair with a crack as the bones of its body emitted a long string of creaking sounds. The little skeleton seemed to be dazed from the fall as it staggered around in circles after picking itself and the bone dagger up, as if it was drunk.

“Damn brat, you’ve only learned how to walk for a few days and now you want to fly?!” Han Shuo felt a deep pain in his heart as he looked at the

little skeleton's current state. He hastily walked up to the little skeleton and knocked on the little skeleton's bright, smooth forehead.

An interesting thing happened! When Han Shuo knocked down with his finger, the little skeleton immediately stopped its drunken staggering and sat down hard like a child. It even extended a finger to scratch its head, seemingly unable to comprehend what it did wrong.

Han Shuo had protected the little skeleton with great care ever since first being summoned by Han Shuo. Under the continual refinement of his magical yuan, it started to display human-like behaviors. Han Shuo's feelings towards the little skeleton was far more than those he felt for anyone else in this world. He was worried to death when he saw it fall from high up in the air.

Han Shuo breathed a sigh of relief when he verified, with his own eyes, that the little skeleton hadn't shattered, and that it had only been rattled by the fall with nothing else worse for the wear.

After looking over it carefully, he suddenly realized that a few specks of dark red could be found within the inky blackness of the little skeleton's originally dark bones. It was no longer that pure, deep black. If it wasn't for his careful gaze, he likely would have been hard pressed to discover it.

"Eh, this is strange. The 'Original Demon Cave' was original meant to refine a small demon chief. He purposefully squirmed his way in and even had an expression of leisurely enjoyment. His body had undergone some changes as soon as he left the pit, and even wanted to imitate those demon generals in my body and fly. Looks like this brat has changed again. I wonder if these changes are for the better or for the worse. Even I don't know what this brat is now." Han Shuo carefully stared at the little skeleton in close observation and muttered to himself.

After a round of deep musings, in which Han Shuo realized that he couldn't understand the little skeleton's changes, he shook his head and thought no further. Looking at the now normal "Original Demon Cave" since the "original demon" general had emerged from it, Han Shuo started an incantation and sent the little skeleton back to the other dimension.

With his injuries recovered and the three “original demons” refined, and even the little skeleton recovering its mobility, Han Shuo traveled back to Ossen City through the transportation matrix when he thought of the incomprehensible magical knowledge and the black gold ore that Phoebe owed him for his services.

# Chapter 75: Close the doors, you get in bed first

Ossen City, the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

Han Shuo ate breakfast and first bought a set of new clothes, arriving at the academy later in the morning. He went to the library first and surreptitiously put back the two books of “The Foundations of Necromancy” and “A Magical Dictionary” that he had asked Jack to steal before. He then walked to Fanny’s lab.

The doors to the lab were open and Fanny was wearing black robes trimmed with gold, wearing a set of black framed glasses and holding a magic staff in her left hand. She held a pen in her right and was drawing some magical patterns on the pedestal in the center, explaining something with her speech.

Next to her, Fitch had put on the appearance of conscientious listening, but his eyes often travelled over Fanny’s face. Fanny had lost a few traces of her charming beauty with glasses on, but gained solemnness and the beauty of intellectuality. In Han Shuo’s eyes, her beauty wasn’t diminished at all, and he rather stared soulfully at her, mesmerized.

Fanny delivered a string of words then lifted her head to look at Fitch, who was busy staring off into space. She frowned, “Fitch, do you understand?”

Fitch suddenly woke up from his musings and nodded, smiling, “Master Fanny, you were very clear, I understand.”

When Fanny lifted her head to look at Fitch, she happened to see Han Shuo standing in front of the door. Han Shuo was now a bit taller than Fitch, and his body was muscular and well defined due to continuous training and fighting. He stood there with his spine straight, like a javelin, without the slightest bit of the usual, frail external appearance that mages usually possessed.

Fanny first blinked, a bit astonished by Han Shuo’s unnoticed changes,

but when Fanny also saw Han Shuo staring at her, mesmerized, her heart gave a leap and her face blushed red as well. Her right hand tightened on the pen and almost snapped the pen in two.

What's wrong with me? Fanny said to herself and involuntarily took a deep breath, seeming to pout as she glared at Han Shuo. She lifted her head to call out, "Long time no see Bryan. You've disappeared for a month after last time's training. Where have you been skulking around for so long that you only remembered to return now?"

Han Shuo's mentality immediately returned to normal after hearing Fanny's words. He laughed lightly, not waiting for her to greet him and strode purposefully into the room. He responded, "Last time's outing in the Dark Forest made me realize the many deficiencies in my abilities. That's why I borrowed a magic book and did some remedial studying on the foundational knowledge of magic. I've come to Master Fanny with some questions because I've encountered many difficulties."

"Huh. Who would believe you?! You're always so mysterious." Fanny rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, obviously not believing his words. She turned her head to look at Fitch, suddenly feeling that his presence was irritating, for some inexplicable reason. She instructed, "Fitch, I have a few more matters to discuss privately with Han Shuo. Since you understood my explanation, you can go back and practice well."

Fitch started. He hadn't seem to think that Fanny would want him to leave because of Han Shuo's appearance. He blanked for a while, then finally viciously glared at Han Shuo, saying lowly, "Errand slaves will always be errand slaves. It's not like you've become a real student just because you put on the uniform."

Fitch finally left after saying this. A smile was constantly apparent on Han Shuo's face, completely oblivious to Fitch's low mutterings. Han Shuo knew this was because of Fanny's attitude towards Fitch that caused Fitch to carry a grudge, but until Fitch took action to express his hatred, Han Shuo couldn't be bothered to spend an ounce of strength on him.

"Go and close the door tightly!" Fanny put down the pen and raked Han

Shuo with her gaze, instructing in an imposing manner as soon as Fitch had left.

Close the doors? Han Shuo's heart jumped, gazing upon Fanny with a deep and meaningful look. He displayed a trace of an odd smile, hastily got up, and hastened to say, "Alright alright, I'll go close the doors."

When Han Shuo had jubilantly and gleefully closed the doors to the lab, Fanny raked Han Shuo with another gaze and continued instructing, "Get on the bed first!"

Nodding his head like a chicken pecking corn, Han Shuo didn't even bother saying much this time and directly shucked off his shoes, falling directly backwards on the white bed. He proudly crossed his legs and smiled, "Master Fanny, you come over as well!"

Fanny watched Han Shuo with an amused expression as her mouth closed with an audible click. "Come, close your eyes first."

He had never been so docile as Han Shuo obediently closed his eyes, thinking dirty thoughts. A depraved smile blossomed on his face.

"Ah!"

A painful howl emitted from Han Shuo's mouth. He suddenly felt that a large surge of mental strength had invaded his mind, completely startlingly Han Shuo from his beautiful dreams.

When Han Shuo saw that Fanny was gazing at him with a small smile, he asked with a hint of anger in his voice, "Master Fanny, what are you doing?"

"Examining your body! Didn't I say last time that you're the subject of my experiments, and that I would use the school facilities to conduct a thorough examination on you when we returned to the school, like I've just done? What did you think I wanted to do with you after closing the doors and make you lie on the bed?" Fanny spoke with a face full of seriousness and glared at Han Shuo, but even with glasses on, they couldn't hide the proud smile in her eyes, one that was proud of successfully executing her scheme.

The Han Shuo of now was not the Han Shuo of before, he immediately discerned the joy in Fanny's eye with one glance. He sat up with a wry smile and said, "Forget it, don't examine me in the future. These things can't be explained by rational logic. If you truly turn me into an idiot by intruding my mind that way, my life will be over."

Fanny vaguely creased her brow in thought upon hearing Han Shuo's words and sighed involuntarily after a bit of contemplation. She smiled, "Forget it then. I'm willing to lose an experimental subject, but not a talented student."

Seeing that Fanny was letting him off the hook so easily, Han Shuo heaved a huge sigh of relief and immediately thanked Fanny sincerely. He then took out the book of "Beginner Magics of Necromancy" and started asking Fanny all the parts he didn't understand.

Upon seeing Han Shuo withdraw the "Beginner Magics of Necromancy" from his space ring, and then seeing that many parts of the book had been highlighted and noted by Han Shuo, Fanny immediately looked askance at Han Shuo. She exclaimed lightly, "You're already reading this book? Have you grasped all the magics that magic apprentices should know? Um... and you've taken a lot of notes. Looks like you really didn't slack off during this month... I've thought wrongly of you."

"Of course I've already grasped the magics that magic apprentices should know!" Han Shuo smiled.

He thought for a moment and released the "Agony of the Soul" magic in front of Fanny. Fanny immediately said, "Oh my goodness! Bryan, you're too amazing. You actually have enough mental strength to release the 'Agony of the Soul' magic. This means that your mental strength has truly reached the level of a novice mage. You're a genius, a true genius!"

Han Shuo wasn't sure if he was a genius or not, but he knew that his mental strength could only improve so rapidly due to that odd, green, round ball. He still hadn't figured out what this green, round ball was, but he was absolutely sure that it had something to do with the cemetery of death.

After a string of surprised exclamations from Fanny, Han Shuo started seriously asking Fanny all his questions about magical knowledge that he didn't know. As an adept mage, Fanny's constant homework had always been to teach students how to understand magic and was very familiar with this foundational knowledge. She went out of her way to resolve all of Han Shuo's difficult questions.

During the process, the two were quite close to each other and Han Shuo could smell the fragrance wafting off of Fanny's body. Their gazes would interlock during explanations and have a sense of mutual admiration due to shared enlightenment. Fanny didn't feel distaste at Han Shuo being so close to her, and would actually clap his shoulder as she complimented him whenever he clearly understood one of her explanations.

Time passed unknowingly in Fanny's lab. The two of them had conversed for several hours, yet Fanny wasn't the slightest bit impatient. She seemed rather delighted and would never be bored because she had met a good student.

It wasn't until when the bells started ringing that Fanny came to herself with a shock. When she recovered her senses, she said lightly, "Oh no, I almost forgot that I still needed to preside over class at the training fields later this afternoon. Bryan, your comprehension abilities are very high. Looks like you've chosen the right path in learning necromancy magic, but let's stop here for today, I'm going to the training fields to teach my class, do you want to come with me?"

Shaking his head, Han Shuo smiled, "I'd rather not. I've already thoroughly grasped some of the lower level magics. I've understood from you today many of the things that I didn't previously understand, and need some time to carefully think about them. I won't be going to the training fields."

Nodding, Fanny didn't press further and hastily cleaned up the lab. She picked up a book, adjusted her collar, and said, "That works too. You can come find meet with me in private in the next couple of days and I'll help you go over the areas that you don't understand. Oh. right. Lisa seems to have been very worried that you were gone for so long. She asked me



where you went?”

“Heh heh, I haven’t been up to much. Please tell her not to worry. I’ll be going now, and will come disturb you quite often in the next few days. Thank you in advance, Master Fanny.” Han Shuo said carelessly and left before Fanny left her lab. He thought for a bit, avoided the crowded areas, and started walking outside the Academy.

After leaving the Academy, Han Shuo circled past two roads very carefully, finally making his way towards Phoebe’s residence.

Han Shuo vaguely felt that he was in a bad place after the assassination at the Boozt Merchant Guild. Not only had he offended Grover, but it was likely that even Phoebe held a grudge against him, but for the black gold ore, Han Shuo had to grit his teeth and come find Phoebe again. He only hoped that the past ten or so days had been enough to calm her temper.

The same old butler answered the door again, with Fabian coming by shortly after Han Shuo had walked in because he’d heard the news. He still wore a faint smile when he saw Han Shuo, saying, “Bryan, how come you have time to swing by today?”

Smiling wryly, Han Shuo shook his head and sighed, “Don’t mention it. I helped your young miss assassinate Darnell and Yuna in the Boozt Merchant Guild last time, but somehow offended your Miss Phoebe. Not only did I receive no compensation, but she actually beat me up. Terribly unlucky!”

“Oh? Although Miss Phoebe comes from a wealthy family, she isn’t the type to throw a tantrum without cause. What happened between you and Miss Phoebe? After she came back in the dead of the night that day, she spent the next couple of days being angry. I happened to overhear her curse you as despicable, shameless, and disgusting. I truly don’t understand what could have happened for her to be in such a terrible mood!” Fabian looked at Han Shuo with confusion, saying slowly as he seemed deep in thought.

His face wry, Han Shuo sighed lowly once again. “Forget it, let’s not mention those things again. I have to find her again for my materials. Is

Miss Phoebe home right now?”

“Apologies, the miss is out and temporarily not available, but I think she’ll return shortly, so if you’re not in a hurry, you can wait here a bit.”

“Alright, then I’ll wait for her for a bit.”

Indeed, Han Shuo’s ear caught the sound of someone knocking at the door from far away after waiting for a short while. As his heart started to agitate with unease, he privately weighed up what he should say to Phoebe when he saw her later.

Just as Han Shuo’s brow was deeply furrowed in thought, a man’s voice sounded lightly. “Eh, you’re Bryan, what are you doing here?”

Han Shuo started and immediately lifted his head, realizing that the warrior Lawrence, who had spent five gold coins to hire him as a human target last time in the warrior’s academy, was standing at the door with Phoebe.

“Senior brother Lawrence, you know him?” Outside the door, Phoebe looked at Lawrence, astonished, as she asked in surprise.

“Of course, he’s Bryan, the errand boy from our Academy!” Lawrence answered matter-of-factly.

“Errand boy?” Phoebe and Fabian both exclaimed at the same time. Phoebe measured up Han Shuo with an odd look as she asked Lawrence, “Senior brother, your Babylon Academy of Magic and Force is the most renowned school throughout the Empire. Why would such a despicable, shameless, and disgusting person be present?”

Lawrence started upon hearing these words and shrugged his shoulders at Han Shuo, smiling at Phoebe, “Little junior sister, how did Bryan offend you? I rather admire his tenacious and unyielding personality.”

Han Shuo’s face was wry as he sat there without a word, drinking tea with a lowered head, one sip after another. He privately reflected that he was in quite the pickle. He hadn’t thought that Lawrence would be Phoebe’s senior brother. Now that his identity had been revealed, if Phoebe wanted to pursue previous events, it would be troublesome for

even him to avoid this.

# Chapter 76: He's my boyfriend

"Senior brother Lawrence, come with me, I'll give you the items you need!" Phoebe said to Lawrence, seemingly a bit bored after Han Shuo made no response to the round of sarcasm directed towards him. Han Shuo only drank mouthful after mouthful of water with a wry face.

Before she left, Phoebe's clear eyes glared viciously at Han Shuo as her body halted, "If you're not in a hurry, wait for a while."

Han Shuo lifted his head to look at Phoebe, clearly perceiving her repressed anger. Remember that the materials for his Demonslayer Edge were still in her hands, he immediately nodded out of resignation.

Phoebe led Lawrence off to the side. Fabian looked at Han Shuo with an extremely odd look after they left, asking with surprise, "Bryan, to think that you're only an errand boy at the Babylon Academy of School of Magic. My gosh, but you're so strong, what's going on?"

"Nothing much. Oh right, this Lawrence is part of the warrior academy at our Academy, a very ordinary sergeant knight, but Miss Phoebe has the strength of a swordmaster. How could the two of them have the same master?" Han Shuo was quite perplexed as he asked Fabian.

Although knights and swordsmen could train the same fighting aura, Lawrence was merely a sergeant knight, whereas Phoebe had the strength of a swordmaster while training underneath the same master. The gap between the two was simply too great, particularly when Han Shuo had clearly heard from their mouths that Lawrence was the senior disciple brother and Phoebe was just the junior sister. This made Han Shuo feel that it was even odder.

"I'm not too clear about the young miss' situation either. I was just an insignificant character in the Boozt Merchant Guild before. I'd only heard that the young miss was studying abroad before the Guildmaster passed away, and would only return once or twice each year. If it wasn't for the fact that the Guildmaster suddenly passed away, Miss Phoebe likely wouldn't have suddenly stayed.

Lawrence only appeared recently. Their relationship is indeed quite close, but I have no way of answering your questions either.” Fabian looked apologetically at Han Shuo as he explained.

Han Shuo didn’t ask further after this explanation, but merely nodded and frowned in contemplation.

After a while, Phoebe and Lawrence once again stood at the door. Phoebe looked at Fabian and instructed, “Fabian, show senior brother Lawrence out the door for me. I have a few words to speak to Mr. Bryan in private!”

“Yes, miss!” Fabian stood up, knowing how to behave in a delicate situation and walked outside.

“Bryan, I’m very happy to see you here. If you’d like to earn a few more gold coins in the future, you can come find me at any time. However, I think you won’t be needing that anymore. Alright, see you later Bryan, I think we’ll have plenty of opportunities to meet in the future.” Lawrence looked meaningfully at Han Shuo, laughed lightly and followed Fabian out.

When the two had left, Phoebe walked in with a cold face and flicked a glance at Han Shuo after sitting down, snorting lightly, “How dare you come back here again!”

“And why wouldn’t I dare?” Han Shuo’s eyebrow flicked, not taking anything lying down as he stared back into Phoebe’s eyes. “I haven’t done anything against my conscience, not to mention you still owe me from last time. As long as you give me the materials you promised and the black gold ore, I’ll leave immediately and won’t come do business with you ever again!”

Phoebe slammed her hand down on the table and glared at Han Shuo furiously, “You, how dare you demand things from me! Damnit, you violated me and I’ve been nice enough not to kill you!”

“Bullshit, both you and I were influenced by the aphrodisiac then. I was the one who dragged you out of the Guild, otherwise you’d be long dead by now. Not to mention I didn’t really do anything to you, otherwise I wouldn’t have brought you to the river.” Han Shuo was truly angry now.

He had toiled all night long and not only had he gained nothing, but he'd suffered a beating at her hands. This Phoebe wouldn't let go of this matter, was she truly trying to avoid paying up?

Phoebe drew out her longsword with a clang and glared wrathfully at Han Shuo. Han Shuo also abruptly slammed the table and immediately stood up, glaring ferociously at Phoebe, seeming to want to break into a fight as soon as the two disagreed.

The two of them glared at each other and maintained this position for nearly a minute. Phoebe curled her lip and stuck her longsword back into the sheath with another clang. She turned her head, no longer looking at Han Shuo and said coldly. "Just what do you want?"

"Very simple. I'll purchase the other materials according to the estimate you gave me and give me the black gold ore that you owe me. Our debts will be resolved this way and we won't have anything to do with each other in the future. I won't conduct any more stupid transactions with you anymore." Han Shuo sat down with a darkened face and drained the water from the glass in front of him with one gulp, saying decisively.

"You dratted, profit-seeking jerk. Here, take it all and get out of here!" Phoebe felt an involuntary surge of rage upon hearing Han Shuo's words as uncontrollable anger showed in her expression. She withdrew a large bundle of items rather irritably from her space ring and slammed it down on the table, throwing it in front of Han Shuo, leveling a harsh glare at Han Shuo.

"Eh, you prepared it all, why didn't you say so? We were harming our amiability for nothing." Han Shuo had planned on taking the items and leaving, but saw that the bundle of items were packaged orderly. There was a piece of odd-looking ore, contained in a clear flask, with the words "black gold" written on it. It looked like Phoebe had been long since prepared for his arrival and hadn't planned on going back on her word.

But what Han Shuo couldn't wrap his mind around was that since Phoebe hadn't planned on going back on her word, why did she come in with such an explosive temper and say that she hadn't planned on giving

him anything. This was rather baffling, and Han Shuo couldn't make any sense of it.

"Give me your crystal card, I'll transfer the appropriate amount of gold coins into your card. Heh heh, I actually didn't have any other meaning and just wanted to take back what was owed to me." Han Shuo smiled rather awkwardly, but still put this bundle of items into his space ring, then talked to Phoebe, somewhat abashed.

Still not properly looking at Han Shuo, Phoebe had a face of cold arrogance and said stiffly, "No need. I'm not as miserly as you. It's only thirty five hundred gold... treat it as a gift. Don't let me see you in the future, just get out!"

Seeing that she was so sarcastic and jeering, Han Shuo's face froze and he nodded, slapping down the piece of black iron ore that he had mined the day before. He too said coldly, "I don't like owing favors to strangers. Treat this ore as compensation of me purchasing your other ores. Good bye Miss Phoebe, I won't be doing business with you in the future."

Just as Han Shuo was about to resolutely leave the room, Phoebe suddenly lost her composure and stood up, looking at Han Shuo with a lost expression. Her wise eyes were full of weakness and weariness. She spoke with a desolate voice, "You're going to treat me as a stranger from now on?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo said naturally and unconstrained, "Since you don't care to treat me as a friend, I, of course, will not shamelessly impose on you."

Han Shuo smiled naturally after these words and began to walk outside, but Phoebe suddenly called out lightly before he walked out the door, "Wait!"

Turning his head to look at Phoebe, Han Shuo asked calmly, "Miss Phoebe, what other matters are there?"

Phoebe's expression was a bit odd. She lowered her head and thought silently for a bit, but when she lifted her head, a good half of the weakness and weariness had actually vanished. Her direct stare at Han Shuo made

him feel very odd. She even quirked her lips at the end and revealed a trace of a smile, asking, "Bryan, you mean that you already viewed me as a friend?"

Astounded, Han Shuo nodded and replied matter-of-factly, "Of course, we've gone through two life or death experiences in the Boozt Merchant Guild, not to mention you've helped me on several occasions. I already consider you a friend, but you're not willing!"

"Who says I'm not willing, huh? Apart from monetary transactions, are you so heartless to all your friends?" Phoebe's expressions had returned to normal by now and had a few more traces of human interest compared to her normal, remote aloofness, and she used the same attitude she had used towards Lawrence just now when talking to Han Shuo.

"Of course not." Han Shuo responded.

Han Shuo could clearly feel that Phoebe's words had been permeated with sincerity and worry. He felt a bit touched inside, and his facial expressions became more tender. After thinking carefully, Han Shuo felt that Phoebe's words should be fine. He frowned and said to Phoebe, "Then, what do you think I should do?"

"Eliminate Grover with me, otherwise we will never have days of peace!" Phoebe's charming face grew cold as she bit off her words.

Musing for a bit, Han Shuo suddenly felt that perhaps a life ensconced in danger was more suitable for him to break through. His life had been too simple and monotone before, perhaps additional stimulus would make it more interesting. Add to that what Phoebe had said, if the threat of Grover wasn't eliminated, he may truly be faced with endless troubles.

After musing for a bit, Han Shuo said resolutely, "Alright, I promise you!"

"Then, accompany me to the personal banquet held by the Guild tonight. Several of the founding elders will be present at this banquet." Phoebe's charming face was gladdened upon seeing Han Shuo agree, and she immediately opened her mouth in inquiry.

"Eh, a banquet held by your Guild? What am I going to do there?" Han



Shuo started and asked.

“Gain the goodwill of the other founding elders and take precautions against the schemes of that old thing. Bryan, I need your help, you just said that we’re friends right?” Phoebe looked straight at Han Shuo and asked.

He suddenly had the feeling of the feeling that he’d boarded a pirate ship and was about to be taken advantage of, Han Shuo felt a bit odd. But he had indeed admitted that the two were friends earlier according to Phoebe’s intentions. He was unable to back down now, and could only grit his teeth and agree.

Exclaiming softly, Phoebe said happily, “Wonderful, wait a moment and I’ll have someone tailor a tuxedo that fits you. I also need to teach you some basic noble courtesies. I’ve already learned from Lawrence that you’re from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Eh... I think you’re probably not too well versed in such things.”

Throwing an ill-tempered look at her, Han Shuo said, “I was an errand boy, but that was in the past. There’s nothing untowards about it and nothing that can’t be talked about!”

“Sorry Bryan, I really didn’t mean anything by it, truly!” Phoebe was a bit agitated and hastened to apologize with genuinity.

“No worries, tell me, I’ll listen carefully!” Han Shuo waved his hand with indifference and indicated for Phoebe to begin.

“This, this is black iron ore!” It was as if she’d just discovered it as Phoebe looked at the black iron ore that Han Shuo had set on the table. She looked at Han Shuo with astonishment. “You actually have black iron ore, it looks like you truly want to forge the best weapon!”

“Absolutely!” Han Shuo responded firmly.

Phoebe gave Han Shuo an overview of the basic courtesies of nobility. Han Shuo understood that in order to climb to a higher level in this world, he must indeed have a grasp of such mannerisms. Therefore, he docilely listened to Phoebe’s descriptions and even tried to make a few of the basic

gestures of courtesies according to Phoebe's demands.

When night fell, Han Shuo had already changed into the tuxedo that Phoebe had specially prepared for him and actually cleaned up nicely. He followed behind Phoebe and rode in a carriage to arrive at the Boozt Merchant Guild for the third time.

Many luxurious and opulent carriages were parked in front of the doors and the guards had been changed out. They were two unfamiliar faces to Han Shuo. When Phoebe and Han Shuo both alighted from the carriage, they walked in with the ease of experience without having to greet the guards. Phoebe led the way past two hallways and appeared at the entrance of the banquet hall.

"Niece Phoebe, this is a private banquet of our Guild, it doesn't seem too appropriate that you've brought him?" Grover's hand held a wine glass filled with fine wine at the front of the door and happened to be conversing delightfully with a couple obviously well off guild elders. When he saw Phoebe and Han Shuo walk in, he first looked balefully at Han Shuo and then addressed Phoebe.

"Uncle Grover, Mr. Bryan isn't an outsider!" Phoebe thinned her lips and laughed lightly, glancing at Han Shuo with some shyness as she explained.

"Oh? Then dear niece, can you tell me why he isn't an outsider?" Grover's eyes squinted as he sized up Han Shuo with venomous, snake-like eyes, speaking sinisterly as he did so.

"He's my boyfriend!" Phoebe threw her head back, looking at Grover directly in the eyes without fear as she said proudly.

# Chapter 77: The position of Guildmaster

“Boy, boyfriend?” Grover was startled and had an exceedingly odd expression as he looked at Phoebe. His gaze at Han Shuo afterwards was even more odd, and confirmed again as if he didn’t believe what he had just heard. “Is he really your boyfriend?”

“Of course.” Phoebe nodded affirmatively, and stretched out her arm with a red face and held Han Shuo’s left hand, like she wanted to prove the relationship between the two.

Han Shuo’s mouth was open as if someone had shoved an egg into his mouth, an expression of dumbfoundedness appearing on his face. He didn’t react until he felt Phoebe secretly apply pressure to his arm with her small hand, laughing dryly and nodded without explaining anything.

One of the Guild elders talking jovially with Grover said doubtfully to Grover in a low voice, “What’s this kid’s background?”

Grover didn’t say much, only throwing a look at this person and turned his body to the side. He smiled, “Since he’s your boyfriend Phoebe, then there’s no problem. Hurry and come on in.”

Dragging Han Shuo, Phoebe’s facial expression was as usual as she walked into the hall. She greeted a few founding members with a smile and continued to drag Han Shuo to a place with fewer people.

Waiters held platters filled with fruit and fine wine throughout the hall, placing them on square tables located in a spacious area. A large chandelier overhead sent bright light into every cranny of the room. The decorations, that littered the entire hall, were incredibly luxurious, giving a rustic countryman, such as Han Shuo, quite a shock.

But, what shocked Han Shuo the most was Phoebe’s words just now. When he saw that there was no one around, he immediately smiled wryly at Phoebe, “Miss Phoebe, what did you mean to do by doing all of this?”

Conveniently snatching a wine glass, Phoebe poured a glass of delicious red wine for herself, gracefully raising it to her lips for a light taste, finally

speaking afterwards, “Don’t think too much, I’m just finding a cover for your presence and don’t mean anything else by it. If I didn’t say such things, you probably wouldn’t even be able to make it inside.”

Nodding, Han Shuo sighed resignedly and said, “I knew that nothing good would result from me following you here.”

“You have to act more natural, I’ll cover things for you. This is the annual gathering of the Guild and all the founding elders will attend. As bold as Grover is, he wouldn’t dare to make a move at this time, so we don’t have to worry.” Phoebe spoke softly to Han Shuo as her eyes continuously scanned his surroundings.

Also grabbing a wine glass to pour himself half a glass, Han Shuo took a sip and found it tartly delicious. He observed his surroundings once more with keen interest, finding that many of the Guild members had also brought their other halves. There were twenty or thirty people in the entire hall. There were some elderly members and some handsome youths. There were also some beautiful married women with the graceful bearing and demure of noble ladies.

Without an exception, all of these people were dressed richly and their motions urbanely polite. It looked like this was the so-called style of the upper class. Grover held a wine glass in hand and threaded through all the people, amiably greeting everyone and looking quite friendly.

“The Boozt Merchant Guild has always been controlled by the Boozt family. My family had always been the Guildmaster before, but because I was always traveling outside, that old thing temporarily took the position of Guildmaster after my father passed away, but don’t think that he has good relations with many of the elders. No one really knows what goes on in the dark, otherwise there’d be no point in me coming back.”

As Han Shuo silently observed the surroundings, Phoebe gave her explanations in a low voice. When Phoebe was finished, a thought struck Han Shuo as he suddenly asked, “How did your father die? Did you know nothing beforehand?”

When he said this, a trace of killing intent instantly blossomed in

Phoebe's eyes. She suppressed her voice and said with a cold expression, "I'm still investigating how my father died. I haven't found any evidence yet because I'm usually not in the Guild and thus am not too certain of many things. The founding elders probably don't really trust my abilities and thus their attitudes are all vague and indefinite. My current task at hand is to win over the support of the founding elders, otherwise I'll be unable to shake that old thing from his position with my power alone."

Han Shuo understood that Phoebe was also suspecting the reasons behind her father's death with these words. He didn't say much more and held his wine glass, observing those in the hall and privately considering a few things.

A few more people entered after a while. An elder with grizzled sideburns walked in last into the hall with the support of a butler.

When this person appeared, many people in the hall made their way over to make their greetings. Phoebe immediately pulled Han Shuo in this direction as well when she saw him, quickly explaining in a low voice, "He's Andrew. He founded the Boozt Merchant Guild along with my grandfather and is currently the founding elder with the longest record of service within the Guild. Even Grover doesn't dare to act too wildly in front of him. We won't be as passive if he helps us."

Arriving in front of Andrew, Phoebe made a restrained bow and said with a smile of joy on her face. "Grandpa Andrew, you've come as well!"

"Eh, it's our beautiful little Phoebe. Grandpa hasn't seen you in quite a while heh heh, you've grown so tall." Andrew's left hand grasped his cane, while his right hand was being supported by a butler as he chuckled at Phoebe.

"Good niece, don't just stand around talking, hurry and let the elderly sit down. When one is at that age, it must be very tiring to take a carriage the whole way here. He mustn't be kept standing." Grover said to Phoebe as he walked over in Andrew's direction, seeming to want to lead Andrew in a seat on his side.

"Heh heh, no worries. I'm having a delightful conversation with little

Phoebe. I haven't seen our little Phoebe in quite a while." Andrew evaded Grover's support and actually raised his cane to walk in Han Shuo and Phoebe's direction.

Grover's brows involuntarily knit into a frown as he saw Phoebe lead Andrew to the other side with a look of surprise on her face. His gaze patrolled over Andrew's body, seeming to be contemplating something.

When Phoebe, Andrew, and Han Shuo had all sat down in a corner on the other end of the hall, Phoebe and Andrew hadn't even had a chance to speak before Grover had raised a glass and said with a chuckle, "Founding elders of the Boozt Merchant Guild, today is the annual gathering of our Guild. It's a pleasure to see everyone again this year. It's a pity that because of health reasons, my dear brother has passed away from an illness. This is quite a tragic event."

"Don't worry Grover, everything is orderly under your management. I think if the Guildmaster knew, he would be touched and gratified." One of the founding elders suddenly spoke up at this time with two others by his side chiming in.

Han Shuo watched their performance with a cold eye, having a clear understanding of things in his heart. He knew that these people were sure to have close relations with Grover, and were merely declaring their stance with these words.

At this moment, Han Shuo, seated next to Phoebe, could clearly hear Andrew snort in a very low tone. Phoebe was even closer to Andrew and naturally heard things clearly. She glanced involuntarily with surprise at Andrew, and exchanged a look with Han Shuo.

"The Guildmaster has already passed away, but our Boozt Merchant Guild cannot be without a Guildmaster forever. I think we should take advantage of this opportunity to thoroughly discuss the particulars of a new Guildmaster. What does everyone think?" The same person called out in a carrying voice, and the two founding elders, who had chimed in before, once again assented. Grover's face was calm, only sitting there and continuously looking around the four corners of the room, with his gaze

pausing a bit longer on Phoebe and Andrew.

“Of course, the position of Guildmaster cannot be empty for too long, but who will be the Guildmaster? This is an important question.” A stocky founding elder said in a seat not too far away with a low, muffled voice.

“What else is there to discuss, Grover should be the new Guildmaster of course. Since the Guildmaster’s passing, Grover has been the one to manage the Guild’s affairs. Everyone has also seen that the Guild has been stable and orderly in his hands. I don’t think anyone else is qualified to sit in this seat other than Grover.” The Grover supporter abruptly stood up and called out, winning the other two people’s assent.

Grover stood up with a smile, his face full of hypocritical humility as he spoke words that his abilities were limited or that he was embarrassed by undeserved praise. The three were resolute in that it must be him, and the merry band demonstrated quite outstanding partnership.

“Uncle Andrew, who do you think is more suitable to be the new Guildmaster?” At this moment, the founding elder, who had previously spoken in a low, muffled voice, looked at Andrew from afar and asked.

All the looks from the surrounding founding elders focused on Andrew, as if waiting for him to express his decision.

Andrew looked in Phoebe’s direction, the latter pretending to be calm and composed. He slightly stood up and chuckled lightly, “It’s not me at any case, I don’t have that many days left to live, heh heh.”

Everyone displayed friendly smiles after his words. Grover also smiled and laughed softly, like he was heaving a sigh of relief because he was truly afraid that Andrew would step forward and seize the position of Guildmaster from him.

“However,” Andrew’s gaze swept over the assembled and he continued, “I think that little Phoebe has grown up. Since she is the daughter of the Guildmaster and a member of the Boozt family clan, logically speaking, she is the most qualified person to be the new Guildmaster. Why has no one mentioned this?”

“No, absolutely not. Miss Phoebe is too young and has always been traveling outside. She doesn’t even know of all the matters within the Guild. If she were to become the Guildmaster, she may ruin the business of the Guild.” The founding elder, who’d been upholding Grover, immediately protested violently.

“Kiro, that may not be the case. Although Miss Phoebe is young, I see that she’s quite knowledgeable and mature, she also knows the proper limits for speech and action when doing something. Perhaps with her at the helm, she’ll even be able to bring further development to the Guild.” A founding elder suddenly opened his mouth. All the other elders who had been staying silent without a word suddenly chimed in upon seeing Andrew express his support for Phoebe. Three or four other elders still remained quiet, as if expressing their neutrality.

“How, how will this do? We can’t take the future of the Guild as an experiment for her competency.” The loyal Grover supporter called Kiro immediately complained.

“How can we not? If I recall correctly, when the old Guildmaster first took over the Guild, he was only twenty three himself, but under the guidance of Andrew and a few others, the old Guildmaster quickly grew up and helped the Guild become more prosperous with every passing day. I believe that Miss Phoebe will also be able to do so. Not to mention with us aiding her, no major problems will develop as well.” The person continued to say.

Grover’s face had darkened and he’d stopped speaking after Andrew had spoken out. Finally standing up at this time, he said to Phoebe, “Good niece, your boyfriend was once an errand boy for the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, and had the status of a slave. Don’t think that I’m poking my nose in too many places, but if people found out that the two of you were together, it would affect the reputation of our Guild.”

Several of the founding elders shifted their focus towards Han Shuo after these words, unable to conceal the contempt and disdain on their faces.

Han Shuo gave a horrified startled look, finally understanding that



Phoebe's worries weren't without reason. It looked like he had underestimated the power of Grover and Shadow Ghost. Who would've thought that they'd be able to investigate his background with only his first name? It was a good thing that he had spent most of his time in the cemetery of death lately. Otherwise if he'd stayed at the school, he may have long since been assassinated by highly trained killers.

"Uncle, what do you mean by this?" At this moment, Phoebe suddenly stood up, her charming face cold as she stared at Grover angrily, wanting to throw all decorum to the side.

"Don't get angry dear niece. I just wanted to say that your judgment doesn't seem too good. In order to manage the Guild, a daring, wise, and far sighted judgment is most important. If you choose even your future husband from the slaves, then I don't think I'm content to let you be Guildmaster." A peaceful smile was still on Grover's face, but the words he said were quite vicious.

"I think a person who can murder his own brother for profit and continuously send out killers to attempt to harm his own niece is even less worth of the position of Guildmaster." Han Shuo also stood up and watched Grover with a cold smile, completely fearless and seemingly unaware of how shocking his words were. Pausing in the astonished gaze of the entire hall, Han Shuo said again, "Please remember that I am a student of the Academy now. I no longer have the status of a slave and never will again."

# Chapter 78: A blood battle in the deep alleyways

“Shut your mouth! Don’t make unfounded accusations! I had such a deep relationship with my elder brother, how could I possibly kill him? Dear niece, I feel so bad for you since you found a boyfriend that doesn’t understand the principles of propriety!” Grover’s face changed drastically as he surged to his feet, slamming his hands down on the tabletop and roared angrily.

His expression as usual, Han Shuo lightly laughed and glossed over the matter, “Everyone already knows this. Phoebe is the Guildmaster’s only daughter and should be the candidate most qualified to inherit the position of Guildmaster. If she were to be assassinated, who stands to profit?”

“When was it an outsider’s turn to talk about the matters of the Boozt Merchant Guild? Phoebe, you should keep this outsider, who doesn’t know what he’s talking about, in line.” Grover glared viciously at Han Shuo as he turned to talk to Phoebe.

At this moment, Phoebe had already calmed down from her earlier panic. She’d always maintained a veneer of civility with Grover, but how was she to know that Han Shuo would have no qualms whatsoever and stand in sharp opposition from the beginning, almost having a throwdown with Grover instantaneously, throwing all her plans into disarray? She didn’t know what to do for the span of a moment.

However, just as Han Shuo and Grover were denouncing each other, Phoebe’s thoughts churned and she felt that Han Shuo’s actions were clear and decisive. Because of his actions, her attitude would clearly be displayed in front of the founding elders. This would also show the founding elders that she wasn’t some weak person who wasn’t willing to fight for her position.

Except, it was the time to measure her gains and losses. Since Han Shuo had already so sharply announced his stance, there wasn’t a way that

Phoebe could salvage the situation even if she wanted to. Immediately after Grover's words had been cut off, she said confidently, "Indeed, Uncle Grover, I believe that I have the qualifications to be a competent Guildmaster."

"Although in recent years I have spent my days outside, father has never given up his tutelage of me. The knowledge I have learned is also relevant to operating the Guild. Father has long since arranged all this. I hope you can support me uncle, and teach me if I am found lacking in any places. I am confident that I can take good care of the Guild."

"Good niece, your courage is worth complimenting. However, a matter such as this is not child's play. One misstep is enough to doom the Guild beyond redemption. Uncle is cowardly and cannot afford to shoulder such responsibility." Since they were laying everything out, Grover no longer hid and concealed his intentions as he spoke with a darkened face.

At this moment, Andrew suddenly grasped his cane and tottered to his feet. He spoke in a conciliatory tone, "There's no point in arguing further. How about this... why don't we let little Phoebe try first? If the Guild is still expanding smoothly in her hands after three months, then let Phoebe be the Guildmaster. If not, Grover will continue to be. What does everyone think?"

Since Andrew had spoken, apart from the three founding elders who supported Grover, all the other founding elders expressed their consent. Andrew waited until they all had expressed their opinions before smiling at Grover, saying merrily, "Since the majority has agreed, let's do this for now. What do you think?"

As unwilling as he was, since the majority of the founding elders within the Guild had agreed, Grover had no way of changing the situation. He could only grit his teeth and say with resignation, "Since this is the case, then let's move according to your wishes."

Nodding, Andrew smiled, "Then good. I have a few matters to attend to, so I will be taking my leave. Ah, little Phoebe, I haven't seen you in so long. If you have nothing else to do, come to my house for a chat!"

“Sure, I happened to want to ask grandpa about your experiences in managing the Guild!” Phoebe smiled faintly and stood up. She put down the wine glass, threw a look at Han Shuo, and walked out without even looking at Grover.

Han Shuo put down his wineglass and flashed a contemptuous, cold smile at Grover, who was staring at him frostily. He followed behind Phoebe and headed outside the hall.

After leaving the Guild, Phoebe looked around and saw that it was empty. She said softly to Han Shuo, “Go back to my residence first. I’ll rush back after chatting with grandpa Andrew. We’ll talk later!”

“Heh heh, little Phoebe, your boyfriend is quite bold! He dared to argue with Grover in the hall, I think you have quite the eye!” Andrew stood on the side of his carriage as he looked benevolently upon Phoebe and Han Shuo.

Her charming face blushing red, Phoebe looked at Han Shuo and whispered, “Be careful.” She then walked to Andrew and said cutely, “No way. You don’t know how frustrating it is because he’s so pudding-headed sometimes!”

Han Shuo didn’t listen further to their conversation any longer and didn’t take the carriage that he had arrived in with Phoebe, but rather set out for the northern part of the city alone.

Since it was late at night anyways, there were almost no pedestrians on the road. When Han Shuo had just left the Boozt Merchant Guild, he didn’t feel that he was in too much danger, but when he threaded past a street and just walked into an alleyway, he suddenly became alert.

His thoughts moved as three original demons were soundlessly released from the back of his neck. When the original demons left Han Shuo’s neck, they immediately assumed the form of nothingness and lay in wait, in three different directions, without leaving a trace behind in the darkness.

As if he’d gained additional pairs of eyes, Han Shuo could clearly see not only the direction in front of him, but even the area behind and to the left

and right of him. Refined by magical yuan, there wasn't the slightest bit of fighting aura or magic pulse from the original demons. Under the status of nothingness, it was quite difficult for the human eye to detect any trace of them. Thus, the departure and concealment of the original demons didn't startle anyone.

The wind adept mage Ellis, whom Han Shuo had seen last time, was floating like a wispy ghost behind Han Shuo. He hung soundlessly waiting. Four killers, clad in black clothes and head coverings, were also on the roofs of the houses on either side of the alleyway. They walked on soundlessly, quietly following behind him and slowly closing in on him.

Startled, Han Shuo hadn't thought that Grover would be so daring. He had just left the Guild when the latter made his move. It looked like Grover's hatred for him was bone deep.

Han Shuo suddenly calmed down when it came to the moment of his survival. There were five in total. Apart from the wind adept mage Ellis, the other four weren't that weak either. According to the observations of the original demons, Han Shuo discovered that the four of them were divided into two warriors, one mage, and one archer. If it wasn't for the fact that the original demons could monitor their movements at any time, Han Shuo would be hard pressed to escape his death.

However, with the addition of the original demons, although Han Shuo still didn't have any advantages, he wasn't without the hope of escaping. From Phoebe's descriptions, Han Shuo knew that there was a mansion up ahead that was the residence of the Empire soldiers stationed here. Han Shuo had chosen to walk through this gloomy alleyway precisely because of the manor that lay before him.

His thoughts churning madly, Han Shuo understood that these people could only make their move within the alleyway. Otherwise once he made it through, they would lose their chance. The space ring lit up faintly as Han Shuo clasped the dagger in his right hand. His footsteps moved forward at a measured pace, neither too slow nor too fast, as he continuously paid attention to the movements of the enemy through the observations of the original demons.

Finally, when Han Shuo made it to the center of the alleyway, the five killers – including Ellis – seemed to believe that this was a good chance as their approach speed suddenly picked up.

An exceedingly light sound of an arrow whistling through the air suddenly fell into Han Shuo's hearing range. The arrow was uncommonly sharp as it made straight for Han Shuo, its momentum exceedingly fierce.

This arrow had come from a professional archer. The angle and tip were exceedingly brutal. If it hadn't been for the fact that Han Shuo had clearly observed his actions through the original demons, then it was very likely that he would've fallen to the arrow on the spot.

His originally measured paces suddenly picked up, but he didn't rush forward, but rather dodged to the left. The arrow shot past the corners of Han Shuo's clothes with a whooshing sound, whistling violently towards the front.

The arrow suddenly fractured into pieces in front of Han Shuo, as Ellis had long since released a few sharp windblades. He seemed to be waiting for Han Shuo to subconsciously move further in, but Han Shuo had already detected this and evaded them.

At the same time, the air above his head suddenly lit up as a patch of fire wall abruptly formed and came down over his head. Two nimble figures, wielding longswords, came flying down from the roofs. Han Shuo could clearly see the pale-green and dark green fighting auras thanks to the light provided by the fire walls.

Abruptly increasing his speed, Han Shuo's speed suddenly raised instantaneously and circled to the left, avoiding the obstruction of Ellis' windblades and dashing out of the entrance of the alleyway. Han Shuo had just left his position when the fire wall slammed down, and sparks flew up from the place he had just been standing.

No matter how they imagined things, they would never know that Han Shuo had already clearly seen their intentionally concealed tracks through the eyes of the original demons. They had thought it was absolutely an unexpected attack, but it had already been completely observed by Han

Shuo. This is what caused the extraordinarily talented group of five to fail their first wave of attacks completely.

“Don’t let him leave the alleyway alive!” Ellis’ soft voice was purposefully sharp and hard as it sounded at this moment.

The archer and fire mage stood on either side on the rooftops of the alleyway. When Ellis’ words were spoken, they made their move at almost the same time. The archer grabbed three arrows and notched them to his bow, shooting them all at the same time with a whistling sound. They flew fiercely towards Han Shuo’s forehead, back, and thigh.

Another wall of flames suddenly formed in the direction that Han Shuo was dashing in, blocking off his escape and forcing him to take the long way around. Otherwise he would be hard pressed to escape the funeral pyre of the flaming walls.

The two swordsmen who had just landed took advantage of the situation to quickly approach with their longswords. They were only ten or so meters away from Han Shuo. Ellis’ feet hovered above the ground as he quickly closed the distance from behind, obviously planning on keeping Han Shuo here.

Tilting his body, Han Shuo once again changed directions and made for the right. He planned on circling past the fire walls and rush out onto the street. Several windblades came whistling in, but it was all within Han Shuo’s expectations. The dagger in his hand moved swiftly as he cut away at five windblades. However, three of them still drew across his thigh and arms.

Him suffering three hits was under the circumstances of Han Shuo knowing that Ellis had sent windblades there earlier, otherwise if ten windblades connected with his vitals, it would be likely that he would be unable to take another step forward.

Han Shuo bore up beneath the injuries to his thigh and arms and rushed out from the windblade ambush, simultaneously evading the fire wall and flying arrows, dashing to the alley’s entrance like lightning. He was about to rush out onto the street.

At this moment, an exceedingly ghastly wail cut through the quiet night sky. In the midst of running, Han Shuo used the original demons to discover that the archer's bow had been cleaved into two, and was falling listlessly from the rooftop with blood at the corners of his mouth. Phoebe stood where he had just been standing, a longsword in hand and standing with a proud, majestic looking air.

"Pho... Phoebe, you're a swordswoman!" Beneath the head covering, Ellis was so surprised that he forgot to modulate his tone and used his original voice to exclaim in surprise. He didn't talk to the others as his quickly dashing body suddenly halted. He abruptly turned back and escaped towards the back with an even higher speed.

Phoebe snorted coldly and didn't bother chasing the escaping Ellis. After all, if a wind mage were to attempt a full out escape, it would be difficult indeed to catch up to him. The longsword in her hand waving, the majestic-looking Phoebe alighted gently from the roof towards the two warriors. It looked like she was planning on taking care of those who were still around.

Han Shuo was about to rush out of the alleyway at this time and was overjoyed when he saw Phoebe suddenly appear. He swiftly did an about face and opened his mouth to summon the little skeleton, running quickly towards the two warriors himself.

The little skeleton wouldn't have been that useful when Han Shuo was fleeing for his life previously. With the presence of Phoebe the swordmaster now, Han Shuo had turned from the hunted to hunter. The little skeleton could naturally make an appearance to kill enemies.

When the bone dagger-wielding little skeleton appeared, it started running quickly under Han Shuo's commands. The seven bone spurs on its back waved as it shot towards the roof, attempting to finish off the fire mage.

The fire mage was shocked as he had never thought the little skeleton would be able to make use of its momentum to directly vault onto the roof. In his panic, he immediately muttered an incantation as the wildly



blazing fire wall made an appearance again, blocking the path that the little skeleton would take.

However, the little skeleton paid no attention to the obstruction of the fire wall and flung himself into it. It walked out with its body reddened from the fire wall and arrived in front of the fire mage's dumbfounded expression. The bone dagger in its hand danced as it turned the mage into a beehive.

# Chapter 79: Breaking through the boundary

There were only two swordsmen left, one senior and one journeyman swordsman. Phoebe herself was enough to make the two of them unable to escape death. Han Shuo turning back merely accelerated their deaths.

With a flash of his space ring, Han Shuo held a crossbow in his hand and fitted a crossbow bolt into the string. He'd already targeted one of them, and shot at the back of the senior swordsman when they abruptly started retreating and wanted to take themselves out of the fight.

The senior swordsman, who planned on leaving had to turn back in resignation and block the bolt, but in the instant he'd destroyed the bolt, Phoebe was already standing in front of him.

The little skeleton that had stabbed the fire mage to death held a bag in his left hand, jumping down from the roof with a whoosh. After his skeleton wobbled a bit, he was already standing with dagger in hand in front of the other journeyman swordsman.

As Han Shuo strode over with a cold smile, one of the swordsmen suddenly drew his longsword across his neck and fell down.

"These are people from 'Shadow Ghost'. If they know that there's no way out for them, they'll choose to end their own lives!" Phoebe shook her head, storing the longsword in her hand back into a space ring and said with a frown.

The little skeleton had arrived in front of the two corpses at this moment and began to search them with practiced motions. When two more bags hung on its left hand, it walked over happily to Han Shuo with bone dagger in hand, offering the three bags to Han Shuo.

Caressing the little skeleton's skull with a faint smile, Han Shuo took the three bags and cursed after one glance. "Damn it, three poor sods. They only had ten or so gold coins!"

Rolling her eyes at him with ill temper, Phoebe didn't search the corpses

and directly said to Han Shuo. "I've never seen someone as greedy as you. Don't bother searching their bodies, you won't discover anything. The people of 'Shadow Ghost' never bring anything important with them when they go out on missions, so forget it, they won't bring any riches to you."

Han Shuo cursed again when he heard Phoebe's words and chanted an incantation to send the little skeleton back. He then grinned and asked softly, "Didn't you leave with Andrew? Why did you suddenly return?"

"You're hurt?" Phoebe was shocked and immediately rushed to Han Shuo. When she saw the blood wounds left by the the windblades on Han Shuo's body, she immediately revealed a worried expression. The space ring on her finger lit up and some gauze and medicine appeared in her hands. She didn't shy away as she said softly, "Don't move!"

It was rare that Han Shuo saw Phoebe display such an expression, and he felt vaguely touched inside. He stood there dumbly, not moving at all and looked at Phoebe carefully apply medicine to his injury, then using gauze to wrap it all up for him.

When Phoebe was finished, she tugged at Han Shuo and exhaled lightly. "You sure know how to pick a place. Two manors are on the two sides of this alleyway and both families are out. No one's come out even after such a violent fight, it looks like the house hasn't been sold yet. However, we can't stay here for long. Although the security isn't too tight here, the guards will still patrol the area after a while. It'd be better if we leave earlier."

"Let's go." Han Shuo agreed and left with Phoebe, rushing to the northern part of the city. He asked along the way, "Oh right, you still haven't told me, why did you suddenly come back?"

Seeing that there was no one around, Phoebe frowned and said in a low voice, "Grandpa Andrew told me in the carriage that Grover has been conducting transactions with the barbaric orcs, and has actually been selling the Empire's weapons to them. The implications of this matter are huge, and if the Empire knew, they wouldn't let him off easily."

"Grover must know that if I'm in charge of the Guild, he won't be able to

cover this up anyone. So he must kill me before I take control of the Guild. Otherwise once this matter is uncovered, as strong as he is, Grover will be hard pressed to escape from the punishment of the Empire. Once I knew of this matter, I knew that he would try to kill you first. I worried about you so I left Grandpa Andrew halfway through to come find you.”

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “So that’s why. No wonder Grover wanted to kill us so quickly. It looks like as soon as you have evidence in hand, Grover will be done for without a doubt.”

“Exactly!” Phoebe laughed coldly, but then sighed as she thought. “However, Ellis has learned of my strength this time. I think Grover will think of a plan and even I will find it difficult to deal with his next assassination attempt.”

Han Shuo knew that his power was limited, if even Phoebe couldn’t handle things, then he wouldn’t have much effect either. The only thing he could do to help Phoebe was with his perceptive senses towards assassins. He thought for a moment and said, “I’ll leave for a bit. I’ll come find you when my injuries are healed. Grover is our mutual enemy now, I know what to do.”

“Alright, but don’t go back to the Academy no matter what you do. Since Grover knows your identity, you’ll face tremendous danger if you stay in the Academy the next couple of days!”

Phoebe mused and said to Han Shuo.

Nodding his head in understanding, Han Shuo told Phoebe to be careful and left alone. The three original demons accompanied him, but didn’t discover any other disturbances until Han Shuo came to the cemeteries behind the Academy.

After returning to the cemetery of death, Han Shuo trained his magic for a bit. A cool feeling wreathed around his injuries as he circulated his magical yuan, and the feeling of pain was greatly reduced.

After sleeping for a while, it was already noon of the next day. Since all the materials had been gathered now, Han Shuo left the cemetery of death eagerly and headed towards the dwarves’ village. He planned on asking

the dwarf chief Calvin to forge the Demonslayer Edge for him.

The dwarf village was located in a small mountain valley. There were enormous trees concealing the entrance of the village. If it weren't for the fact that Han Shuo had once made a trip here with the dwarves, he would have been hard pressed to find their place of dwelling.

Han Shuo was now quite familiar with the route and came to the dwarf village after a while. He threaded past the towering trees, and a dwarf, who stood guard with a sharp axe in hand in front of the village immediately called out with a friendly voice, "Oh! Good friend, you've come to visit us again!"

Following behind the dwarf, Han Shuo traveled through a small path with shrubs on both sides and finally made it to the dwarf village. Calvin, Bennett, and the others had heard the news and were all waiting merrily to welcome Han Shuo. Fine wine was quickly served.

The dwarves lived in log cabins that they themselves had constructed, with some also living in emptied-out tree hollows. There were only a hundred or so dwarves in the village. Women and children were a good half of the numbers, and the warriors, who could truly fight, numbered not that many.

Han Shuo had won the true friendship of the dwarves over this period of time. They were very generous towards Han Shuo. Whenever he came by, there was always fine wine and meats welcoming him, making him feel quite touched.

"Han, how come you have time to stop by?" Calvin said merrily to Han Shuo.

Taking out the materials that Phoebe had prepared from the space ring, Han Shuo handed them over to Calvin, saying, "Elder, these were the materials you requests. There's also enough black metal ore. Will you be able to forge a weapon for me?"

Calvin took the materials from Han Shuo and looked at them carefully, saying with surprise, "Of course, absolutely. With enough materials to forge a great weapon, this is a happy matter for us. Don't worry Han, we'll

start working on it tomorrow. We'll be able to forge a weapon for you in about a week, and you're sure to be satisfied for it."

Han Shuo truly breathed a sigh of relief with his guarantee and immediately expressed his genuine thanks to Calvin. The low complaints of some of the female dwarves came from afar. Han Shuo's ears were sharp, and he involuntarily listened closely to them.

"Ai, it will be winter soon. We're never guaranteed of food in the big snow, and the chief has drawn from the stores many times to treat the guest. At this rate, how will we survive through the winter?"

"Yes, I've also heard that the damned man-eating monsters have been around lately. It looks like they've come out to plunder and raid in order to make it through winter. If they discover our village, we'll have to move again. When will these days end!"

The conversations of the female dwarves were all completely taken in by Han Shuo. He was a bit touched. It looked like the lives of the dwarves weren't as good as he thought, but even so, they had still taken out the best food to treat him. This made him feel quite guilty.

He thought for a moment and sighed lightly, saying to Calvin, "Elder, do you not treat me as a friend?"

"Han, why would you say such things? Have we treated you unkindly in some way?" Bennett, who was very kindly disposed towards Han Shuo, was the first to exclaim in surprise and looked at him in consternation before Calvin had a chance to open his mouth.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo sighed, "Why must you worry about food and man-eating monsters, but refuse to tell me, your friend, about such matters?"

"This won't do, since the elder is willing to bring out the winter rations to treat me, as your friend, I must do something. Don't worry elder, I'll head for human society and help you solve the matter of winter rations. What else do you need apart from this? I can bring it all to you."

"How can we allow this? Although we're friends, we can't trouble you.

We too wish to purchase these things in the human's society, but there's a long stretch of Dark Forest between here and human society. Not only are there attacks from magical creatures on the journey, but we may run into adventurers with ill intentions. This is why we're forced to stay here."

"Han, I know that if you're to purchase those things for us, it will spend quite a bit of your money for sure. We can't trouble you like this. I think we'll work a bit harder and still get through this winter." Calvin said.

"This matter is thus decided. I will help you think of ways to handle the matter of winter rations and the threat of the man-eating monsters. Just concentrate on forging weapons and leave the rest to me."

Han Shuo made some internal calculations. There were roughly a hundred or so in the entire dwarf village. He would probably have to make a few trips in order to bring the amount of food they needed to the cemetery of death, based on how much food the space ring could hold. If he purchased the food from Phoebe, he probably wouldn't need to spend that many gold coins. It was just a convenient favor to do, and Han Shuo was naturally happy to do so for the dwarves.

"Thank you so much. I thank you on behalf of my child and the mothers within the village!" A female dwarf suddenly heard Han Shuo's guarantee when she brought over fruit and was so moved that she immediately thanked Han Shuo with the greatest courtesy of the dwarves.

"You're dismissed." Calvin admonished, and then also said with gratitude, "Han, we only create fine wines and forge weapons. Because we have exceedingly little contact with humans, we don't have that many gold coins. We're willing to make some fine wines and forge some weapons for you in exchange, otherwise I won't be able to accept your good intentions!"

Although Han Shuo didn't lust after their wine and weapons, but he understood that with the dwarves' obstinate tempers, they would be unwilling to accept his assistance for no reason at all. He finally accepted after thinking for a while.

With the promise of winter rations from Han Shuo, all the dwarves were beyond excited. Even Calvin drank heartily with Han Shuo, a rare occasion

indeed. He had to say that the wine made by the dwarves was truly quite sweet. Even the fine wine that Han Shuo had drank last night at the Boozt Merchant Guild's banquet couldn't compare.

Han Shuo was in an excellent mood after ensuring his Demonslayer Edge, and drank the night away with the dwarves. However, due to him practicing magic, he had already thoroughly sobered under the use of magical yuan when he left the dwarf village. He maintained a state of high alert as he traveled back to the cemetery of death.

Before meditating, Han Shuo thought for a bit and decided to once more explore the boundary that had stopped Han Shuo from descending down to the lower levels of the cemetery of death. He wanted to see if he could break through that barrier with his current level of mental strength.

After using the round, green ball to open the passageway, Han Shuo focused his mental strength and abruptly burrowed him. A piercing pain immediately filled his mind, but because he was used to the pain inflicted by the round, green ball during training, Han Shuo held up beneath the onslaught. He circulated his magical yuan to its highest and burrowed downwards.



# Chapter 80: A magical cemetery

Han Shuo fell onto solid ground, regained his footing, and took his bearings. He was in a large laboratory. All sorts of containers and large bones were placed everywhere. Several gloomy lights, like green will-o'-wisps, were placed on the walls on the side, lighting up the interior, making it slightly brighter.

There were also a few rooms in the four corners. Han Shuo went into each of the rooms and discovered that two of them were filled with all sorts of books having to do with necromancy magic, and included a few books on dark magic as well. The books in here were obviously all very old. There was a lot of dust on them, and the number of books greatly exceeded the number of books in the dark studies section of the library in the Academy. Many of them were also books that Han Shuo had never heard of.

Magical supplies were stored in the other four rooms. Each of the containers were sealed tightly and were filled with colorful liquid, with some holding strange bones and teeth of vicious beasts that sparkled with light.

Just as Han Shuo was taking measure of his surroundings, the round, green ball in his hand suddenly sent out an eye-dazzling flash of green splendor. The light encompassed the entire laboratory as a black, shadow-like a ghost suddenly materialized in one of the circular magical symbols within the laboratory.

“My child, when you arrive here and see this mirror image, I will have already returned to dust. If you seek to understand everything about the cemetery of death, then you must pay attention and listen to all that I have to say.”

The black shadow was a concentrated mass, whether it was his eyes or the light from the round, green ball, Han Shuo was unable to see its original form. An unpracticed voice slowly formed each word with a bit of difficulty.

Han Shuo was shocked and then immediately realized that this was a way that mages left messages – mirror images. According to the meaning of the words, Han Shuo hastily focused his concentration and listened to every sentence he was saying.

“First, you must know that the cemetery of death was the sacred ground of necromancers during my time. It represents the peak of necromancy magic. The cemetery of death can move. When you finally grasp all that is present here, you will find that you own a frightening city...”

The wispy voice explained ceaselessly. Han Shuo concentrated and listened to the voice’s slow descriptions. When the voice said, “You will still be able to see me on the next level”, the black shadow suddenly disappeared as well.

Apart from the magic matrix above grounds in the cemetery of death, there were two more levels apart from the laboratory and library on this level. In order to fully grasp all the secrets of the cemetery of death, he must travel to the two lower levels as well. Han Shuo had gained this understanding from the black shadow that the cemetery of death was actually a castle that could move, and it was an incredibly powerful castle. This greatly shocked Han Shuo.

The round, green ball was equivalent to a key to enter the cemetery of death. The evil mental brand of a necromancer was held within. If an ordinary person obtained this round ball, they would be unable to escape the corruption of the ball and would finally turn into a senseless zombie, apart from necromancers with the feel of necromancy magic about them.

Although Han Shuo was just a magic apprentice, he still had the presence of necromancy magic about him and thus thankfully hadn’t been assimilated by the curse, but because he had brashly explored when his mental strength had been too weak, he would have been hard pressed to escape death that day if it weren’t for the help of the magical yuan.

The amazing magical yuan was different from all energy of this world. It had actually saved Han Shuo when his mind was being invaded by the mental strength, and had bafflingly helped Han Shuo increase his mental

strength. Han Shuo had reaped great rewards in the midst of inhumane pain. This was probably something that the creator of the round, green ball had never imagined.

From the depictions of the black shadow, Han Shuo received limited information. It seemed that a more in-depth explanation existed in the lower two levels. Han Shuo mused silently for a bit, and then reentered the rooms that were full of magic books.

The magic books were the essence of necromancy magic, the product of a time when necromancy magic was at its peak. These were true priceless treasures to Han Shuo. The Academy already had quite a number of books, but books truly dealing with necromancy magic weren't that many. Most of them only dealt with beginner or journeyman topics, and ones that dealt with more advanced necromancy magic were exceedingly few.

He flipped through the books covered with thick dust in the two rooms. Han Shuo had to sigh in admiration. The magical books here were much more superior compared to the ones at the Academy, whether in terms of quality or quantity.

Three of them were called "Necromancy Magic", divided into upper, middle, and lower scrolls. They were placed in the most eye catching place and had obviously received special treatment. They were placed in a magical container and still looked quite new. They probably wouldn't be damaged even in tens of thousands of years.

The upper scroll of "Necromancy Magic" was already quite thick. Han Shuo discovered that it recorded, in detail, everything from the beginning of necromancy magic to the true essence of necromancy magic. The knowledge held within was quite different from what was taught by the Academy, much of the necromancy knowledge and magics recorded were those that Han Shuo had never heard of.

There were handwritten notes on every page starting from the middle scroll, providing detailed footnotes to the content on the page, but it looked like the three scrolls were of one entity. When Han Shuo read the middle and lower scroll, he still couldn't understand some of the

knowledge within even with the aid of the notes.

Han Shuo could just barely understand the first half of the upper scroll, but unfortunately, without the presence of handwritten notes, Han Shuo still felt it very difficult to understand. Perhaps the person who had prepared this set of magical books had felt that people wouldn't need notes to understand the upper scroll, and that's why he didn't leave any explanations.

After thinking for a while, Han Shuo decided to start with the first scroll. He planned on using this complete set of "Necromancy Magic" as his textbooks and slowly study and train from them. After forming his determination, Han Shuo took the round ball and departed from this level, returning to the surface level. He wasn't affected by the boundary and began to study this scroll, forgoing meals and forgetting to sleep.

Han Shuo was preoccupied with this scroll of "Necromancy Magic" for many days in a row, understanding all the words inside by studying every word. From this set of "Necromancy Magic", Han Shuo understood that the knowledge and spells currently taught at the Academy were much more shallow than the explanations in the books.

There were many evil magics that Han Shuo would be unable to learn from Fanny.

"Corpse Reanimation" was a basic kind of necromancy magic. It used necromancy magic to turn those who had died into zombies, and would start fighting according to the caster's will. If mental strength was sufficient enough, a terrifying zombie army could be reanimated.

"Canopy of Necromancy" was another evil magic. As long as "Canopy of Necromancy was released", the battle strength and agility of dark creatures would be greatly increased beneath the coverage of the canopy and the enemy would have difficulty adjusting to this area spell, decreasing their battle strength.

Numerous spells similar to "Corpse Reanimation" and "Canopy of Necromancy" were listed within the scroll. It was said that these magics had been lost for a long time and none of the necromancers today could

grasp them, but there were detailed descriptions within this scroll of “Necromancy Magic”.

Han Shuo understood that he had picked up a precious treasure. If this scroll of “Necromancy Magic” was circulated, then it could possibly immediately change the current condition of necromancers, noticeably increasing the level of the necromancer’s strength. The terror of necromancers would then once again materialize.

He studied for nearly ten days, either meditating or studying the scroll of “Necromancy Magic”. “Corpse Reanimation” was a basic spell, but unfortunately Han Shuo had no corpses to practice on. “Canopy of Necromancy” was an advanced spell, Han Shuo was equally unable to practice it because he lacked the mental strength to do so.

But through his practice during this time, Han Shuo mastered the bone spear magic. Even the zombie summoning spell was almost at hand, but he met with some resistance when communicating with the other dimension.

After calculating the time, it was about time that the Demonslayer Edge was complete. Han Shuo thought for a bit and left the cemetery of death with the small skeleton, carefully evading a few level 3 and above magical creatures. He hunted a few low level monsters and took them with him, once again walking to the dwarves’ village.

Midway there, just when Han Shuo was about to enter the dwarves’ village, he heard the sound of weapons clashing. Han Shuo was greatly shocked and picked up his speed, threading through the trees and bushes with the little skeleton and rushing towards the source of the sounds.

A couple dozen man-eating monsters and almost a hundred goblins were wielding weapons and besieging the dwarves. The dwarves held brand new weapons in their hands, and were so much sharper compared to the ones that the man-eating monsters and goblins were using. The goblins in particular were using a few crude blades and wooden sticks, breaking into many pieces whenever they clashed with the dwarves.

It was the superiority of their weapons that had enabled the vastly

outnumbered dwarves to defend until now. The dwarf village was behind them not too far away, and women and children with no fighting ability were there. For the safety of the village, they couldn't even retreat into the village in case they exposed the village and endangered the women and children.

Han Shuo took in this scene and immediately became enraged. His crossbow had already appeared in his hand as he ran and several crossbow bolts broke through the air with a whistling sound, shooting down a man-eating monster and two goblins. The little skeleton seemed to sense Han Shuo's anger from the depths of his heart and flew towards the front. The seven bone spurs on its back shot in all directions and lines of blood appeared on the bodies of these man-eating monsters and goblins after ear-piercing sounds rang out.

"Oh, it's Han! He's here!" Bennett, who was hoisting up an iron club and surrounded by five or six goblins, when he suddenly saw Han Shuo's figure and exclaimed in surprise.

Like a wolf entering a herd of sheep, the arrival of Han Shuo and the little skeleton immediately heralded a slaughter. The little skeleton was particularly fierce. Its seven bone spurs danced amongst the crowd of man-eating monsters and goblins, causing injuries and fatalities to them.

After Han Shuo had arrived, he first summoned a few skeletal warriors and they all wielded bone daggers as they dashed towards these villains. Han Shuo himself rather held his ground and targeted the man-eating monster and goblins who had died, beginning to release the spell of "Corpse Reanimation".

After failing a few times, Han Shuo still continued to remain where he stood and repeatedly chanted the incantation, under the surprised looks of the dwarves, attempting to make the bodies, who had just lost their lives, rise again.

Finally, an ugly goblin with a crossbow bolt still sticking out of its chest suddenly stood up after Han Shuo cast his spell. It grabbed a metal club and tottered over, starting to attack the goblin next to him that was still

alive. With one success under his belt, Han Shuo calmly recalled the steps he had just taken when casting and once again cast a “Corpse Reanimation” spell.

He succeeded once again, it was a man-eating monster this time. Under the release of Han Shuo’s “Corpse Reanimation” spell, another five or six man-eating monsters and goblins stood up, raising their weapons in accordance with Han Shuo’s commands and starting to attack the living man-eating monsters and goblins.

When the man-eating monsters and goblins discovered this phenomenon, this immediately caused a strong wave of terror and panic to spread amongst them. These man-eating monsters and goblins were shocked out of their wits seeing their dead companions stand up vacantly and attack them. Saying a few sentences in their own language and pointing at Han Shuo in fright, all of them scattered like the four winds as they fled for their lives.

Even the dwarves on the side felt a bit of fear. They all looked at Han Shuo with exceedingly odd looks, different from those they looked at him usually. Han Shuo blanked and then immediately reacted. He dissolved his spell and the dead man-eating monsters and goblins fell down once again.

“Han, this magic of yours is too evil. Even we are a bit afraid.” Bennett walked towards Han Shuo and spoke haltingly.

Han Shuo knew that the spell of “Corpse Reanimation” was indeed quite evil, and ordinary people would be unable to accept it. He thought for a moment and nodded, saying, “Bennett, I understand what you mean, but I’ve done so in order to save all of you.”

“We understand, thank you Han. However, this kind of magic is truly hard to accept. Even the villainous man-eating monsters and goblins were scared witless by you. Heh heh, let’s go. Your weapon is ready and we’ll give it to you when we arrive at the village.”

“You guys have finished it!” Han Shuo was truly astonished upon hearing that the Demonslayer Edge was ready. He brought up the rear and walked towards the dwarf village.

The little skeleton's seven bone spurs reattached to its spine and didn't head for the dwarf village along with Han Shuo. Rather, it followed Han Shuo's orders and looted the bodies of the dead with a practiced air.

Following Calvin, Han Shuo came to the dwarf village and arrived at the site where the Demonslayer Edge was crafted.

"Han, this is the weapon that we've forged according to your requirements. Are you satisfied with it?" Bennett pointed with the hammer in his hand at a weapon on the side as he spoke to Han Shuo.

The Demonslayer Edge was two feet long, and a cold light sparkled along its keen edge. The body was dark brown with three raised thorns at the spiky tip. It was heavy in his hand.

Han Shuo held the Demonslayer Edge and carefully observed it, suddenly stabbing the whetstone beneath it. The Demonslayer Edge sank into the whetstone.

Nodding, Han Shuo looked at the somewhat uneasy Calvin in satisfaction. He smiled, "Elder, thank you for your crafting. I really like this weapon."

"Heh heh, as long as you like it. This weapon has black iron and black gold mixed in as well as more than ten rare metals. I'm also very satisfied with this weapon." Calvin breathed a sigh of relief and looked at the Demonslayer Edge as he spoke.

"Be on the alert, man-eating monster and goblins may appear again during this period of time. I will leave for a while and will bring your winter rations with me next time I visit. Make sure to take care."

After reminding these dwarves, Han Shuo eagerly returned to the cemetery of death, circulating the magic within his body. He used the essence of his blood as a circuit to the Demonslayer Edge, refining the weapon for the next three days and three nights according to the memories left behind by Chu Cang Lan. Han Shuo's blood was intermixed with magical yuan as it slowly flowed into the Demonslayer Edge.

After three days, Han Shuo was drained and worn out and felt that his



magical yuan was a running dry. The originally dark-brown Demonslayer Edge had turned dark red. After Han Shuo's magical yuan recovered over the next couple of days, he started practicing the "Law of Activating Magic" with the Demonslayer Edge, attempting to manipulate the weapon with his mind.

During this process, the meridians of Han Shuo's body would occasionally swell painfully. Han Shuo still gritted his teeth against the enormous impact of the waterfall on this day, continuously using magical yuan to refine the meridians in his body. He suddenly sank into a mental state.

Under unbeknownst circumstances, Han Shuo slowly woke up. He discovered that at some unknown time, he had already fallen into the deep pool. When he emerged from the frigid waters of the deep pool, he suddenly discovered that the Demonslayer Edge had disappeared. Startled, he wanted to quickly find the Demonslayer Edge again.

At this moment, a dark-red light suddenly shot out from the waters and flew towards Han Shuo. Han Shuo had thought danger had found him and was planning on evading it when he realized that a bizarre feeling had risen in his heart. It was as if the dark red light shooting towards him had some sort of connection to him.

He first blanked, and then a thought flashed through his mind. Suddenly enlightened, Han Shuo's thoughts moved. The dark red light shooting towards him suddenly started dancing in mid air. Han Shuo then sensed a fish in the waters of the pool and a thought bubbled up in his mind. The fish was instantaneously pierced through by the Demonslayer Edge.

"It looks like I've succeeded." Han Shuo's left hand reached out and the Demonslayer Edge shot out from the waters, landing in Han Shuo's palm.

Circulating his magical yuan, the speed of the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" was many times faster than usual. Han Shuo was shocked again, and then suddenly discovered that traces of frosty air was leaking out from the Demonslayer Edge, held in his left hand with the mystical glacial air being infused into it. Because the Demonslayer Edge was pointed at the

deep pool, a layer of ice had already formed on the surface of the pool as the waters gave off frigid air.

He knew that these were the signs of having broken through the “open passages” and reaching the “molded spirit realm”. Han Shuo was gratified to know that after a few life and death struggles and several sleepless nights of magic training, he had finally once again achieved a breakthrough.

Han Shuo’s magic had once again improved now, and a most excellent Demonslayer Edge was now in his hands. Han Shuo felt that it was time to leave the cemetery of death and thoroughly eliminate the threat known as Grover.

Walking out from the tombs in the mountains behind the Academy, Han Shuo didn’t immediately find Phoebe. Han Shuo harbored feelings of affection towards Fanny. He had planned on asking her a few questions on magical knowledge after their last meeting, but it was a pity that he had received the black gold ore from Phoebe and had eagerly returned to the cemetery of death.

The upper scroll of “Necromancy Magic” contained much knowledge that Han Shuo did not fully understand. This scroll didn’t have many notes. As an adept mage, Fanny was bound to have a more in-depth understanding. Therefore, Han Shuo had long since noted the topics he didn’t understand and wanted to find a chance to ask Fanny again.

The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force had an exalted position within the Empire. Although Grover hated Han Shuo’s guts, he wouldn’t dare brazenly make a move against Han Shuo on school grounds. The teachers of various majors were all quite strong, apart from the necromancy major, the other majors had even more stronger characters acting as overseers. Even if the killers of ‘Shadow Ghost’ came looking for him, it was impossible for them to leave alive once they had been discovered.

It was now dusk and the students were now relaxing or eating meals after a day of learning. Han Shuo didn’t directly go look for Fanny at her

lab, afraid that this would attract the attention of others. He waited a while until the sky had completely darkened, before walking to the small building that Fanny lived in without anyone knowing.

Han Shuo had stayed in the necromancy major for so long and had long since learned of where Fanny lived because of his feelings for her. He skillfully deciphered the appropriate direction under the cover of the night, walking to the teacher dormitory building in which Fanny resided.

# Chapter 81: Caught in the act in bed

Fanny's quarters bordered those of some other female dark major teachers. However, there was still a bit of a distance between them. His sensitive perceptions could clearly hear voices in low conversation from within the teacher's dormitory building. It looked like they had yet to go to sleep at this time.

All of the teachers at the Babylon Academy were extraordinarily strong. When Han Shuo neared, he purposefully concealed his presence and even slowed down the rate of his heartbeat.

Just as Han Shuo arrived in front of Fanny's door and was about to reach out and knock, the door suddenly opened. Fanny was wearing silk pajamas and an expanse of snow white skin showed at her chest. She was wearing the ruby necklace that Han Shuo had given her, further displaying her beauty.

"Bryan, what are you doing here so surreptitiously?" Fanny was a bit unhappy as she looked at Han Shuo.

Looking around, Han Shuo asked askance, "Eh, how did you know I was here?"

"I felt that someone was following recently times and so became wary. I've cast "Life Reconnaissance" in front of the door so I discovered you as soon as you came over!" Fanny rolled her eyes at Han Shuo and said in an ill temper upon seeing him cast shifty looks around the area.

"Eh, Master Fanny can I come inside?" After all, it wasn't too convenient to stand and talk at the door. Add to this that several teachers had yet to go to sleep, it would be a bad thing if they were seen.

Who knew that when Han Shuo spoke these words, Fanny's charming cheeks would flush faintly red. Fanny hesitated, then also stuck out her head to look around, finally dragging Han Shuo in with a red face and hastily closing the door.

Han Shuo discovered the room was filled with the presence of femininity

when he entered Fanny's room. Pink bed curtains, neat and clean tables and carpet, as well as some elegant decorations that demonstrated the female identity of this room's owner.

A thought suddenly striking him, Han Shuo remembered that in his original world, ordinary young girls wouldn't easily let strangers into their rooms. The room of each girl was the window to her soul. One would be unable to enter without her acceptance. When his thoughts travelled here, ripples grew in Han Shuo's heart as he looked at Fanny with a hot gaze.

"What are you looking at? Where have you been again the past couple days? There will be a test in half a month and you must participate, otherwise the school authorities have the power to expel you." Fanny glared at Han Shuo viciously upon seeing his hot and bothered glance, then seemed to think of something and turned her back to Han Shuo, taking off the ruby necklace from her snow white neck.

"I know. I've come to find you this time in order to ask you a few questions regarding magical knowledge. Eh? Why did you take the necklace off? I feel that you are very beautiful and moving when you wear this necklace."

"None of your business. It's already night now, I've taken the necklace off in order to prepare to rest. If you want to ask about magical knowledge, then come find me in the lab tomorrow during the day. It's already night, so it won't be too good if someone discovers that you're here." Fanny look at Han Shuo, out of sorts.

Footsteps sounded outside the door at this moment, and they had already arrived in front of Fanny's door within the blink of an eye. The door was knocked on twice as a female voice sounded, "Master Fanny, you're not asleep yet, can I come in?"

It was truly that whatever one was worried about would happen. Fanny and Han Shuo looked at each other, their faces both stilling at once. Fanny then glared viciously at Han Shuo and then reached out with her hand to make a shushing motion. She opened her her mouth to say, "Master Camilla, just a moment, I'll open the door for you shortly!"

After Fanny spoke, she suddenly started walking around in the room, her eyes patrolling over everywhere. It looked like she was trying to find a hiding spot for Han Shuo. Fanny's room wasn't too big, there didn't seem to be a place able to hide Han Shuo's entire body. In her anxiety, Fanny suddenly saw her room and pointed at it to Han Shuo, her charming face full of joy.

Seeing that Fanny was so anxious, Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders and followed her wishes, standing up from the side of the table and walking towards her bed with the pink bed curtains. He hopped onto Fanny's bed with a whoosh, an expression of great enjoyment showing on his face.

Having walked to the door, Fanny was about to open the door when she was extremely surprised after turning her head. Her mouth opened with no sound, her right hand pointed frantically at the bottom of the bed. It looked like she'd meant for Han Shuo to hide beneath the bed, but Han Shuo had gotten the wrong impression and actually already gotten on the bed that she'd never allowed strange males to touch before.

"Master Fanny, hurry and open the door!" Camilla stood in front of the door and could already see from the light that Fanny was at the door. She opened her mouth and hurried Fanny.

Lying sideways on the bed, a wonderful fragrance wafted around him, Han Shuo ignored the anxious Fanny giving hints by the door and smiled as he undid the bed curtains, taking Fanny's nicely scented blankets and covering his body.

Fanny gritted her teeth angrily with regards to Han Shuo's actions, but Camilla's continued hurrying in front of the door left Fanny no other choice but to open the room door and pretend to be calm. She smiled and responded, "Master Camilla, how come you've come to find me so late at night!"

Camilla was an adept mage of the dark major and was already middle aged. Her looks could only be described as ordinary. When she walked into Fanny's room, she automatically sat down next to the table and said, "Your necromancy major actually won out over the light major through the trials

of the Dark Forest last time. This has given us a lot of face. Our major will be heading out for our trials shortly. I'm here to ask you for tips and tricks!"

"What tips and tricks? Our major only managed to hunt down those magical creatures last time simply because we were lucky. Master Camilla you've been in the dark major for many years and have taken the students out on many outings. You should be very experienced, I think you're asking the wrong person by coming to me." Fanny felt uncomfortable with Camilla in the room, deathly afraid that she would discover Han Shuo's presence.

The more she worried, the more her gaze flitted to the edge of her bed. She continued to keep an eye on the movements on her bed, afraid that Han Shuo would emit some sounds and arouse Camilla's attentions.

"Master Fanny's bed curtains are very pretty, where did you buy them?" Camilla suddenly stood up and unexpectedly walked towards Fanny's bed, her eyes staring at Fanny's bed curtains and an expression of extreme interest appeared on her face.

Her heart shuddered as Fanny quickly closed the distance, arriving before Camilla and sat down to block the former's line of sight. Her spine ramrod straight, she hastily said, "From the Mier Decorations Shop. If Master Camilla likes them, then you can go buy them as well. One gold coin should be enough. Um..."

Fanny's bed was not that big to begin with, Han Shuo was already flush against the wall as he lay on his side. In her hasty anxiousness, Fanny abruptly sat down on the bed and actually placed her butt on the back of Han Shuo's left hand. When Fanny came to the end of her explanations to Camilla, her light "um" already explained that she also felt things were inappropriate.

"So you bought it from the the Mier Decorations Shop, no wonder it's so pretty. Too bad I'm old and not as pretty as Master Fanny. If I bought these curtains, I'll be sure to be ridiculed behind my back."

Master Fanny's well rounded bottom was sitting on the back of Han

Shuo's hand. Han Shuo was feeling the wondrous sensation as his heart was like a capering monkey and his mind like a galloping horse. Just as he was enjoying the sensation, he suddenly felt that the wondrous sensation on the back of his hand was no longer there. Disappointment rose from Han Shuo's heart as he carefully snuck a peak. He discovered that Fanny's body still remained in the same position, but had used the muscles of her waist to slightly lift her wonderful behind.

The place where Fanny was sitting just happened to block Camilla's line of sight. If Fanny shifted her body, it was very likely that Han Shuo would be discovered. Fanny clearly felt that she had sat in a place she shouldn't have sat in, yet couldn't move her body and could only lift her buttocks to avoid Han Shuo taking advantage of her.

Watching from the back, Han Shuo could see a red flush creep up Fanny's neck, slender shoulders, and delectable back. Because she had tightened her body, Fanny's curves were fully on display and her well-rounded behind fell completely into Han Shuo's view.

Han Shuo had no idea what Fanny and Camilla talked about afterwards. His lustful gaze roved greedily over Fanny's body. As a mage, it was very difficult for Fanny to maintain her position that was akin to a horse's stances. Her body started trembling after a while. Perhaps it was because she could no longer hold up, or felt that Han Shuo should have moved his hand from the area, Fanny's body relaxed and her two butt cheeks dropped down as she once again sat down.

Another light "um" emitted from Fanny's mouth. Han Shuo had flipped his hand from the back to his palm facing up. His fingers curled vaguely from the pressure of Fanny's buttocks, curling into the space between them, immediately causing Fanny to cry out slightly as she couldn't bear up beneath it.

"Master Fanny, are you alright? Your face is so red and your body is trembling so. Are you sick? Let me take a look for you?"

"No, nothing much. If you don't have any other matters Master Camilla, why don't you leave? I... I'm tired and want to rest early."



Fanny trembled as she tried to lift her butt as she spoke, wanting to stand up from the edge of the bed. Han Shuo had been enjoying the well rounded, slippery sensation of Fanny's butt. When he lost that touch, he subconsciously reached out his hand and plunged into the area between Fanny's butt that she had just lifted up a tiny bit.

Fanny had been about to stand up straight when her body suddenly spasmed because of the abrupt stimulus to her body. Her body once more sat down uncontrollably, swallowing Han Shuo's rampaging left hand.

"What's wrong, what's wrong Master Fanny? Something's dreadfully wrong with your body!" Camilla said frantically and then lifted the bed curtains, wanting to relieve the dazed Fanny from their embrace. She suddenly saw Han Shuo's burning hot gaze and a startled shriek emitted from Camilla's mouth.

This scream startled the dazed Fanny awake. She recollected her senses and hastily stood up, not paying any attention to Han Shuo. She frantically explained in a panic, "Master Camilla, he's my student and has come to ask me some questions. I was afraid you'd misunderstand. That's why I told him to hide."

"Master Fanny, you don't have to explain. This is your private matter. Heh heh, no wonder you've rejected the advanced of many young men and ignored even Gene. So this is why. Your relationship is to the stage of sleeping together, this is truly surprising. Master Fanny I apologize, I've disturbed you. I'll leave now!" Camilla exclaimed in shock and apologized in a bizarre voice, walking directly outside.

Fanny was in an extreme state of panic and disarray, seeking to hold Camilla back and wanting to explain. But no matter how she explained, Camilla continued to retain an ambiguous expression and display an "I understand" expression. She chuckled merrily as she walked out of Fanny's room.

When Camilla had left Fanny's room, Fanny, standing in front of the door, circled the table in her panic and then seemed to remember something. She made threatening gestures at the Han Shuo still lying in

bed, crying out, “Damned Bryan, I’m absolutely not letting you off the hook today.”

Fanny had already jumped onto the bed when she finished speaking and commenced a punishment of fists and feet with a face full of wrathful anger, her little fists landing on Han Shuo’s chest like rain.

As a mage, Fanny had no way to use her fists and feet to attack and cause any damage to Han Shuo, but Han Shuo was utterly mesmerized as he watched the highly aggravated Fanny wave her little fists around, tottering and faltering from her movements and even revealing a portion of her snow white, slender thigh because her skirt had become hiked up.

First reaching out a hand to pretend to stop her, Han Shuo was hard pressed to bear up beneath the agitation of his heart. In his feverish mind, he pushed Fanny down onto the bed and used his strong body to completely press down on Fanny’s well endowed, perfect body. He kept saying, “Master Fanny, calm down, calm down.”

Han Shuo paid lip service to asking Fanny to calm down while covering her with his body. Feeling the firm, pert tips of Fanny’s breasts on his chest, his chest tightly adhered to Fanny’s. The friction between the two bodies under Fanny’s struggles caused Han Shuo to slowly lose himself.

Fanny was breathless with anger. He was the one more impulsive than any other and yet he dared tell her to calm down. The pain in her hands becoming more and more pronounced, she couldn’t move no matter how she struggled. As she watched Han Shuo come closer and closer, her heart was extremely agitated as she said continuously, “Damn it, stop already or I won’t go easy on you!”

# Chapter 82: The Eye of Darkness

A howl of agony rang out as Han Shuo clutched his lower body, moving off of Fanny. He curled up in pain as his mental state returned completely to normal.

Fanny sat up, dusted herself off and got off the bed as if nothing had happened. She flicked a proud glance at Han Shuo and snorted lightly, “Well, do you recognize my strength now?”

“Master Fanny, there was no need to be so vicious, was there?” Han Shuo grimaced as he clutched at his abdomen in pain.

“Damn it, how dare you say anything. I’ve let the matter at the pool go, but you’ve... you’ve violated me again! I’ve already gone easy on you by not killing you!” Fanny was filled with rage at the thought of what had just happened as she glared at Han Shuo irately.

Han Shuo scrambled down adroitly from the bed and sat down next to Fanny, his face full of seriousness. He said calmly, “Let bygones be bygones. I’m going to recite a magical incantation for you.”

Fanny saw that Han Shuo was all business and knew that he was purposefully shifting topics from what had just happened. A surge of rage grew in her heart and she was about to open her mouth and furiously berate Han Shuo when she suddenly heard Han Shuo’s incantation. Fanny paid it no heed at first, but was then astounded when Han Shuo came to the end. A bafflingly excited light shone in her clear eyes as they focused on Han Shuo. She asked with a trembling voice, “This is necromancy magic... I can feel it, but how come I’ve never heard this incantation before?”

“This is an incantation for an advanced magic, ‘Canopy of Necromancy’. It’s necromancy magic that has been lost for many years. I also gained it unwittingly.” Han Shuo explained slowly upon seeing Fanny’s overjoyed expression.

“Just what is going on, explain it to me clearly! And are there any other lost necromancy magics? Hurry up and tell me!” Fanny had always been

embroiled in the study of necromancy magic and had long since forgotten her earlier rage upon hearing the ancient incantation, that had been lost for ages, come out from Han Shuo's mouth. Rather, she asked him frantically instead.

Internally heaving a sigh of relief, Han Shuo first gathered his thoughts calmly and then nodded, saying, "There's also an evil "Corpse Reanimation" magic. I found it unwittingly. Master Fanny, you should know that these are all lost magics of our necromancy major, so I need you to temporarily keep this a secret."

Master Fanny wasn't dumb, she immediately understood what Han Shuo intended and nodded her head like a chick pecking at rice, urging him on with her eyes.

Han Shuo then went over the magical incantation and hand gestures for "Corpse Reanimation" and "Canopy of Necromancy" in detail for Fanny. He then brought out some knowledge that he had yet to fully grasp and inquired Fanny with them one by one. Fanny was delighted without comparison and had long since forgotten Han Shuo's discourteous actions towards her earlier. She patiently explained and detailed the incomprehension that Han Shuo had run into.

Han Shuo understood that he would be casting these spells sooner or later, but, he didn't intend to let others know that he knew these secrets before his strength was enough.

As an adept mage of the necromancy major and someone Han Shuo admired, Han Shuo hadn't planned on continuously hiding the truth from Fanny. Particularly when she was someone whose bark was worse than her bite, and was actually very caring towards him. After all, there was still some knowledge that he'd have to ask Fanny about in order to gain full understanding.

Han Shuo stayed in Fanny's room and talked until the middle of the night unbeknownst to both of them. The previously excited Fanny started yawning successively, then discovered that it was late. Fanny covered her mouth as she yawned and said lazily to Han Shuo, "It's late, I'm going to

rest. I've explained these questions to you, so you should return to the dorms and rest too. Oh right, you haven't ever stayed in the dorms I've arranged for you right?"

Nodding, Han Shuo got up and walked to the door. Just as Han Shuo was about to push the door open and leave, Fanny suddenly said, "Bryan, don't think I've forgotten what you've done to me. However, if you can apply yourself to your studies and graduate early from the necromancy major, perhaps I will forgive you!"

Han Shuo started, halting in front of the room door and turned his head to see Fanny looking at him with expectation. Her expression was grave as she said seriously, "Bryan, with your talent this shouldn't be difficult. As long as you're willing to work hard, you're sure to become a very strong necromancer, and then you'll be able to get everything you want!"

"Does that include you, Master Fanny?" Han Shuo asked subconsciously.

Fanny's heart trembled as she looked at Han Shuo leering at her. Her cheeks suddenly reddened and she became irate, admonishing, "Get out! Scram, you sex-crazed bad boy!"

His heart full of joy, Han Shuo felt that Fanny seemed to be a bit interested in him. From their recent conversations, he could tell that Fanny had certain expectations for him. He thought carefully and suddenly understood. He realized that if he wished to gain Fanny's heart, his current strength and status were truly a bit unrealistic.

"Don't worry, I'll work hard. You'll see soon!" Han Shuo whispered as he paused in front of the door, then quickly left in the darkness.

After he departed from Fanny's room, Han Shuo didn't return to the dorm room that Fanny had arranged for him. There were people guarding the doors and some of the rooms were connected to each other. Han Shuo didn't wish for others to discover his tracks, in case he raised the suspicions of "Shadow Ghost" and Grover.

Particularly as he'd just heard Fanny say that she'd felt someone had been following her recently. This made Han Shuo become even warier, afraid to exposing himself in front of others.

Turning over these thoughts in his head, he felt that perhaps he should buy a house outside of the school grounds, otherwise he wouldn't even have a place to stay in the future when he returned to the Empire. If he had his own personal place, he wouldn't need to travel to the cemetery at the back of the Academy every time he wanted to activate the transportation matrix.

Just as Han Shuo was quietly weighing this matter in his heart and walking to the side of the dark major library, he suddenly heard the sound of pages being turned. This caused his heart to suddenly contract in surprise as he immediately concealed himself noiselessly in the shadows of a corner around the library.

Moving his neck slightly, three original demons flew out soundlessly, sneaking into the library under the cover of deep night. Two figures held faint light in their hands, and Han Shuo saw two familiar faces with the help of the feeble light source – the old mage Duke and the senior knight Erick.

Han Shuo had originally received the round, green ball, that opened the cemetery of death, from these people in the cemetery in the mountains behind the Academy. The confident Erick had thought that Han Shuo would be dead without a doubt after his fighting aura imbued slash. Thus, he hadn't checked Han Shuo's body. After a few months, Han Shuo hadn't thought that he'd see these two again in the dark major library.

"Be careful. Strong people are abound in this Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Don't alert others, or we'll be in big trouble." Duke immediately admonished lightly upon seeing Erick flipping through pages with large motions.

"We still haven't discovered it, the books of the necromancy major have no record of anything to do with 'The Eye of Darkness'." Erick flipped pages with a softer hand as he complained in a low voice.

"Huh. 'The Eye of Darkness' is the key to opening the cemetery of death. We finally obtained it after a great deal of effort, to think that it would suddenly disappear. When Dylan died last time, the item was no longer on

him. We went back to his place and searched all of it, but still found nothing. Why would that item suddenly disappear? This is strange indeed. The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force has many books regarding necromancy. Perhaps we can find some clues. Otherwise we can't afford to be targets when the higher ranks throw the blame around." Duke glared at Erick and said lowly.

On the outside, thanks to the original demons' eavesdropping, Han Shuo could thoroughly eavesdrop on their conversation and expressions. He finally understood that the round ball he held was the "Eye of Darkness". It looked like the two were making a visit to the dark major library late at night because they, too, had the same mindset as him, wanting to research the secrets of the "Eye of Darkness" in the library.

After a short while, the two had gained nothing and left the library dejectedly. They left swiftly using a small road leading to the back of the Academy.

From their conversation, Han Shuo could conclude that the two seemed to be a part of some sort of organization. He had now obtained the "Eye of Darkness" and wanted to know more of their secrets, and see if they would be a threat to him. He made use of the three original demons to trail them from a distance, slowly moving to the mountains in the back along with them.

The two didn't pass through the cemetery in the mountains, only changing their direction after they'd left the academy grounds. They left quickly, using the streets of the northern district, finally walking into an isolated yard in the northern district.

The three original demons had followed them here and were about to sneak into the yard for a good peek, according to Han Shuo's instructions, when he suddenly felt the original demons crash into something. "Who?!" Immediately sounded out from the yard.

Han Shuo was startled and immediately understood that some sort of boundary must have been set up around the yard. Otherwise the original demons, being without shape or form, would have never been discovered.

The original demons seemed to sense danger as Han Shuo was recovering from his surprise. They retreated quickly, with Han Shuo hastily manipulating them with his mind, bidding them flee with all possible speed in three different directions leading to the northern street.

After a while, the original demons returned to Han Shuo's body from three different directions, allowing him to heave a sigh of relief. He remembered the yard, knowing that there was a strong expert inside and temporarily gave up his continual observation.

He discovered that these were the streets of the northern district just as he was about to leave. This yard was not too far away from Phoebe's residence. The sky was already growing slightly brighter at the moment. Han Shuo remembered the rations he had promised the dwarves and spent a silver coin for breakfast on the ride, then walked to Phoebe's residence.

When Han Shuo arrived at Phoebe's residence, he immediately noticed that the presence of guards around her residence was much more numerous than before. Exceedingly soft sounds of breathing sounded from both sides of the door. It looked like experts were lying in wait inside. Apart from that, there was also a place within the building in which Han Shuo couldn't feel the flow of air. This let him know that a sort of field or barrier had been set up inside.

Han Shuo knocked lightly when he arrived on Phoebe's doorstep. Someone swiftly arrived as soon as he'd knocked, but didn't directly open the door, asking softly behind the door instead, "Who is it?"

"I'm called Bryan, here to see Miss Phoebe!" Han Shuo stood outside the door and said softly.

"Please wait a moment!" The person inside responded as another set of footsteps quickly faded away. After a while, two sets of footsteps could be heard from the other side of the door.

"Is it Bryan?" Fabian's voice rang out through the door.

"It's me." Han Shuo responded.



Sighing in relief, Fabian instructed, "Open the door, it is indeed Bryan."

The doors were opened to reveal Fabian, standing beside two swordsmen, who wore silver armor. Their faces were weathered and coarse, bearing the traces of many years of standing beneath the wind and sun. It looked like they were two experts.

"Hurry and come on in! I haven't seen you for ten days now. Phoebe often mentions you around me, saying that we'll forgo a lot of hassle with you on our side and your extraordinary reflexes." Although a smile appeared on Fabian's face, he was obviously quite weary.

"It looks like life hasn't been that easy for you. Last time I was here, security wasn't as tight as it is now!" Han Shuo swept his gaze over Fabian as he teased him.

Sighing lightly, Fabian said, "Don't mention it. Since the banquet, Miss Phoebe has been the victim of assassination attempts three times in the past ten days. Each has been more vicious than the last. These people are from the Battlefire mercenary band, Miss Phoebe has spent a lot of money in order to hire them, but in the last couple of days, they've had three of theirs injured and two dead. It looks like Grover is starting to become anxious, but our circumstances have become more and more dangerous!"

They walked towards the main hall as they talked. Han Shuo could sense two more mages and one warrior in the corners of the surroundings, they seemed to be exceedingly strong. With so many experts protecting her and Phoebe's strength as a swordmaster, Grover and "Shadow Ghost's" people must surely be extremely frightening with such a high number of casualties.

Three original demons once again flew out soundlessly from the back of Han Shuo's neck. They avoided the boundary that the Battlefire mercenary band had set and hid in three different parts of the room, silently observing everything around them.

After a while, Phoebe walked in with a tall beauty with fiery-red hair, pinned up in a ponytail. The girl's skin was copper-colored and her body was tall, athletic, and buff. Her breasts, butt, and body were large, and she

wore a broadsword on her back. She too looked like a swordsman.

“Bryan, it’s good to finally see you again. This is great!” Phoebe said in surprise as she looked at Han Shuo.

“Phoebe, this is the magical Bryan that you’ve talked about?” The athletic girl with the fiery-red hair looked at Han Shuo skeptically as she spoke.

“Yes, Candice!”

“Let me see if he’s as amazing as you say!” Candice snorted lightly as she pulled out the broadsword behind her in one movement, suddenly slashing downwards at Han Shuo. When the broadsword was unsheathed, red flames immediately crept up onto the surface of the entire blade like a red dragon’s breath. It looked like she was also a mage swordsman.

# Chapter 83: Existing and complementing each other

Han Shuo never would have thought that this woman would make such a move out of the blue. She'd only said one sentence before turning to action. The broadsword made its way towards him, its fiery heat already causing some discomfort to his skin.

Snorting coldly, the Demonslayer Edge suddenly appeared in Han Shuo's left hand. He infused it with magical yuan in the manner of the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire", making the dark red Demonslayer Edge suddenly emanate faint amounts of frigid, purple air. The temperature indoors suddenly changed, Candice's side was fiery hot, while Han Shuo's was glacially cold.

Their two swords hadn't even met when the two hot and cold blasts met each other. Clouds of white smoke billowed out, but what surprised Phoebe was that Han Shuo's purple frosty air was different from any other ice magic she had seen before. It rather seemed like something living, and could even proceed in a twisted manner.

When Han Shuo and Candice's swords connected, a violent force, interspersed with fighting aura, crashed into Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge like an iron hammer. Han Shuo bedraggledly backed up a few steps, but the fighting aura found it difficult to proceed after surging into the Demonslayer Edge. It couldn't break through the Demonslayer Edge's resistance to hurt Han Shuo.

It was rather Candice who suddenly cried out in shock. When the white fog dissipated and Han Shuo once more looked upon Candice, the broadsword in her hands already had a large chip in it. It looked like the Demonslayer Edge had harmed it.

Candice looked like she possessed the strength of a senior swordsman, and her strength was even more unfathomable because she also possessed fire magic. The broadsword in her hand should have been a magical sword of exceedingly high quality, one that enhanced the power of the fire

magics it was imbued with. Who would've thought that such a good quality sword would immediately be marked by Han Shuo's.

Just as Candice looked at the broadsword in her hand with a look of shock and anger, seemingly wanting to pursue a fight, Phoebe, standing off on the side, suddenly spoke up. "Alright Candice, Bryan's forte isn't his brute strength. I've already said his amazingness comes from his extraordinary senses."

"He, he ruined my magical sword!" Candice first glared at Han Shuo and then complained to Phoebe.

"Silly, you were asking for it. If you don't improve your brash temper, you'll suffer from a lot of disadvantages in the future!" Phoebe flicked a resigned glance at Candice and tried to speak a few words out of goodwill. As her beautiful eyes looked over Han Shuo, Phoebe displayed an exceedingly interested expression. She exclaimed in astoundment, "Is this the weapon you wanted to forge? Can I have a look at it?"

"There's nothing to see, it's just a bit sharper than ordinary weapons!" Han Shuo put the Demonslayer Edge away without a change in expression, only smiling at Phoebe once he'd put it away.

"Huh! Grinch!" Phoebe exclaimed softly and then pointed at Candice, introducing her to Han Shuo. "This is the vice captain of the Battlefire mercenary band, Candice. She's a friend that I've known for a while. Although her temper is a bit brash, she's a nice person. Don't mind her!"

Nodding, Han Shuo flicked a glance at Candice, smiling, "I won't mind, but I hope she doesn't hold a grudge, heh heh!"

"It's just a magical sword, and it's not completely broken. I'm not that miserly. Phoebe, you chat about your private matters, I'll go guard the door outside. I hope that damned Grover will come to his senses." Candice glared at Han Shuo with disdain, and then walked outside with look of heartache on her face as she looked at the broadsword in her hand.

As he watched Candice walk out of the room, Han Shuo felt that although this girl was a bit hot tempered, she wasn't the petty, grudge-holding sort. Otherwise she wouldn't have left so easily.

“I’ve come to purchase some rations from you, and would like to ask you to find a secluded residence for me. It doesn’t have to be big, as long as it’s guaranteed that no one will find me easily.” Han Shuo didn’t conceal anything as he looked at Phoebe, directly speaking frankly.

“No problem, how much food do you need?” Phoebe was quite decisive and didn’t hesitate at all. She agreed first, and then asked how much food was needed after.

“Roughly enough for a hundred people to weather the winter.” Han Shuo responded.

Phoebe looked at Han Shuo oddly as soon as he’d spoken. When he started to feel completely uneasy from her gaze, Phoebe asked, perplexed, “What are you going to do with enough winter rations for a hundred people? Are you planning on leaving the Empire?”

Shaking his head wryly, Han Shuo knew that she would be suspicious. He said, “Don’t think too much, I’m helping friends resolve a difficult matter. I won’t leave the Empire in the short term without getting rid of Grover first.”

“There’s no problem regarding the food, but you’ll have to give me a few days to prepare it. As for a secluded residence, I advise you to not live alone outside for the time being because Grover and the members of ‘Shadow Ghost’ have continuously viewed you as a thorn in their side. If I look for a residence for you through my means, that may enable Grover to pick up a few clues.”

“Mm, if you don’t mind, you can stay here at my place for now. This way we can help each other as well. When the threat of Grover is neutralized, I can leave this house to you and we’ll return to the Guild again, what do you think?” Phoebe thought for a moment and looked directly at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo thought carefully about Phoebe’s suggestion and felt that what she said did make some sense. However, he was less enthused about accepting the house. After all, even if the threat of Grover was eradicated, there was still a threat if an enormous killer organization like “Shadow

Ghost” knew of his hiding place.

“I know what you’re worried about, so don’t worry. As long as Grover is eliminated, I have ways to ensure that ‘Shadow Ghost’ will never make trouble for us again. I’ve formally taken control of the Guild lately and am collecting evidence on Grover’s crime. Grandpa Andrew is also fully supporting me. Grandpa Andrew has even found the tracks of old thing Grover’s mistress. He’s already sent men to take the items back. I think Grover is even more frightened than us right now.” Phoebe spoke words of comfort upon seeing Han Shuo’s brow knit into a frown.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “Then alright, I’ll stay here for the time being. I’ll leave after the threat of Grover has been removed!”

“That’s great! With you here, those damned assassins won’t be able to ambush us!” Phoebe was overjoyed to see Han Shuo agree.

Phoebe then let Fabian arrange a room for Han Shuo. Han Shuo’s room was also very spacious, with all of the daily amenities present. It was separated from Phoebe’s room by only one wall.

Han Shuo sat cross legged on the bed at night and started circulating his magical yuan, practicing magic as usual.

Han Shuo’s magical realm had now reached the molded spirit level. This level was a process that unlocked the potential of the brain. As long as he made it past this level, Han Shuo’s memory, comprehension abilities, and observation skills would all increase enormously. His mind would be much smarter than an ordinary person’s.

Except, because this level was a type of awakening the mind’s potential, it was particularly risky. One misstep could result in the mind sinking into a state of befuddlement, moving completely according to instinct. If it was serious, then the practitioner might lose their memories or have a split personality even after recovering from that state.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, Han Shuo’s head was enveloped by a cloud of black light. It was like a cloud of black lightning had encircled Han Shuo’s head and was continuously releasing incredible amounts of lightning.

This status was maintained for who knew how long. Han Shuo breathed out lightly and stopped training with a sense of trepidation. After learning the horrors of the “molded spirit” realm, Han Shuo himself proceeded with all due caution. He always chose the most quiet conditions to train, and didn’t dare let any outside matters disturb him.

After he stopped training, Han Shuo saw that he was still in a good mental state and began to cautiously meditate again, wanting to increase his mental strength through meditation. Suddenly, his mind trembled with a crash and his mental strength started gathering at a speed many times faster than normal according to Han Shuo’s thoughts.

Death energy was present everywhere beneath the heavens and earth. Han Shuo could feel very clearly this time that through the use of mental strength, he could even slowly, bit by bit gather death energy. He could sense that the manner of gathering death energy was something that was completely unattainable in the normal course of casting magic.

This time’s meditation brought Han Shuo into a marvelous world. Han Shuo could clearly feel that his mental strength was increasing much faster than before. Although the benefits weren’t as large compared to when he used the “Eye of Darkness”, the mental strength gained from this type of meditation was quite pure and clean and wasn’t accompanied by pain.

When Han Shuo awoke from his meditations, he suddenly remembered that the first two levels of demonic magic emphasized training the meridians and bones of the body, but the level of “molded spirit” was completely made for training the potential of the mind. The meditation of mages were completely used to gather mental strength in the mind. They would never use it to train other parts of their body.

Judging from this, if Han Shuo’s brain potential received a high degree of improvement, then the speed in which his mind gathered mental strength would naturally greatly increase. This would then lead to unquantifiable benefits for when Han Shuo practiced his magic in the future.

“Indeed, it looks like the same evil methods of training from two

different worlds can complement each other. It looks like even without the 'Eye of Darkness', the amount of mental strength I receive from meditating is much more than that of ordinary mages." Han Shuo was gladdened and murmured to himself.

"Phoebe, do you like this brat?" At this moment, light sounds of conversation floated in from next door.

This house's soundproofing was good to begin with. If it were any other person, they absolutely would've been unable to clearly hear the conversations from the other rooms through the wall, but Han Shuo wasn't an ordinary person. The perverseness of the sensitivity of his ears allowed him to clearly hear the murmured conversations of the two girls in the dead of the night.

"Candice, what nonsense are you talking? Bryan's helped me a few times, we're just friends who fight side by side." Phoebe had lowered her voice to the utmost and argued.

"I don't think so, if it's just friends who fight side by side, then how come you keep defending him and give him such high praise? I just think you treat him a bit differently, that's all. Has something happened between you two? From my high experienced instinct as a mercenary, you absolutely treat him differently from others!" Candice's voice was suffused with thick mistrust and seemed to speak quite professionally.

"Really, there's nothing. We've been friends for so many years, would I lie to you? Oh, right, what do you think of Bryan?"

"What do you mean?"

"One word – strange! No matter his skills, the weird sword in his hand, or his background, it's all very strange. I think this person must have a secret he's concealing, you better be careful!"

"I'm not asking you that, I knew about that a long time ago... why would I need you to remind me? I'm asking you how is he as a person?" Phoebe's tone was odd as she asked again.

"Huh. And you say you're ordinary friends. I don't see you caring this



much about your other friends. His looks are okay, but he isn't handsome or charming either. I haven't come in contact with anything else, but according to your descriptions, he doesn't seem like much. Petty, profit seeking, and sex-craved don't seem like pros!"

Han Shuo heard everything they were discussing and was cursing Candice inwardly when the three original demons in a further location suddenly sensed the approach of assassins.

There were ten assassins this time, one of those in front was dressed in all black and his body was hovering in mid air. It looked like he was at least of the archmage level. Through the vision of the original demons, Han Shuo could see that Grover had also appeared in the distance. His face was gravely cautious, and the experts by his side, such as Ellis and the others, were all part of this time's operation. It seemed that Grover was betting everything on a single cast of the dice. He was planning on making it difficult for Phoebe to escape this time.

The three original demons slowly changed their directions according to Han Shuo's instructions. They carefully avoided the area covered by the archmage's mental strength, and carefully felt out the strength and numbers of those coming. It was the wee hours of the morning at this moment, and the guards were in the heavily fortified northern part of the city. This needed a few minutes and was when security was most lax in the entire northern part of the city. It seemed like these people had already carefully scouted out the conditions here.

Han Shuo measured the strength on his side and he felt that the odds were stacked against him. He could no longer pay attention to Phoebe and Candice's conversation. He rushed out of his room with the fastest possible speed, kicking the door to her room open with his foot and rushing inside with no reservations for anything whatsoever.

# Chapter 84: See who's a master of concealment

“What, what are you doing?” Candice squealed in shock and suddenly stood up. Phoebe had been about to undress for bed when she saw Han Shuo rush in. She, too, was startled and hastily pulled her clothes back on, looking at Han Shuo with a face of panic.

“Grover and the people of ‘Shadow Ghost’ are coming. Don’t say useless things and think about what we need to do!” Han Shuo roared in a low tone at the two frantic women with a darkened face.

Candice was still vaguely suspicious when he finished speaking and was about to express her opinions with a war face, whereas Phoebe had an extremely grave face and admonished, “Listen to him Candice, Bryan wouldn’t be wrong!”

Candice didn’t believe Han Shuo, but she believed Phoebe. Upon hearing Phoebe’s words, she immediately pulled out the broadsword from her back and nodded to Phoebe, dashing out suddenly like a ball of fiery shadows. Low sounds of warning immediately came from Candice.

Phoebe didn’t waste any time and grabbed a robe from the edge of the bed, flinging it onto herself. Her space ring suddenly brightened and a longsword sparkling with cold light materialized in her hand.

Nodding to Phoebe, Han Shuo quickly dashed outside of the house and saw that Candice was standing outside, giving orders in a low voice.

Using the vision from the original demons, Han Shuo closed his eyes and said, “Three people are approaching from the left, 130 meters away. Two warriors and one mage. The mage is the wind adept mage Ellis. An archmage along with four warriors and an archer is approaching from the front, roughly 130 meters away. There are most likely people from ‘Shadow Ghost’ on the roof. Several people are lying in wait in an alleyway 50 meters to the right, and they seem to be laying down some sort of trap...”

As if he was watching the action from above, Han Shuo continuously and swiftly detailed the particulars of the people approaching swiftly. Candice hadn't believed it at first, and would've never believed that he could clearly detect the oncomers' movements from so far away, but Phoebe had immediately asked Candice to arrange people according to Han Shuo's descriptions as soon as she walked out of the room.

"Miss Phoebe, I hope you make the preparations to retreat this time. According to my estimations, I think even with you as a swordmaster, we are still possibly not their match. If the situation goes south, I hope you don't linger here, but no matter how dangerous it is, don't retreat to the right. It's a dead end there!" Han Shuo suddenly opened his eyes and stared at Phoebe as he said gravely.

"Thank you, Bryan, I know what to do. You be careful as well!" Phoebe trusted Han Shuo a great deal and when she saw him warn her with such a serious face, she immediately understood that it would be a dangerous battle this time. She immediately nodded gravely at Han Shuo, indicating her understanding.

Breathing in deeply, Han Shuo willed the Demonslayer Edge out of the heart of his palm and checked the dagger concealed on his body, and the steel needles strapped to his legs. He then wielded a crossbow in his left hand and bounded up a nearby tree. The shadows of the house happened to completely conceal his body. Han Shuo stared calmly towards the left, not moving an inch.

"And so they've come, everyone be careful and spread out!" As a swordmaster, Phoebe finally heard the footsteps and inwardly rejoiced for trusting Han Shuo. She cast a gaze at Candice on her side.

It was only now that Candice looked in shock at the Han Shuo, who was concealed in the shadows. She had never thought that Han Shuo would truly be this amazing. Not only could he detect movement from a distance of a hundred meters, but it was as if he had a pair of eyes in the sky, thoroughly deducing all of the enemy's movements.

Candice was a mercenary who had experienced hundreds of battles after

all. After a short duration of shock, she looked at Phoebe and the two of them leapt up together. The two of them concealed themselves on either side of Han Shuo and also hid in the shadows.

“Br... Bryan, can you tell me slowly the movements of the enemy, so I can inform the people below?” Candice was about a meter away from Han Shuo when spoke in a soft voice.

Maintaining his position without even a flicker of change in his expression, Han Shuo’s voice was low as he faintly summarized the details of the enemies’ movement. Candice held a magical item in her hand, utilizing it to give her commands to the mercenaries hidden amongst the yard.

The three people from Grover’s side, with Ellis in the lead, were the first batch to arrive. They paused on a nearby roof. Han Shuo and the others didn’t move until the floating archmage appeared at the front door with the other experts from “Shadow Ghost”. It was only then that they held their breaths, focused their concentration, and prepared to make a move.

No one saw how the archmage moved, only that his body was completely enveloped in a black robe. He muttered a few lines of incantations in an almost inaudible voice, and fierce magical pulses suddenly emanated towards Phoebe’s residence. The rooms all began shaking violently as if a large earthquake was taking place.

At the same time, the four warriors behind him swiftly spread out. One archer shifted to a roof on the side, observing the surroundings from a high vantage point. Ellis nodded to the two warriors after seeing the ground tremble and shake like a great beast awakening. The two of them leapt off and descended towards the yard.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh whoosh whoosh.

Five arrows suddenly appeared in the darkness, like five violent vipers submerged in deep waters. They sped swiftly to bite the two descending warriors. The two had concealed their movements and had never expected that they would face such a fierce attacks as soon as they’d leapt off. They were quite shocked and frantically waved their swords to block the arrows.

Three of the arrows were smashed to pieces, one of them was evaded by both of them, with only the one that Phoebe had shot out nailing directly into one of the warrior's calves. When the two landed, they triggered the field that had been laid out there and three bolts of lightning suddenly appeared in the air. Under the illumination of the lightning, Han Shuo could clearly see multiple strands of metal wire as thin as hair tangled together. When the two landed, their ankles were caught in the metal wires.

The lightning crept amongst the metal wires, turning the area into a brilliant silver net with strong electricity flowing through it. The two people's bodies spasmed as they emitted ghastly howls. The one who wasn't injured quickly reacted after being electrocuted and thrust his sword out to cut through the metal wires and escape. The other one, with an arrow in his calf, foamed at the mouth and his hair was a burned mess as he slowly fell down into the metal net.

"This is bad, an ambush!" Ellis had been about to descend like the others, but suddenly cried out upon seeing the two warriors had been hit, raising a hue and cry to warn the "Shadow Ghost" killers who were attacking from the front.

The door cracked into four or five pieces with two loud cracks, and four warriors dressed in black came rushing in. They started searching the two sides of the yard. The archmage floated into the yard, the magic staff in his left hand was wrapped in his long black sleeves. The rooms on the sides started collapsing from the severe earthquake in accordance with his motions.

Out of those of the Battlefire mercenary band lying in wait in the neighboring rooms, two directly died from the impact of the collapsing house. There were also three who had no choice but to rush out as well. They all held their weapons and stood in the yard. Han Shuo took a quick look and noticed that there was only a senior swordsman, a thunder journeyman mage, and an archer left.

(Hello reader, if you're not reading this on <http://volaretranslations.com>, then please be advised that this work has been stolen from the original translator.)

The archmage waved the staff in his hand and a large surge of magic once again ripped outwards. Three earth dragons suddenly erupted out of the earth, like pistons of ice, slashing towards the three Battlefire members, who had appeared. The senior swordsman and journeyman mage evaded in time, adroitly dodging to the side before disaster struck. The other archer raised his bow, gathered his concentration, and aimed at the archmage, but he didn't have the chance to release the arrow before the earth dragon, rising beneath his feet, crushed his chest. The strong force of impact immediately caused him to lose his life.

Calmly controlling his breathing, Han Shuo could clearly sense that Phoebe and Candice on either side of him suddenly started breathing more heavily. It looked like that with the death of this person, the calm stance that the two had always kept vanished completely.

Afterwards, Phoebe and Candice both shot out crossbow bolts at the same time and sent them flying towards the earth archmage who released the earth dragons. The crossbow bolts had fierce momentum, but it was a pity that a wall of earth suddenly rose from the ground with a wave of his left hand. Their crossbow bolts collided with the wall and didn't cause any damage to the killer.

"In the shadows of the big tree!" Ellis didn't disguise his voice this time and suddenly spoke with his original voice. The whooshing sound of a windblade attack accompanied his voice.

When Phoebe and Candice heard the sounds of an imminent windblade attack, they immediately jumped out from Han Shuo's side. Phoebe held a longsword that dazzled with eye-catching light and dashed at the archmage with the fastest speed possible. Candice's broadsword flared with tongues of fire licking at the skies, turning her into a fiery elf in the darkness as she swiftly charged Ellis.

Wielding a crossbow, Han Shuo didn't move as he lay covertly in the shadows of the big tree. He didn't even raise a hand to fend off the incoming windblades. Several windblades ripped through the tree branches, and another two connected with Han Shuo's waist. However, he grit his teeth and bore it all, staying there unmoving, maintaining even his breathing and heartbeat at a very stunningly steady rate.

Phoebe and Candice flew out from the tree, their flames of battle thoroughly stoked. Because the earth archmage had toppled all the houses with a huge earthquake as soon as he'd arrived, this caused many of the traps, that the Battlefire mercenary band had set up, to become ineffective. Phoebe was well aware of the horrors that an archmage was capable of and thus had her sights set on him, immediately rushing forward, bringing all her strength to bear.

When Phoebe made her move, the two senior swordsmen from "Shadow Ghost" immediately converged on the archmage's location, presenting a combination of two melee and one mage to Phoebe. Off in the distance, the "Shadow Ghost" archer also coordinated with the other two swordsmen along with Ellis, starting their attacks on those of the Battlefire mercenary band.

Wielding her broadsword, Candice sent a tongue of fire licking out with every swing of her weapon. The broadsword sent out dazzling light in the night sky, forcing the wind mage Ellis to continuously back up.

Ellis' actions were extremely agile as he leveraged the power of the wind. As he quickly backed up, several columns of windblade tornadoes rushed towards Candice. When one of the journeyman swordsmen rushed to Ellis' side and combined their efforts in battling Candice, even the imposing Candice suddenly seemed to be under a lot of pressure.

At this moment, whether it was Phoebe's side or Ellis and those of "Shadow Ghost", everyone had fully revealed themselves in the broken and battered yard. Only Han Shuo still remained hidden within the darkness, still holding on after taking two direct hits from the windblades. He was waiting for the best moment to attack.

Phoebe and Candice were both in disadvantageous spots, but a few traces of expectation arose in their dejected hearts upon seeing Han Shuo continuously fail to materialize. The two girls were both smart ladies, and had already guessed that Han Shuo must be planning something despite his injuries. They all moved in unspoken accord and slowly brought their opponents towards the big tree.

After a short while, the struggling Phoebe and Candice had both gathered beneath the tree where Han Shuo was concealed, their movement cut off by the archmage, Ellis, and the other assassins.

“Beautiful Miss Phoebe, after a few battles, I greatly admire your strength. However, you’ll have no more chances this time. My deepest apologies!” Ellis laughed gently as the sky in front of him howled and roared after his words, forming a violent tornado. The broken tree branches and rocks around them were all swept into the sky by this tornado as it moved towards Phoebe and Candice.

The archmage said nothing as he extended his left hand, four high walls of earth rising from the ground, thoroughly enclosing Phoebe and Candice in a cage.

The longsword in Phoebe’s hand rippled with a blinding milky-white aura, the light forming into the shape of a cross. It blasted through one wall of earth as she hopped out with Candice. The swordsmen waiting on the side immediately started attacking Phoebe and Candice. Ellis had a sinister smile on his face as he focused his concentration and slowly manipulated the tornado to churn up the two.

Just at this moment, a crossbow bolt suddenly pierced through the air and shot towards the earth archmage wrapped in black robes. The archmage leaned to the side and a swordsman next to him waved his hand to ward off the crossbow bolt. A bone spear then materialized out of thin air, also shooting towards the archmage with a sharp whistling sound.

The archmage seemed to feel a bit irritated as he slightly flexed his left hand. Earth magic once again gathered and a stone slab on the ground suddenly flew out, smashing the bone spear flying towards him into two



halves.

The archmage had just breathed a sigh of relief and was about to search for the enemy hidden in the shadows when a ghastly wail suddenly sounded. Ellis, not too far away, clutched his chest and raised a face full of fear to look at the top of the big tree. A sharp weapon burrowed out like a poisonous dragon, leaving his chest with a whistling sound.

Pfft.

An arrow of blood sprayed uncontrollably from Ellis' chest and Ellis raised his head to the sky. His knees suddenly gave way and he sank listlessly to the floor, pausing, and then fell stiffly backwards.

# Chapter 85: Earning a profit without working for it

Ellis' sudden death also completely revealed Han Shuo's existence. As the weapon returned to his hand, Han Shuo also jumped down from the tree as well.

At this moment, there was also an arrow sticking out of the side of the thunder journeyman mage of the Battlefire mercenary band. It looked like he'd been hit by the archer from "Shadow Ghost" on the far roof at some point.

The other senior swordsman was also spitting out blood. His body seemed to have been injured by the windblades as fresh blood dripped out of his wounds onto the floor.

"Leave this place!" Han Shuo jumped down adroitly, took in the situation, and understood that even with Ellis dying in the ambush, they were still at a disadvantage. He immediately made the decision to retreat.

Only a few moments had actually elapsed since the arrival of these killers until those several rounds of attacks just now. Before the change of the city guard had completed, the killers from "Shadow Ghost" would have more than enough time to slowly kill his companions, particularly when the original demons that Han Shuo had set up further away sensed that the others, who had been setting up traps, were also rushing this way. He naturally understood that their arrival would mean their chances of living had further decreased.

Phoebe and Candice's beautiful eyes were already sparkling when Han Shuo's command to retreat sounded out, seemingly already considering how to retreat.

Before the two had decided, a thought struck Han Shuo as he suddenly remembered a place and a crafty smile spread across his face. He suddenly said, "Follow me!"

Han Shuo's body suddenly dashed towards one of the fallen walls of the

house, the Demonslayer Edge flying out of his palm like a poisonous dragon. A large hole suddenly opened, accompanied by violent explosions. Han Shuo caught the Demonslayer Edge as he arrived, charging out from the hole.

Phoebe and Candice were close already to Han Shuo and were also the closest to the opened hole. When Han Shuo's body moved, the two beauties didn't hesitate and also flew over, escaping through the hole in the blink of an eye.

The remaining two Battlefire mercenaries looked at each other after seeing Candice and Phoebe leave, and also started escaping in two different directions.

"Don't chase after them? After the two girls!" The black robed archmage suddenly opened his mouth at this moment. His voice was exceedingly sharp and unpleasant to the ears.

Thus, all the killers gave up on the remaining two Battlefire members and quickly squirmed through the hole, under the archmage's instructions, and started chasing Han Shuo and the others.

Having trained in magic, Han Shuo was extremely speedy as he furiously dashed. As warriors, the two beauties Phoebe and Candice didn't lag behind either. The two of them paid attention to nothing else, setting their sights on Han Shuo, and chased after him.

One of the original demons was one step ahead and had concealed itself in Han Shuo's path. With an additional set of eyes up ahead, Han Shuo would especially pick isolated areas to flee to as he threaded through various yards and alleyways. With the existence of the original demons, Han Shuo could map everything into his heart and wouldn't take a single wrong path.

Gradually, Han Shuo's band of three slowly widened the gap between them and their pursuers by leveraging the terrain. A fork in the road suddenly appeared, one led in one direction in a more twisting and turning fashion, whereas the other was wider and didn't offer that many areas of concealment in the middle of the road.

Following behind Han Shuo, Phoebe and Candice were incredibly astounded by Han Shuo's familiarity with this region. They watched as Han Shuo used his knowledge of the land to leave their pursuers far behind them.

When the fork in the road appeared, the two of them naturally thought that Han Shuo would dash into the more twisty and turning road and use that opportunity to completely shake off their pursuers. They hadn't thought that Han Shuo would suddenly stop and take out a black mask and cover his face, throwing another two at Phoebe and Candice, hurriedly urging them, "Wear it!"

While Candice was still hesitating, Phoebe had already pulled the mask on without another word, covering her beautiful face entirely. Seeing that the pursuers had already appeared in the corner of the street, Phoebe rushed Candice, "Hurry!"

Candice no longer hesitated after Phoebe spoke up. She frantically put on the mask and then took out another set of black nightwalker clothes from her space ring, seemingly planning on wearing them as well.

"Don't put on the black clothes! Let's move!" Han Shuo suddenly said as he looked at their pursuers behind them. Having paused briefly for a few seconds, his body moved again, running past the quiet, windy path and making for the other broad street without any concealment.

Even Phoebe was startled as she didn't understand why Han Shuo did so, but this wasn't the time to ask extraneous questions. Based on her trust in Han Shuo, Phoebe lightly tugged Candice and ran after Han Shuo decisively.

"Don't run full out, make sure that those who are following us can follow our tracks!" Han Shuo briefly dropped his speed and pulled up side by side with Candice, whispering to the two girls.

"What the heck are you doing? If we didn't slow down and went on the other path, I think we would've escaped by now. Why are we going to such lengths, like using masks to cover our faces? They know what we're wearing, there's no point in doing so and rather makes us appear like

idiots!” Candice complained.

“Heh heh, I’m using a mask to cover my face, not to deceive them, but in order not to reveal our faces to another group of people. When I came through here yesterday, I discovered a set of shady, surreptitious people in the house ahead. These people are also very strong and must not be up to anyone good. If the people of ‘Shadow Ghost’ met with them, I think some trouble can be caused. Perhaps we can use this to resolve our ‘Shadow Ghost’ troubles in one go.” Han Shuo explained simply with a sinister tone.

“You’re so depraved!” Candice blurted after a moment of stunned silence.

“Bryan, we can’t bring danger to innocent people! Are you sure they’re not good people?” Phoebe started and asked Han Shuo.

“Don’t worry, I’m sure they’re not good people. I even saw them creeping around the Academy grounds yesterday to steal things. How could they possibly be good people when committing such crimes!” Han Shuo promised to Phoebe and then suddenly said lowly, “Be careful, it’s that yard up ahead. I’ll attack from the distance in a moment and then we’ll immediately flash behind that yard. Be careful not to reveal yourself at all costs.”

His speed suddenly picking up, Han Shuo, Phoebe, and Candice rushed towards the yard that lay before them. Han Shuo suddenly took out a crossbow when he arrived at the front of the door and fired off a crossbow bolt without aiming. He then took out a metal needle and randomly flung it into the yard as well.

After doing all this, Han Shuo grabbed Phoebe and Candice once again and found a hiding place that an original demon had already scouted out – a square, stone box that was a trash dump behind the house that didn’t have a lid.

“Ew... it stinks!” Candice immediately covered her nose and cried out lowly. Phoebe also covered her nose, a morass of disdain and discomfort surfacing in her eyes.

This place was very narrow and there were also a few trash bags present. Han Shuo crouched down in the middle, with Phoebe and Candice crouching down on either side of him. The three of their bodies all pressed tightly together. Han Shuo naturally couldn't avoid the stink that Candice and Phoebe were smelling, and could only use the mask on his face to cover his nose.

Han Shuo didn't say anything and used his hand to make a shushing noise, indicating for the two to talk less and closely observe their surroundings.

"Enemies!" A low call came from inside the yard and slight footsteps sounded from inside, seeming to search for traces of the invaders.

At this moment, the crouching Han Shuo, Phoebe, and Candice saw that the archmage, that had been floating in midair, had caught up with a few killers from "Shadow Ghost".

"They went inside this yard!" A swordsman immediately reported to the archmage when they arrived.

The archmage nodded and waved the magic staff covered by his long sleeve. A strong magic pulse once again appeared suddenly, and the earthquake spell that had been used on Phoebe's house once again showed itself in this yard. All the structures and buildings collapsed one by one as the archmage cast his earthquake spell.

A noisy din of curses and yells suddenly sounded out from inside. Duke and Erick, as well as some of the other people in the yard, flared out their fighting aura and magic without a second warning, attacking the black robed archmage.

Duke also floated in mid air, he was an archmage as well. An ornate magic staff accompanied the conclusion of his wind magic incantation as hundreds of wind blades formed a tornado, churning towards the black robed archmage and the other. The tornado, made of windblades, possessed a frightening force. The sand, little rocks, and small trees in its path were swept up and crushed to dust.

"Damn it, why is there another archmage present?! Grover didn't tell us

about this!" A shrill exclamation came from the black-robed archmage's mouth as he raised an earthen wall in front of him and hastily retreated.

The swordsman from Grover's side and an archer from "Shadow Ghost" didn't react in time and were dragged in by the tornado. Endless rounds of ghastly screams rang out as the two were ripped apart in a mass of blood and flesh. They were transformed into a mist of blood and signs of life ceased to exist.

"After them!" Duke snorted coldly and dashed out of the shambles of the yard with Erick and a few others, chased after the other members of "Shadow Ghost" who had already started fleeing in the distance. Magics crashed against each other along the way as endless pilipala sounds of explosion were emitted.

"Eh, where are these people from? They're so strong!" Candice murmured with a face of shock after they'd left.

"This yard is in ruins and there's no one inside. We don't have to stay here anymore." Phoebe hastily jumped out and stayed far away from the stone box that had been used to store trash.

Candice and Han Shuo walked out from inside as Han Shuo laughed lightly, "At this moment, the city guard should have finished changing shifts. I wonder if these two groups of people will alert the guard."

"You're sinister indeed. What should we do next?" At this moment, Candice had started treating Han Shuo as the leader at some unknown time. Now that the danger had been resolved and he had brought "Shadow Ghost" and Grover's people a huge amount of trouble, she opened her mouth and asked Han Shuo.

"Miss Phoebe, I think I may know where Grover's mistress is..." At this moment, Han Shuo suddenly opened his mouth.

Her face showed an overjoyed expression, Phoebe looked at Han Shuo with a look of excitement and asked hurriedly, "Where is she?"

"Follow me. It looks like we won't be resting much tonight." Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders with resignation, took his bearings and led them to

traverse the wide road, walking towards a dark and narrow path.

Grover had revealed himself at the very beginning. When Ellis and those of “Shadow Ghost” had rushed into Phoebe’s house, Grover had stayed in a house a short distance away and awaited the news. One of the three original demons had stayed by Grover’s side, monitoring him.

Grover left alone only when Phoebe’s house had collapsed. He didn’t return to the Guild, but boarded a carriage that had been prepared prior, saying to the groom, “Go to Cara’s place, be careful!”

Han Shuo had heard from Phoebe last time that Grover’s mistress was called Cara, this was why he’d notified Phoebe and Candice.

The three original demons would become harder to control if they were too far from Han Shuo’s side. When Grover had left, Duke and the members of “Shadow Ghost” on this side had just made contact. Han Shuo’s control over the original demon became more and more difficult as Grover’s carriage rushed away. When Phoebe and Candice agreed, they immediately traveled at full speed towards Grover’s location.

The sky was starting to grow hazily bright when Han Shuo appeared on the streets in the west of the city with Phoebe and Candice. Compared to the northern and southern sides of the city, it was dirty and messy here, with trash everywhere on the streets. A few beggars were wearing thin clothes in this frigid weather. They had curled themselves up and lay next to the piles of trash, seeming to want to obtain some warmth from the trash bags.

“To think that Grover, with his status, would come to the slums . He’d hidden his mistress away here, no wonder we couldn’t find her. Grover is a difficult person to move against alright!” Phoebe frowned as she looked around and said lowly to Han Shuo.

“Alright, this is the place. Follow me, I don’t think Grover will be able to escape this time!” Han Shuo had seen through the eyes of the original demon that Grover had entered a dirty and broken house. He immediately circled past the piles of trash in front after speaking to Phoebe, darting into an alleyway in which flies and bugs danced in flight.



Although they were disgusted by this place, Phoebe and Candice still grit their teeth and darted in after Han Shuo. The two continuously flapped their hands, trying to shoo away the flies around them.

## Chapter 86: New pursuits

Han Shuo, Phoebe, and Candice walked into the dirty and run down house. It was actually very clean and neat inside, with a few decorations that could even be called luxurious. To think that it was only dirty and broken down on the outside, but quite fancy on the inside.

After entering the house, Candice abruptly closed the door tightly, emitting a thumping sound that she was unable to conceal. Her broadsword in her hand, she barred the way out.

“Candice, you don’t need to be that careful. My dear uncle doesn’t know any martial arts or magic, he won’t be able to escape this time.” Phoebe’s mask had been taken off and she displayed her stunning features. She sat down leisurely at random, coldly looking at a room with its door open.

Han Shuo inspected his surroundings and observed by using the original demons. When he ascertained that no suspicious characters were around, he then poured a cup of warm water and took two greedy sips.

Grover walked out of the room, through the open door, with a face full of dejection. He released a ghastly laugh and looked at Phoebe, “Good niece, dear niece. To think that you’d been hiding your strength all along. Was Cara already taken by you?”

Phoebe started and looked in surprise at Grover. She shook her head, “No, I’ve only just discovered this place.”

“Let Cara live, I’ll give you everything you want, including my life.” Grover knew it would be difficult for him to escape death with the way things were now, and had let everything go.

“I’m sorry, Cara isn’t in my hands. If my guess is correct, Grandpa Andrew sent men here already and she’s been taken by them. I don’t have the authority to decide whether she lives or dies.” Phoebe shook her head and stared at Grover with a cold look. She asked again, “Did you kill my father?”

“Yes, I poisoned him. Since you already know everything, I have nothing

further to hide. What else do you want to know?" Grover's face was wooden as he nodded stiffly.

Inhaling deeply, Han Shuo could clearly feel the suppressed anger surging from Phoebe. Phoebe slowly stood up and looked at Han Shuo and Candice, "I want to speak privately with my good uncle. Bryan, will you guys go outside and wait for me?"

Nodding, Han Shuo put the teacup in his hand down and left with Candice, walking towards the alleyway entrance far away.

"Hey, can I ask you something?" Candice kept sizing up Han Shuo when they had left the house and finally couldn't help but ask after a while.

Han Shuo had been contemplating Duke's background with a lowered head when he heard Candice's question. He raised his head and looked at her in confusion.

As a girl, Candice's height was a bit taller than ordinary girls. Her skin wasn't pale, but rather the coppertone of one having spent many years in the sun. Her body was quite fit and muscular, and her breasts looked like they would explode out of her top. Her thighs were supple and full of explosive power. She looked as difficult to handle as a feisty mare.

"What's would you like to know?" Han Shuo wasn't kindly disposed towards Candice, but he didn't hate her either.

"How were you able to locate the assassins' movement so clearly, like you saw them all with your own eyes?" A heavy sense of curiosity permeated across her face as she looked at Han Shuo with every expression of interest.

"There's a magic called 'Eye of the Sky', you must've heard of it? My method is similar to that one. Of course there are some differences, but I can't tell you the exact details!" Han Shuo flicked a glance at her and said faintly.

"Two archmages were unable to detect the disturbances from your method. It's wondrous indeed. Can you pass this method onto us? If our mercenary band knew of this method, it would greatly increase the success

rate of our missions. We are willing to offer a hefty reward for this.”

“I’ve heard that you’re a merchant, you can name your price. We can negotiate no matter how high it is. Other forms of payment will work as well as long as our mercenary band can do it.” Candice looked at Han Shuo with sparkling eyes and discussed very earnestly with him.

Shaking his head firmly, Han Shuo rejected her resolutely. “My apologies, there are some thing I won’t sell. My apologies Miss Candice.”

“Then will you join our Battlefire mercenary band? As the vice captain of the band, I can directly approve your application. With your strength, you will surely accomplish great deeds if you join us.” Candice seemed to know that Han Shuo would reject her and wasn’t discouraged at all. Rather, she invited him to join them and become a member.

“I’m sorry, I don’t plan to for the time being.” Han Shuo rejected politely again.

“Alright, when you plan to, please remember to come find us, the Battlefire mercenary band, when you want to. I will greatly welcome you with open arms.” Candice promised solemnly.

Phoebe walked out of the house with a cold and remote expression at this moment. Her face only softened when she saw Candice and Han Shuo. She asked, “What are you guys discussing?”

“Nothing much. Oh right Phoebe, what about Grover?” Candice pouted a bit awkwardly as she asked Phoebe.

“He killed himself just now. I’ve already gotten what I wanted from him, we can leave now.” Phoebe’s expression was strange as she looked at Candice.

“Then there shouldn’t be anything to do with me after this. May I leave now?” Han Shuo suddenly spoke up when he saw the two conversing.

Phoebe once again focused her beautiful eyes on Han Shuo and looked dumbly at him, then said to Candice, “Candice, two of your people from the mercenary band made it out. Go contact them first and see if anyone else survived in the wrecked yard.”

Candice looked at Phoebe and Han Shuo with an ambiguous expression and displayed a smile of understanding. She nodded at Phoebe and walked off with large strides.

“Bryan, will you take a walk with me?” Phoebe blushed after seeing Candice’s meaningful gaze and slowly returned to normal only after she’d left. She looked at Han Shuo with a face of expectation.

“Sure, where would you like to go?” Han Shuo thought and he asked.

“Let’s walk around the southern district. I think the Boozt Merchant Guild no longer poses a threat to me anymore.”

Han Shuo didn’t say much else as he accompanied the beautiful Phoebe on a slow walk down the dirty streets. There were people who had obviously fallen on hard times on the streets and they shot admiring glances at the richly dressed Han Shuo and Phoebe.

“In this world, our Guild actually doesn’t have much status. Although merchants earn some gold, our status is basically the same as ordinary citizens.” Phoebe’s voice was far away as she said introspectively to Han Shuo by her side.

“Miss Phoebe, you don’t see the gazes of the other people on you. They’re actually full of admiration and envy. To them, your current life is what they dream to have, what else are you unsatisfied with?”

“Heh heh, we almost died yesterday. They can’t even imagine a life filled with unknown dangers. Perhaps they worry over living out their daily lives, but we worry about our lives. I wonder who admires who!” Phoebe sighed self deprecatingly.

She suddenly stopped walking and concentrated her gaze on Han Shuo. “Bryan, with your abilities, you are certain to climb quite high as long as you are willing to work hard. I had thought to ask you to manage the Guild with me, but I’ve thought through this clearly. I think the small Boozt Merchant Guild would be insufficient to hold you. You should have more expansive skies. Bryan, have you thought about how you should live in the future?”

Han Shuo started as he remembered his status. Although he had left behind the label of errand slave, he was still a student of the Academy. With his status, even if he swiftly graduated from the Academy, there was still nothing to his name. Of course, this wasn't the life he wanted, but just that Han Shuo didn't have any other plans for the time being.

"Power and a lofty position is what you should be reaching for. As much money as a merchant has, he is still a small character at the mercy of others. Only those with an illustrious reputation and an extraordinary position have the right to control over and determine the lives of others. You should become one of those types of people!" A mesmerizing light shone in Phoebe's beautiful eyes as she stared directly at Han Shuo, her voice full of persuasion.

His mind had never been so agitated before. Han Shuo had thought of these things before, but never as clearly as in this moment. Since he had been lucky enough to be reborn, he should enjoy everything there was to life without reservations. Why didn't he use the strength that was available to him? Under Phoebe's persuasion, Han Shuo's mindset of not wanting to remain ordinary slowly started to catch on fire and he became full of resolution.

After a while, Han Shuo took in a deep breath and nodded, saying lowly, "I understand your meaning, but my opportunity hasn't seemed to arrive yet."

A brilliant smile spreading over her face, Phoebe seemed to have been waiting for these words. When she heard Han Shuo's words, she immediately stared at Han Shuo and said, "You're wrong, the chance has always been there. The fastest way to obtain power and status is to achieve meritorious acts in war. The Empire has never been at peace, and our battles with neighboring countries has never stopped. I think a large war will break out in the near future. I think you should get involved. As your good friend, I'm willing to help you and do all that I can to help you."

"I appreciate your good intentions, but I would like to obtain all that I deserve through my own hands." Han Shuo said resolutely to Phoebe, paused and then said again, "Miss Phoebe, please prepare the rations I

need. I'll come by the Guild in a few days to pick them up. I think we'll have many opportunities to cooperate in the future."

"Then alright, I've said all that needs to be said and won't need you to accompany me further on this random stroll. I trust that with your abilities, you will soon rise to prominence within the kingdom. Don't forget that I'm your friend then!" Phoebe winked at Han Shuo and said cutely.

"Heh heh, your words today have greatly inspired me, I will remember them! Farewell Miss Phoebe, don't forget my rations!" Han Shuo smiled and suddenly changed direction, heading for the northern part of the city.

Phoebe pouted angrily after quite a while had passed since Han Shuo had left, she said huffily in a voice that only she could hear. "Damn it, you only care about your rations!"

# Chapter 87: Joining the Dark Mantle organization

After parting ways with Phoebe, Han Shuo went returned directly to the Academy. However, he once again avoided entering through the front gate and decided to enter through a secluded corner from the mountain in the back.

Han Shuo suddenly became wary in the woods that he had spent time with Phoebe last time, an unexplainable feeling of unease rising in his heart. This shock made Han Shuo immediately release his three original demons. They flew out from the back of his neck and patrolled the entire woods, but didn't find anything.

The feeling of unease didn't vanish after the original demons failed to find anything. That exceedingly uncomfortable feeling grew stronger and stronger, making Han Shuo incredibly wary.

The Demonslayer Edge appearing in his hand, Han Shuo took a deep breath and readjusted his facial expression to be at his best. He tried using his own senses to detect the abnormalities around him and called out, "Who is it? Come on out!"

Han Shuo had only randomly called with this line and hadn't actually thought that anything would happen, because if it was an enemy, an enemy at this level definitely wouldn't appear just because Han Shuo had called out.

But unexpectedly, a low, eerie laugh rang out from the thick woods as soon as he'd finished speaking. A human shape slowly took form in front of Han Shuo within the shadows of the large trees.

"Kid, you have a good level of awareness. How did you discover my existence?" When the figure within the shadows of the tree had materialized, a ruthless-looking old man, who was exceedingly tall, skinny, and wearing grey clothing, walked out. The old man's beard was grey and his eyes were the color of ash. They looked completely lifeless.



“Due to my instincts, who are you?” Han Shuo gripped the Demonslayer Edge firmly and watched the approaching old man with a hostile gaze, ready to make a move at any moment.

“I can give you the opportunity of a lifetime. I’m acquaintances with Phoebe’s master and mean you no harm, you don’t need to be so nervous!” Han Shuo could feel a strong sense of danger exuding from this person. This was probably the strongest person he’d met since coming to this world. Han Shuo even felt that if the old man were to make a move, he’d be hard pressed to escape.

“Phoebe? So Phoebe sent you, what do you mean by all this?” Han Shuo reined in his impulse to flee from this person and asked with a darkened face.

The old man suddenly halted in his tracks and didn’t continue forward. He just stood there, sizing up Han Shuo, like he was observing an item he expected to sell at a high price. He kept nodding his head and a smile blossomed on his face after a while, but when this smile floated out from his ruthless features, it only made one feel that his face became even more sinister.

“Phoebe doesn’t know of my existence, but I know everything about your recent actions. I heard the conversation between you and Phoebe just now and have an offer to make you, but if you choose this path, you can obtain all that you want, but you may also die very quickly.” The old man said slowly as he looked at Han Shuo.

“Who are you?” Han Shuo was a bit lost and had no idea what the old man wanted. He immediately asked again.

“Bryan... parents died when he was young and was then sold off to the necromancy major of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force by his uncle to become a slave. Six years as an errand slave. Started displaying extraordinary abilities during an outing to the Dark Forest and seems to possess another wondrous way of training in addition to training necromancy magic...”

Han Shuo’s heart sank slowly as the old man started listing details from

his life. Apart from a few secrets having to do with the little skeleton and the Cemetery of Death, most of the doings that he'd experienced in this period of time were all ferreted out. This made Han Shuo feel that a pair of eyes had been fixed on him in the darkness, and a sense of fear rose in his heart.

"Who are you?" This was the third time that he asked about the old man's origins.

"I'm called Candide and I belong to the Empire's 'Dark Mantle' organization that directly answers to His Majesty. Heh heh, there's a covert organization behind every nation. I think you understand the need for such an organization's existence. The people of 'Shadow Ghost' have appeared in the Boozt Merchant Guild several times now. You guys have caused such a great disturbance. Did you really think that we wouldn't know anything?" Old man Candide looked at Han Shuo with a vague smirk as he said slowly.

Han Shuo was greatly startled after he heard these words and heaved a silent sigh as he finally realized that he really was still too naive. He'd never heard of "Dark Mantle", but immediately understood after Candide's explanation that this organization must be similar to the Western Depot and the Eastern Depot of the Ming Dynasty, government agencies that directly answered to His Majesty, the Emperor.

"Alright, what do you want from me?"

"I'd like to absorb you into our Dark Mantle. I've carefully investigated your birth and think there shouldn't be a problem. I've also kept my eye on you lately and feel that your working style and special abilities will enable you to handle the jobs of 'Dark Mantle' with competence. If you join the 'Dark Mantle' and achieve exemplary accomplishments for the Empire, you can obtain everything you want." Candide looked at Han Shuo and gave this invitation.

Han Shuo's brows knit together and considered it carefully. Candide's invitation wasn't as simple as it appeared on the surface, but with Han Shuo's status and strength, if an enormous organization like "Dark

Mantle” wanted to make a move against him, only death would be in his future.

There was a path in front of him now, and although it was dangerous, the destination remote, and full of uncertain factors, it was indeed an opportunity. This presented quite a bit of strong temptation to the now hotly ambitious Han Shuo. After weighing his gains and losses, Han Shuo felt that he didn’t seem to have much choice.

Han Shuo nodded firmly after a while and said lowly, “I accept.”

“Wonderful! Although you might be placed in more dangerous situations in the future, as long as you can climb high enough, you’ll have the chance to see beautiful sights that many will be unable to ever see in their lives.” Candide laughed lightly and took out an iron badge, handing it to Han Shuo. “This is the badge that symbolizes our status as members of the ‘Dark Mantle’. Put it away carefully, you’re under my command from today onwards. Your first mission is to keep an eye out for Duke’s movements. Oh, he’s the wind archmage that came flying out of the house that you guys brought the members of ‘Shadow Ghost’ to last night.”

There was a certain heft to the black iron badge, with the words “Dark Mantle” carved on the back. There was also an image of the crown carved in back. The crown was floating above a patch of black clouds and was also black colored.

“Who is Duke, where is he now, and how should I keep an eye on his movements?” Han Shuo was greatly startled and wondered how astonished Duke would be if he discovered that Han Shuo was keeping surveillance on him. He might even guess that the “Eye of Darkness” was with Han Shuo. If Han Shuo were to keep tabs on Duke, then he himself would also bear greater risk.

Hesitating, Candide explained, “Duke isn’t a person from our Lancelot Empire. He’s from the Kasi Empire and is here as a representative of the Maya School of Magic from the Kasi Empire. He’s here to conduct an exchange of magical knowledge with your Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Of course, these are all excuses that they’ve come up with. Their

true goal must not be this, but they've hidden it well. We don't know what they're up to at the moment. That's why we need someone to keep an eye on them."

"Therefore, he'll visit your Academy often during this time. As a student within, you're the most convenient person to keep a watch over him. Oh, right. Since you've joined 'Dark Mantle', no more killers from 'Shadow Ghost' will bother you. I will tell them to behave themselves."

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "I see. Alright then, I'll keep an eye on Duke's movements. How should I find you if I discover something abnormal?"

"These are our three strongholds within the Empire. Destroy this after you look at it. This badge represents your identity and you can use it to exchange information with others in the strongholds. However, your level is too low thus far and you won't have the right to ask about many things. If you can advance to a higher status, you'll be able to use the resources of 'Dark Mantle' and can even deploy the Empire's army. Heh heh, you must work hard." Candide said to Han Shuo.

A thin piece of paper landed in Han Shuo's palm. He looked it over once and ripped it to pieces in front of Candide after he'd memorized the contents. He then said, "Alright, my mind's a mess right now and I need some time to think. I'll report to you if Duke does anything out of the ordinary."

"Mm. I'm going to leave now as well. The members of 'Dark Mantle' have a lot of freedom. We won't intervene in your private affairs, and will only come for you when there's a mission that needs to be conducted. We won't affect your life under normal circumstances." Candide was surrounded by a cloud of black mist and his figure became fainter and fainter. A thin pulse of magic traveled out of the mist, and he then vanished from Han Shuo's sight as the breeze blew past, like he'd never appeared.

Han Shuo had clearly identified what he needed under Phoebe's persuasion not too long ago. Who would've thought that an olive branch would be extended as soon as he'd left Phoebe. He'd joined this "Dark

Mantle” organization after a round of discussion with Candide. This made Han Shuo subtly feel that something was wrong, and he started to suspect whether or not Phoebe knew of Candide’s existence. This would simply be too much of a coincidence otherwise.

However, even if Phoebe and Candide were acquainted with each other, then Grover wouldn’t have been anything in the face of Candide’s enormous power. Phoebe wouldn’t have so many troubles either. This made Han Shuo quite confused as well.

Han Shuo carefully sorted out his thoughts within the woods and went over everything that had happened recently in his mind. He then set off towards the Academy grounds again with a look of resolution.

# Chapter 88: But I have a guilty conscience!

Han Shuo had been worried that he would be found out by Duke, but had thoroughly dispelled these worries a few minutes after arriving at the necromancy major

The reason was because when Han Shuo arrived, he naturally greeted Borg and Carey when he saw them cleaning off the stone sculptures along the path. However, the two didn't recognize Han Shuo and were at a loss of what to do with their profound respect and humility.

When Han Shuo identified himself and Borg and Carey cautiously recognized him, they spoke to him with an even more fearful attitude.

Han Shuo was no longer an errand slave of the necromancy major now. He'd turned into a student and his status was naturally higher than these two errand boys. Add to that the fact that the necromancy students had purposefully exaggerated Han Shuo's aid when they returned from the Dark Forest, this made the two previous enemies, Carey and Borg, even more afraid that Han Shuo would come looking for them.

However, Han Shuo didn't pay attention to the two and rather took out a bronze mirror and admired himself in it, full of bliss. He'd suddenly discovered that his features had indeed gone through tumultuous changes compared to a few months ago. His originally frail and thin frame had become much stronger and taller. His weak facial features had become much more resolute after a series of life threatening experiences. His features had become much more pronounced, and had changed from those of an old child half a year ago to that of a dashing and charming young man.

If even Borg and Carey, two errand boys, who were well acquainted with Han Shuo, couldn't recognize him easily, then Han Shuo wouldn't need to worry about Duke and Erick, particularly after Candide had promised to take care of the overhanging cloud known as "Shadow Ghost". Han Shuo suddenly felt completely relaxed and didn't continue to conceal his traces. He returned to the Academy openly in public.

“Eh, it’s Bryan! You haven’t come back to the Academy in so long, I thought something happened to you!” Amy, from the necromancy major, had been on her way to the classroom building when she suddenly exclaimed upon seeing Han Shuo.

“Hello Amy.” Han Shuo smiled as he greeted her and walked towards the dark major’s classroom building with her.

When Han Shuo arrived at the necromancy major’s classroom, he lost himself in thought for a little while. Just two short months ago, he could only hold his broom and make use of the time that he had while cleaning to stand outside and listen to Gene’s lectures. Who would’ve thought that in just a short period of time, he’d turn into a necromancy major student and had the right to enter the classroom to sit down and listen to lessons with the other students.

“Don’t just stand there, the second class is about to begin, come on in!” Amy suddenly spoke up to rush him when she walked up to the door and saw that Han Shuo was standing dumbly outside the window.

Han Shuo immediately came to his senses and smiled kindly at Amy, nodding as he walked into the classroom. As soon as Han Shuo walked in, the gazes of several students inside suddenly all focused on Han Shuo, particularly Lisa in the back row. She had been lazily shutting her eyes when her eyes suddenly gleamed as she stood up and waved at Han Shuo, “Here, over here!”

Bach and Bella’s gazes landed upon Han Shuo, as well as those from some other majors, were exceedingly odd as they murmured something lowly.

“Bryan’s back, heh heh. Amy, do you believe the rumors?” Athena suddenly asked Amy in a low voice after she greeted Amy.

“I don’t really believe it. It doesn’t look like anything would ever happen between Master Fanny and Bryan. Camilla, that old witch, loves to carry tall tales, you believe stuff that she says?” Amy pouted and shook her head.

It wasn’t just Amy and Athena, when Han Shuo walked towards Lisa, he heard all the students talk about him and Fanny. They talked vividly about

Camilla finding Han Shuo on Fanny's bed, as if they'd personally been there. In their mouths, he and Fanny became a couple caught in the act.

Han Shuo felt quite speechless, he hadn't thought that Camilla would be such a busybody and make it so that all the necromancy students knew of this matter. This probably meant the other teachers, including Fanny herself, had gotten the news even earlier.

Lisa's originally excited expression turned into one of interrogation after Han Shuo sat down with a wry smile. Her gaze first made a surprised circuit over Han Shuo, as if marveling over his changes. She then said coldly, "Huh, the things they're talking about, are they true or not? Is there really something between you and Master Fanny?"

"Lisa, how could even you not believe me when they don't believe me?! If I were someone like that, Master Fanny would never be someone like that! I can't believe someone would actually believe such ridiculous things, this is too outrageous!" Han Shuo explained softly to Lisa with a wry expression.

Lisa breathed a small sigh of relief after Han Shuo's words and her expression also eased off, but she still asked suspiciously, "Rumors don't come from nothing, it should be true that you went to Master Fanny's room in the middle of the night right? Although that old witch Camilla has a fat mouth, she wouldn't implicate you with no evidence at all?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo said, "I only went over to ask Master Fanny a few questions. The old witch made a mountain out of a molehill and I can't stop her from speaking. She can say whatever she likes, it doesn't affect me at all."

"But, this has a large effect on Master Fanny's reputation. Everyone will surely think that Master Fanny's life is a bit unclean, particularly since you're her student. Perhaps the school authorities will keep an eye on her or something like that." Lisa frowned as she reminded Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was suddenly enlightened after Lisa's words. He suddenly felt that he really was very selfish in only thinking of himself and never considering Fanny's position.



Just as Han Shuo was inwardly berating himself, Gene walked into the classroom with a thick stack of magic books. He swept his gaze around the room when he entered and saw Han Shuo sitting in the back row. His face suddenly chilled.

The class had just begun when Gene suddenly stopped and looked at Han Shuo in the back with an evil smile. “Bryan, you’ve never attended class since you became a necromancy major student. Is the knowledge I’m going over too advanced for you? Do you understand what I’m talking about?”

After the trials of the Dark Forest, Han Shuo understood that Gene wasn’t a bad person. He just made things a bit difficult for Han Shuo because of Fanny, but Gene was still a refined, cultured person. He didn’t make life too obviously difficult for Han Shuo, and thus Han Shuo didn’t bear a grudge difficult to resolve against Gene.

This time, because of those ugly rumors about him and Fanny, Gene must have been eaten alive by the green-eyed monster. This was why he was seizing upon this pretext to embarrass him.

“Master Gene, I’ve learned the knowledge that you’re going over when I read books, and have mostly grasped a proper understanding. Therefore, I think I can understand the class lessons, please don’t worry about me.” Han Shuo leaned back and said with a slight smile to Gene.

“Oh, if you could grasp magic through self study of books, then why would our Babylon Academy of Magic and Force still exist. Heh heh, since this is the case, I’ll ask you this: how many ways can magic be cast?”

“They can be divided into the four ways...incantations, magical items, hand seals, and magical matrixes. Incantations use words to communicate with the magical elements in order to reach the purpose of release magic. Magical items include scrolls...”

Han Shuo retained his lazy posture and smoothly reeled off a bunch of definitions, including some of his own reflections. Gene was noticeably surprised by his words. He started slightly at first and then nodded. “Very good, it looks like you already know all the basic knowledge within the

books. Then I'll ask you some more questions."

Gene frowned and then asked Han Shuo a series of questions. He started with the most foundational magical knowledge, and then started asking points that only novice mages would be able to grasp. Han Shuo spoke fluidly, explaining the answers to all of these questions.

Gene and the other students within the classroom all looked at Han Shuo with faces full of surprise throughout this process. It seemed that they hadn't thought that Han Shuo could fully grasp so much knowledge this deeply in such a short amount of time. Traces of sweat shone on Gene's forehead as he appeared a bit agitated. He then snorted lightly and asked another question.

"I don't know how to answer this!" Han Shuo blanked and answered honestly. This question had surpassed the knowledge that a journeyman mage would know, and he truly didn't know understand it.

Gene finally smiled and was about to say a few words to regain face when Lisa said impatiently, "Master Gene, if he knew the answers to everything, then what would be the point of coming to your lectures?"

Lisa's words stopped him in his tracks when he heard them. Gene obviously felt a bit awkward and slapped the table with a dry laugh. "Alright then, I won't keep asking. Let's continue with class."

"How come you suddenly know so much?" Lisa retracted her head as she asked Han Shuo in a low voice.

"Didn't I tell you earlier? I asked Master Fanny about all this. Otherwise, how would that old witch Camilla have material to spread rumors with?" Han Shuo responded and started listening to class seriously. Some of the material that Gene was currently going over included some of the journeyman mage knowledge, which was something that Han Shuo still needed to grasp. This was why Han Shuo didn't harbor ill feelings towards Gene's jealousy.

Lisa seemed to still want to chat with Han Shuo after class, but Han Shuo didn't give her the chance to as he immediately headed over to Fanny's lab after class.

“Fitch, I’ve already explained this magic many times. I think with your powers of comprehension you should’ve understood this long ago. Why can you still not successfully cast it?” Han Shuo’s sensitive ears allowed him to clearly hear the conversation inside as he stood outside the laboratory doors.

“Master Fanny, I think you’re well aware of my feelings, but why don’t you give me any chances and would rather be with that lowly errand slave? Why?” Fitch’s strong complaints traveled out from inside. Han Shuo pulled the door open slightly and could clearly see Fitch’s furious face.

Master Fanny wore black rimmed glasses and a demure, regulation style magic robe. A look of resignation appeared on her face as she sighed, “Fitch, I’ve become more and more disappointed in you. First of all, Bryan is the same as you now, one of my students. You shouldn’t treat him as an errand slave anymore. In addition, I’ve noticed that you’ve never focused your concentration whenever you come to me with a question. You’re always distracted and I have no idea what you’re thinking of. Bryan is much better than you when it comes to stuff like this.”

“Bryan again, in what way is that damned errand slave better than me? Why are you willing to be with him, but unwilling to give me any chances? Is the witch Camilla really speaking the truth, and you really did sleep with him with no sense of shame?” The fury on Fitch’s face grew as he suppressed his voice, almost roaring as he spoke.

Pa.

Fanny flung a slap at Fitch, she was truly incensed, an uncommon occurrence. She looked at Fitch with cold eyes and said, “I think I have nothing further to say to you. I told you before that we could only talk about matters of the heart once you’d advanced to the level of adept mage in order to encourage you, but now I see that not everything is alright with you. I can tell you clearly that there is no possibility of anything developing between us. I hope you can let go of all illusions. If you still have questions regarding magic in the future, please come find me within the training fields or the classroom. You are no longer welcome in my

laboratory. Please leave immediately!”

“So you’ve been lying to me all along. Haha. Good. Very good. You wanted me to reach the level of adept mage first before discussing matters of the heart, but that errand slave Bryan has already become an exception for you. Hypocritical shameless woman, I’ll never believe you again.” Fitch held his face as he laughed ghastly, walking outside of the laboratory.

Han Shuo backed up a few steps and hid himself in the corner until Fitch had left. He looked coldly at Fitch’s passing figure, paused for a moment, and then walked into Fanny’s laboratory with a natural expression.

Han Shuo saw that Fanny was a bit lost in thought as he walked towards her. She propped herself up listlessly on the round table with her two hands, sighing lightly with a lowered head. She murmured to herself with an exceedingly weak voice. “Perhaps Fitch is right, I really am a hypocritical, shameless woman. I seem to have truly violated some principles...”

Han Shuo clearly heard all of Fanny’s low murmurs, but he didn’t understand the meaning behind her words and didn’t know who her words were intended for. After thinking for a while, Han Shuo cocked a finger and rapped on the surface of the round table.

“Get out of here!” Fanny suddenly lifted her hand and glared at Han Shuo. When she saw that the person in front of her had turned into Han Shuo, her expression became very odd. She first blanked and then started in shock, her eyes seemed like they wanted to hide something. Her expression finally went back to normal and she rolled her eyes, obviously in a bad temper, at Han Shuo. “What are you doing here?”

“Nothing much, I just have a few questions to ask you.” Han Shuo looked oddly at Fanny and responded.

“What did you hear? Did you see everything just now?” Fanny’s charming features changed as she suddenly glared at Han Shuo. “Your ears are so perverse that you must’ve heard everything! Don’t you know that eavesdropping is very rude?”

“Eh... I didn’t want to listen in, but they all landed in my ears. I didn’t have any choice either?” Han Shuo spread out his hands like a rascal, indicating that he really hadn’t meant to. His expression then turned grave as he turned to Fanny and said seriously, “That Camilla really is very evil. I don’t mind, but she’s slandered you and negatively impacted your reputation. Do you intend to let her off the hook like this?”

“Forgot it, the old witch is just like that. There’s nothing between us anyways, what other people say have nothing to do with us. The more we explain, the more they’ll think we have a guilty conscience. Let’s just ignore them since people of moral integrity do not fear slanderous attacks.” Fanny sighed lowly as she too seemed a bit worried, but spoke peace making words.

“But I have a guilty conscience!” Han Shuo said with a wry expression.

“Damn it, what do you feel guilty about?” Fanny’s charming face blushed hotly all of a sudden, but her expression was infuriated as she lowered her head and cursed lowly at Han Shuo.

“It’s because of my mistake that’s caused other people to misunderstand you so. I feel that I have wronged you and so, of course I feel guilty.” Han Shuo explained with a poker face.

Fanny started slightly and then reacted afterwards, saying huffily, “So this is what you meant by guilty conscience. I thought you meant something else!”

“What other meaning is there?” Han Shuo asked.

“No, nothing.” Fanny hastily responded like she wanted to cover something up, and then immediately changed the topic and asked Han Shuo. “What questions do you have for me this time?”

Han Shuo had been about to open his mouth to answer when he suddenly felt someone approaching. He didn’t respond and looked to the door instead. After a while, Han Shuo saw the wind archmage Duke walk into Fanny’s room with a benevolent smile.

“Master Fanny, are you free today? I’d like to ask you a few more

questions?” Duke smiled and greeted Fanny after entering the room.

His brow then furrowed as he turned to look at Han Shuo. Han Shuo was startled, but kept a very normal expression on his face, looking at Duke with an expression of surprise and confusion, like it was the first time he’d seen Duke and wanted to know about his origins and background.

## Chapter 89: An odd phenomenon in the molded spirit realm

“Mister Duke, you’re too polite. Go ahead and ask whatever you’d like to know.” Fanny passed a chair to Duke and smiled faintly.

Duke glanced over Han Shuo’s body and then naturally looked back at Fanny, as if not minding Han Shuo at all. He didn’t take the chair that Fanny passed over and only said politely, “I won’t be sitting, I’m just here to ask you a small question. I’ll leave after I’ve asked it. Master Fanny, you’ve studied necromancy magic all this time. have you ever heard of the ‘Eye of Darkness’?”

On the side, Han Shuo silently observed Duke and noticed that after he said these words, his gaze was tightly fixed on Fanny, as if was trying to glean some clues from Fanny’s facial expression.

Shaking her head, Fanny’s expression was perplexed as she asked Duke instead, “What is this ‘Eye of Darkness’? Does it have something to do with the necromancy major?”

“Heh heh, it’s just a small tool. I’m not too certain of the specifics either, that’s why I wanted to ask you. Since you don’t know as well, forget about it. My apologies for disturbing you.” Duke wore a gentle smile having delivered this line after entering through the door. He nodded towards Fanny and walked towards the door again. When he reached the door, he seemed to suddenly thought of something again and asked carelessly, “Oh right... Master Fanny, I’ve heard that the library of your necromancy major is shared with the dark major’s? The necromancy major was once greater than the dark major many years ago. Do you not have your own standalone library?”

“Heh heh, Mister Duke you’ve said so yourself that it was many years ago when the necromancy major was at its peak. The magics that necromancers can now grasp are limited and there aren’t that many books on display.” Fanny laughed lightly and then paused. She said indifferently, “Oh, right, I’ve heard that there’s a secret library within our school. There

are forbidden texts from all the various majors within that library, preserved secretly with authorization from the Empire. I've only heard about it from one of the other teachers and have never known where this secret library was hidden."

"I see, then I'll be taking my leave. I'll be taking up residence within your Academy for the immediate future. May I inconvenience you with any other questions I may have?"

"I'll be happy to be of service!"

It looked like Duke hadn't recognized Han Shuo. The former hadn't paid any attention to Han Shuo after his initial glance when he walked into room. Han Shuo rejoiced inwardly after Duke left.

"Alright, what questions do you have?" Fanny flicked a glance at Han Shuo after Duke left and asked with ill temper.

His space ring lit up faintly, Han Shuo brought out the questions that he'd previously organized. He sat down naturally in the chair that Duke hadn't occupied just now, and started with his first question.

As an adept necromancer, Fanny had a very complete grasp of theoretical knowledge. Questions that had troubled Han Shuo for quite some time were all easily resolved through Fanny's explanations.

"Summoning zombies is a bit more troublesome than skeletons because the volume and weight of zombies are greater. You'll need to expend more mental strength when summoning them. In addition to this, controlling zombies is also more complicated than skeletons. The bodies of zombies are much more durable than skeletons. If you wish to agilely control them, you must practice repeatedly..." Fanny's voice was gentle as she concentrated on pointing out a few things to take note of when summoning zombies.

When Fanny finished explaining, Han Shuo's brow knit fiercely together as he sank into a state of contemplation. Fanny didn't make a sound as to not disturb Han Shuo when she saw that he was deep in thought.

After a while, Han Shuo exhaled easily and smiled, "So it was an issue of



insufficient coordination between the deployment and retrieval of mental strength. I've grown accustomed to summoning skeletons and am used to using the same amount of strength to communicate across the other dimension. It looks like this was the core of the problem. I think I understand now."

After those words, Han Shuo started reciting the incantation to summon zombies again within Fanny's vision. When the first incantation finished, the figure of a zombie flashed through the air and then immediately disappeared. Han Shuo wasn't in a hurry as he tried to control the amount of his mental strength, but still hadn't succeeded after four or five tries.

Fanny's face wore a gratified smile as she watched Han Shuo. She understood that Han Shuo had already understood the meaning of her words and was searching for the appropriate amount of mental strength through practice. Once he felt the proper amount of mental strength, he would be able to completely summon a zombie.

"Never mind it, you don't need to practice for now. Your direction is definitely correct, and you just lack a bit of repeated practice. I think you'll be able to fully grasp the magic of summoning zombies when you are able to fully control your mental strength. Bryan, it's only been two or three months, yet you've already reached the level of novice mage. I've never heard of such speed in all my years of teaching in the necromancy major."

"Then how do I compare to Fitch?" Han Shuo temporarily gave up further practice beneath Fanny's encouragement and chuckled honestly as he looked at her.

"It feels so unnatural to see your honestly smiling face. Don't act dumb in front of me anymore. Oh, I'd forgotten about Fitch until you mentioned him. He seems very off right now, I'm worried that he'll hold a grudge and purposely create trouble for you. Be careful." Fanny first rebuked Han Shuo, and then spoke to him with a tone of concern.

"Don't worry, if Fitch is really that gullible, I think the person who would end up worse off will surely be him." Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders and paid Fitch's grudge no mind. To be honest, he really didn't think much

of the journeyman mage Fitch now.

“Bryan, I knew that you’d be here, come here. Master Fanny, I have a few matters to discuss with him, hehe.” Lisa’s voice traveled in from outside at this moment as she walked towards Han Shuo as soon as she came in. She grabbed Han Shuo’s wrist and dragged him outside.

As Fanny watched Han Shuo get pulled away by Lisa, a bit of anger seemed to grow out of nowhere in her heart. It was as if someone had seized something precious to her, and she didn’t feel quite happy about it.

“How do you know my cousin?” Lisa asked as she dragged Han Shuo to a little courtyard behind the school library.

Han Shuo liberated his shoulder from Lisa’s hand and looked at her in confusion. “Your cousin? Who is he?”

“Lawrence! He’s learning martial arts in our martial arts school. He came looking for you previously, but you weren’t here. Who would’ve thought that he’d immediately come looking for you as soon as you’d returned this time. How do you know him?”

So it was him. This Lawrence was a bit odd. He had the same master as Phoebe, but attended class at the Academy. Also, he currently possessed the strength of a journeyman swordsman. Han Shuo weighed all of this privately.

As he lowered his head, Han Shuo happened to see Lisa’s chest next to him. Her chest had originally been quite flat, but now blossomed into shapely curves. The well-rounded look noticeably illustrated that she had quite a figure.

“Eh... Lisa, are you wearing more clothes than usual today? Why do I get the feeling that you’ve filled out quite nicely?” Han Shuo snuck a glance at Lisa’s chest and unknowingly let these words slip.

“What, what do you mean by that?” Lisa had been walking when she heard Han Shuo’s words. She was so startled that she almost fell over. Her little face then reddened as she stared at Han Shuo with her question.

“Your chest was flat before, with nothing there, but now it looks bumpy.

Did you pad it with something?" Han Shuo thought internally, but his words were directly reflected in his speech. He opened his mouth and responded with this incredibly honest internal dialogue.

Extraordinary rage! Lisa glared vehemently at Han Shuo and reached out her small hand and gave Han Shuo a firm pinch. She gritted her teeth and said, "You said such a thing and now suspect that I've padded my chest. Do you want to die?"

Han Shuo was horrified as he suddenly realized what he said. He thought those words had only stayed in his heart just now, and according to his *modus operandi*, he would've only kept them in his heart. He would never have caused so much trouble for himself by voicing thoughts that would only anger the other person.

But who could have known that reality would be so strange. It was his inner thoughts, but Han Shuo hadn't given any thought to the consequences and just let it all out. This made Han Shuo feel exceedingly odd.

At the same time, a strand of cool sensation suddenly suffused with his mind. Han Shuo's body shuddered slightly, and he then understood why such words slipped out from him before. It must be because the magical yuan had started creating some strange phenomenon after entering the "molded spirit" stage.

He smiled wryly at Lisa with her teeth gritted as he calmed himself down inside. He privately admonished himself to be careful and to not say anything random again. He finally laughed dryly at Lisa, "I'm sorry Lisa, I was just joking with you. I hadn't thought that you really started developing. I'm truly happy for you."

"You're such a bad person to say such things to someone!" Lisa immediately blushed and explained in a low voice, "I should be the one thanking you instead. I followed the methods that you prescribed. Umm... this is so embarrassing. Anyways, that's what happened!"

Shaking his head in silent laughter, Han Shuo had completely forgotten the ways he'd imparted onto Lisa before for developing her breasts. Who

would've thought that they would actually have an effect? This made Han Shuo feel rather awkward and put on the spot.

"Hi Bryan, how are you?" At this moment, Lawrence happened to see Han Shuo and Lisa from across the courtyard and greeted them from afar.

Lisa's hastily took in a few breaths to calm her reddened face and snuck a glance at Han Shuo, saying softly, "Lawrence's father is a great finance minister of the Empire. He is on very friendly terms with His Majesty. It will benefit you greatly if you have increased contact with him, I won't be disturbing you then."

Lisa seemed to be greatly afraid of Lawrence seeing her reddened face, and after saying these words she fled towards the training fields with small running steps.

The son of one of the Empire's finance ministers! Han Shuo gave a slight start as he thought privately that the Academy was indeed full of hidden dragons and crouching tigers. It would seem that many future nobles would be training in the various majors of the Academy.

"I'm quite good. I've heard that you came looking for me twice? Heh heh, were you planning on spending five gold coins for me to get beaten by you all day?" There wasn't only Han Shuo and Lawrence in the courtyard, there was also a few students from other majors in the distance, reading books in groups of two or three or leisurely tanning themselves in the sunlight.

"If you're willing to, I don't mind spending another five gold coins, heh heh, but I think you would definitely not be willing now!" Lawrence leaned against a stone railing and was quite at ease as he spoke to Han Shou.

"Who says I'm not willing? The only thing is I don't need five gold coins. As long as you're willing to let me fight back, I'll agree to practicing with you. I was beaten up quite severely by you last time and really want to save face!" Han Shuo smiled faintly and also leaned leisurely against the railing as he spoke to Lawrence with an interested expression.

"Oh, that's not a problem. I can practice with you after we've concluded our business here and see if you're really as strong as Phoebe says."

Lawrence also looked quite interested as he stood up straight and smiled.

“ Alright then, I’d like to hear what business you have with me? The two of us shouldn’t have any interaction at all, so what have you come to discuss with me?”

Looking around, Lawrence kept his voice down when he discovered that no one was paying them any attention. He looked at Han Shuo with bright eyes, “My little junior sister said that you seem to be able to get your hands on black iron ore. If this is truly the case, I’d like to purchase some from you. It doesn’t have to be much, just an amount at the size of a fist will do. I was going to ask little junior sister to buy some for me, but I felt that since we got to know each other last time and I’m truly curious about you, I’d like to be friends, so I’ve come to find you myself!”

Han Shuo looked at the very sincere Lawrence and thought that since he was the son of a great finance minister for the Empire, he must have a lot of money.

# Chapter 90: Three pairs of eyes in the darkness

“I can get the black iron ore for you, yes, but you also know that it’s not that easy to obtain. How many gold coins do you intend on spending to buy it?” Han Shuo weighed things up internally as he spoke slowly with a calm expression.

His mental state sharpening, Lawrence drew himself upright and said with some excitement, “So you can get it. Heh heh, I only need the size of a fist to forge weapons. The black market currently has a shortage, so name your price!”

Rubbing his chin, Han Shuo remembered a conversation he had with Phoebe last time and hesitated, saying faintly, “How about this? Give me five thousand gold coins and I’ll try to get a piece for you.”

“No problem, although black gold ore is even more rare, a black iron ore the size of a fist is indeed worth five thousand gold coins. If you can get a piece of black iron ore, you can come find me at the knight school. We’ll do an exchange of goods and money.” Lawrence said joyfully.

Nodding, Han Shuo remembered how he’d been beaten up by Lawrence a few months ago at the knights school. His eyebrow flicked upwards as he chuckled. “I’ll get you a piece of black iron ore within ten days. Why don’t you practice with me again right now? I’ll be very happy to be a human target for you again.”

“Alright, then let’s begin. I can check out just how wonderful you are. Even someone as proud and aloof as Phoebe continuously complimented you in front of me. I’m quite curious about your strength.” Lawrence struck a pose excitedly and was prepared to immediately fight with Han Shuo.

It was noon, and most of the students in the courtyard had just put their things away and were getting ready to go to lunch. Only two or three students sunbathing in the far distance seemingly hadn’t left because

they'd fallen asleep. Han Shuo swept a glance around the perimeter and smiled, "Let's go to the left. There aren't that many people there and we won't affect anyone."

Han Shuo lifted his head provocatively at Lawrence after he spoke and walked to an empty clearing behind the railing to the left. Lawrence tightened his fists and chuckled lightly, following behind Han Shuo and also making for the empty lot on the left.

When he arrived, Han Shuo circulated the magical yuan throughout his body and started adjusting his bodily condition. Lawrence was a few steps behind Han Shuo and had just walked down the stone steps when Han Shuo had already doubled back like lightning, bringing a fist crashing down on Lawrence without giving him time to react.

Lawrence hadn't anticipated that Han Shuo would make a move so quickly. The punch with frightening momentum had already arrived in front of Lawrence before he'd had time to react. His facial expression changing slightly, Lawrence suddenly backed up a step after putting his feet down, returning to the stone steps again and shunted his body to the side, avoiding the punch that Han Shuo had suddenly flung his way.

The punch whistled past Lawrence's face and frigid air emanated from Han Shuo's left fist, giving Lawrence a bit of a fright.

Han Shuo retracted his left arm before Lawrence had time to react, then suddenly curved it and slammed his elbow into Lawrence's chest.

Lawrence grunted lowly as his body was forced into the railing by Han Shuo's elbow, his face reddening slightly.

"Heh heh, Lawrence your sense of alertness isn't good enough!" Han Shuo didn't follow up his elbow blow to Lawrence's chest with another attack. He backed away with an odd smile instead, teasing Lawrence in a sing-song tone.

The two of them were only practicing and not fighting to the death, so Han Shuo hadn't used his full strength in that strike. He'd only released the barest hint of frigid air from the "Glacial Mystical Spellfire". As a sergeant knight, Lawrence had fighting aura protecting him internally and

hadn't suffered any injuries.

"You were the one who suddenly ambushed me. This punch doesn't count, I'll make you pay later." Lawrence wasn't mad as he elaborated on the truth with a wry expression. He then walked down the stone steps again and suddenly faced Han Shuo with no hints of levity.

Pale-green fighting aura suddenly blossomed from Lawrence's hands as his footsteps sped up. He approached Han Shuo like lightning, the fighting aura from his left hand suddenly formed into the shape of a sword of light and hurtled down towards Han Shuo.

Lawrence had just experienced Han Shuo's speed and strength and understood that the current Han Shuo couldn't be compared with who he had been before. This was why he was using his fighting aura, but his movements were quite cautious as he obviously pulled his punches.

A trace of a slight smile curved at Han Shuo's lips as he watched Lawrence's movements. He measured up the strength of Lawrence's fighting aura and completely failed to dodge. He circulated the "Glacial Mystical Spellfire" in his right hand as a thin beam of faint, red light materialized in the path of Han Shuo's waving right fist. It crashed down into the sword of light coalesced from Lawrence's fighting aura along with Han Shuo's right fist.

Bam sounded out dully as Lawrence's sword of light, made from fighting aura, dispersed in a mass of light spots. Lawrence's strong forward momentum was halted in its tracks. Han Shuo also felt a wave of soreness and numbness overcome his right hand as his body backed up two steps involuntarily.

"Lawrence, how much of your fighting aura did you use in coalescing your sword of light just now?" Han Shuo looked at Lawrence with burning eyes as he asked

"Sixty percent!" Lawrence responded and then looked askance at Han Shuo. "Your speed and aura is noticeably different compared to a few months ago. It looks like you were definitely acting on purpose last time – except, why would you be willing to be beaten up for five gold coins?"



Han Shuo had been a rookie who hadn't been tried in combat a few months ago, and his magical yuan had only been at the first level of the "solid realm". He had done so to earn gold coins, but most importantly to train his body and thus hadn't held himself back. It looked like Lawrence was misunderstanding Han Shuo.

Sixty percent of his fighting aura. Han Shuo thought briefly and went over the amount of magical yuan he had infused just now. He finally concluded that his own strength should be slightly stronger than Lawrence's because he had only infused his punch with about forty percent of his magical yuan. This already had the effect of being at equal strengths with his opponent.

After testing his strength through the direct collision of one fist, Han Shuo didn't continue colliding head on with Lawrence. He used the agility and nimbleness of his body instead to battle Lawrence in much more efficient ways.

The two of them traded blows back and forth for a while on the empty lot and both of them suffered from a few attacks. Han Shuo's body was obvious much stronger than Lawrence's, and he emitted low grunts when punches of equal strength landed on his body.

Han Shuo's body was stronger than Lawrence's to begin with, not to mention that the initial stage of training magical yuan had been self inflicted torture, so he had endured all sorts of pain. He was already used to this kind of pain, so these blows didn't even register on his body when they landed.

Spots were dancing in Lawrence's eyes when he voluntarily stopped after a while. He smiled wryly, "No more, enough. You're quite a strange person. I can't feel any fighting aura from you at all, but why is it that your strength is much greater than mine. Is your body made out of steel? Why does it feel like I'm punching a stone wall when I hit you? Don't you feel pain at all?"

Chuckling evilly, Han Shuo said, "Don't you worry about this. My body is naturally odd. Can't my body be strong?"

“Eh, do you have the blood of barbarians running through you, or can you go berserk like the berserk warriors? Phoebe was right, you are a marvelous person!” Lawrence first asked in astonishment and then murmured to himself.

Han Shuo also understood his deficiencies after the two had sparred. His body and magical yuan was indeed wondrous, but Lawrence had obviously been trained in martial arts and there was quite a rhythm in his punches and evasive maneuvers.

Han Shuo had never learned martial arts, and his attacks were always the simplest methods. Compared to Lawrence, he lacked effective attacking methods. He made a mental note of this deficiency. Han Shuo planned on thoroughly pondering this when he had time and see if there were any other attacking styles left behind in Chu Cang Lan’s memories.

“I don’t know. Alright, let’s stop here for today. I’ve finally redeemed myself for last time. I’ll come to the knight school when I obtain the black iron ore.” Han Shuo mentally weighed a few things and made his careless farewells to Lawrence as he returned to the necromancy major with furrowed brows.

Lawrence didn’t get mad after coming off a bit worse for the wear this time. After he bid farewell to Han Shuo with a smile, he walked towards his knight school and muttered, “A strange person indeed. The durability of his body can probably be compared with orc warriors!”

Han Shuo mused privately as his footsteps continued to take him towards the necromancy major. Phoebe needed some time to prepare the rations and he didn’t intend on returning to the cemetery of death in the short terms. Duke was currently residing within the school and Han Shuo still didn’t know his exact plans. Therefore, he decided to remain within the necromancy major after some thought.

Han Shuo’s dorms had long since been arranged by Fanny, but he’d never lived in them. Now that he’d decided on temporarily staying within the academy, the dorms were finally proving to be of some use to him.

The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force was the largest institution of

learning within the Empire. Its facilities were very comprehensive, and it was no wonder that a high tuition was enacted from every student.

Han Shuo's quarters were in the corner of the second floor and were roughly fifty to sixty meters squared. It included a bedroom and a bathroom, with tables, chairs, and mirrors. It was the difference between heaven and earth compared to the warehouse Han Shuo had stayed in before.

It was already past noon after he'd arrived at his dorms. Han Shuo had missed meal time and could only take out a few chunks of meat jerky from his space ring to pad his stomach.

Han Shuo didn't leave the dorms after he finished eating. He closed the room door tightly and sat on the bed, taking advantage of a quiet lull to practice his magical yuan. The magical yuan started circulating and slowly began to coalesce in his mind from all parts of his body. A sort of clear, slightly-cool feeling permeated through his brain, making Han Shuo feel that his brain was immersed in a refreshing pool of water.

However, this feeling only lasted for a short while. The comfort of his mind was replaced by a soul wrenching pain. The training of the "molded spirit" level caused Han Shuo's brain to continuously switch between comfort and pain. He would feel lazily at ease one second, and so much pain that it felt like someone was digging through his brain with a sharp knife the next.

What was most agonizing about this for Han Shuo was that every time the pain surged, his mind would become immensely clear headed. This would cause the pain to be suddenly magnified ten times. The clarity of his mind was specifically for him to suffer through even greater pain. This made Han Shuo wish to curse whoever created this magical yuan technique was seriously a perverse masochist.

After a long, long time, Han Shuo breathed out lightly and halted his magical yuan training. Hot air rose from his body like he'd just taken a hot shower and a strong sense of manliness rolled off his body.

Training his magical yuan had taken Han Shuo from afternoon directly

to night. The night scenery outside his window was captivating as the cool night breeze blew in. It was desolate and silent all around.

Sitting up from his cross legged position, Han Shuo turned on the hot water in the bathroom and laid back leisurely in the tub, enjoying this rare moment of carefree ease. He even hummed a small tune.

The dead of the night was the perfect timing for those with ulterior motives to come skulk around. Two small sounds suddenly sounded in Han Shuo's ears, just as he was lazily showering. One of them came from within the dormitory building, the other outside the window.

Three original demons flew out, without a sound, from the back of Han Shuo's neck. Two of them went out the window to check what was going on outside. One of them floated towards the origin of the sound, while the other stayed near the window, silently observing any abnormalities. The last original demon floated out the crack in the door and arrived in the hallway of the dormitory building, moving forward along the hallway and floating to where the sound had come from.

The one that had gone outside finally discovered Duke surreptitiously floating around the sides of the buildings after traveling for a while. Duke hadn't used nightwalker clothes this time. He appeared like a ghost in the darkness, floating to the dark major's classroom buildings without any weight at all.

The original demon within the hallway had discovered one of the dormitory room doors had been lightly opened, with Fitch tiptoeing out quietly with a sinister face. He was walking towards Han Shuo and judging from his facial expressions, seemed to bear ill will.

Han Shuo immediately jumped out from the bath tub and quickly towelled himself off. He put his pants back on and lay down on the bed with his back facing the door, even breathing sounds emitting from his mouth.

# Chapter 91: A game of hot potato with lingerie

Fitch fancied himself clever as he tiptoed like a thief up to Han Shuo's door. He looked around shiftily and then used an exceedingly low voice to summon a wraith, bidding it to enter Han Shuo's room through the crack beneath the door.

Han Shuo's original demons had been refined from wraiths to begin with, so wraiths could also be another set of eyes for the summoners. However, as summoned creatures from necromancers, they carried a faint hint of death about them and had a greyish-white outline. Anyone with a slightly higher level of alertness would easily discover traces of them.

Han Shuo's original demons had undergone specialized magical yuan refinement and thus didn't have any magical ripples emanating from them. Their form was also indistinct. As long as they didn't come into contact with a magical boundary, it would be very difficult to discover them. Add to that the fact that original demons were one of the demon generals and had a mental connection to the mage, they could be deployed to far distances and had uncommon attacking capabilities. Therefore, no matter how one viewed it, an original demon was much more practical than a wraith.

After Fitch's wraith entered Han Shuo's room, it circled around inside and then stopped in front of Han Shuo's window. It seemed to be silently observing Han Shuo's movements.

Breathing evenly, Han Shuo was on his side and appeared to be in a deep sleep. He seemed to be completely oblivious to everything happening around him. Fitch used the wraith to probe around from the outside before placing his hand on the door handle, exerting a small amount of force. Han Shuo's room door creaked open with a small squeak.

A bag of powder suddenly appearing in his hand, Fitch opened the paper wrappings and blew on it in front of the door. The powder dispersed into

the air and emitted a light fragrance.

Soul Temptation Powder!

Han Shuo had some understanding of poison powder now and had already recognized the fragrance when it dispersed just now. He laughed coldly inside and didn't hold his breath. He continued to naturally inhale and exhale. With the strength his body acquired after entering the third demonic realm, low level powders that would cause him to sink into a drugged state had absolutely no effect on him at all.

A sinister and venomous smile on his face, Fitch had a bit of a gleeful expression on his face right now as he walked lightly towards Han Shuo, glaring at him fiercely. What he was thinking, no one knew.

Leveraging the line of vision from the original demons, Han Shuo still fully viewed Fitch's expression even with his eyes closed. Although he maintained a sleeping posture with his body, Han Shuo had long since readied himself. He was prepared to make a move as soon as things went south. Han Shuo was prepared to kill as soon as Fitch laid a hand on him.

However, Fitch didn't seem as bold as Han Shuo thought. He stared at Han Shuo and then murmured to himself, "You lowly slave, you're completely unworthy of Master Fanny. I should've run you out of the necromancy major a long time ago, but you weren't around for a long time. However, let's see where you'll run this time. After tomorrow, everyone will be sure that you're a pervert. Even if Master Fanny helps you, the school authorities will expel you from the necromancy major. I've spent quite a lot of effort and time in wanting to make a move against you, heh heh!"

Fitch murmured as he fished out a large package from his being. He bent down and shoved the package under Han Shuo's bed, then slowly backed out of Han Shuo's room with a proud air, cackling in a low tone as he did so. He then carefully closed the door to Han Shuo's room and walked easily to his own room with a face full of satisfaction.

Han Shuo immediately sat up in his bed after Fitch had left and bent down to look around. He discovered that Fitch had hung this package

from the wooden slats beneath the bed. He would've been hard pressed to discover it if he hadn't looked carefully.

When Han Shuo took down the bundle and opened it, he was flabbergasted by what he saw.

A collection of flimsy, thin female lingerie greeted his eyes. These colorful articles of clothing were lace trimmed and all had very small amounts of cloth on them. They were either cute or sexy. Some had just been washed, with two looking like they'd just been taken off and hadn't had time to be washed. There were still a few traces of the female body on them.

Han Shuo stared at the female lingerie items within the bundle and looked them all over twice, sighing that Fitch really did possess amazing methods of revenge. He started to grow a healthy appreciation for Fitch. However, what he admired wasn't Fitch's schemes, but his methods. Who would've thought that he would be able to silently and unwittingly obtain so many articles of female lingerie? He wondered if there were any in this pile that belonged to Master Fanny!

Shaking his head with involuntary laughter, Han Shuo knew that once the girls of the school realized that their lingerie had gone missing, they were bound to raise a huge furor tomorrow. Fitch was certain to have other tricks up his sleeve. Perhaps there would be a room by room search of all male students tomorrow. If this bundle were to be discovered beneath his bed, Han Shuo was sure to gain the title of "Great Perverted Demon". He wouldn't have to wait for the school to expel him then, since he himself wouldn't have the face to face anyone and would never appear within the Academy again.

"I won't do anything to you if you don't do anything to me. Fitch, ah Fitch. You can't blame me for being vicious this time." Han Shuo picked up the package and snickered softly as he got out of the bed and walked towards Fitch's room with the original demon leading the way.

He used almost the same exact methods of leveraging the original demon's vision to copy Fitch's methods. He travelled soundlessly to Fitch's

room, shoved the bundle beneath Fitch's bed and then left, with none the wiser.

Once this matter had been completed satisfactorily, Han Shuo returned to his room and didn't go back to sleep, but rather used the other original demon to observe Duke's movements.

Duke had flown directly to a classroom on the fourth floor of the building after arriving at the dark major building. There was not a soul within the classroom building at night. Duke didn't move after setting foot in this room, becoming one with the night.

Han Shuo gazed upon Duke in the darkness, through the eyes of the original demon parked in the shadows of a great tree. Except, he didn't make another move after arriving and had no further movement. This made Han Shuo feel quite confused. He wasn't sure what Duke was doing in the classroom building in the middle of the night.

After a while, just when Han Shuo started to feel a bit impatient, a fat cloud of black light suddenly appeared in the distance and slowly moved towards the classroom building.

It would've been difficult to discover the cloud's existence if he hadn't been paying attention in the darkness. Han Shuo gave himself a mental shake and immediately increased his attention. He carefully observed the movements within this ball of light. The dark light was thickly concentrated like a dense patch of clouds, making it difficult for Han Shuo to see what was going on inside.

The motionless Duke only detected this cloud of light after it entered the dark major classroom building, and he suddenly coughed lightly.

The cloud of black light halted briefly upon hearing Duke's light cough, then quickly traveled up the steps and made for the room that Duke was in.

Duke and the cloud of dark light finally met with the room between them. Duke flicked a glance at the cloud of dark light that had halted in front of the door and displayed a trace of a smile, saying softly, "The Empire's 'Black Underworld' organization is everywhere alright. There are



even people from 'Black Underworld' within this organization. It's very nice to make your acquaintance. I think you can reveal your true appearance now?"

"I've been in this Academy for many years, and expended a lot of the organization's resources just to gain entrance to this place from the beginning. My identity must not be revealed at any costs. There are many archmages like you within the Babylon Academy, and the head of the school is even a grand magus. It would be no trifling matter if we alarmed her."

A familiar voice traveled out from the the cloud of black light. It was then peeled back like layers of clothing being cast off, revealing the figure of the dark major's old witch Camilla.

It was her! Han Shuo was startled as he observed everything inside with greater caution, deathly afraid that he would miss any bit of their conversation.

There was a "Dark Mantle" organization within the Lancelot Empire, and hence there would certainly be a similar organization within the Kasi Empire. It seemed that Camilla was from the Kasi Empire and was a member of the Kasi Empire's "Black Underworld". This was quite interesting.

"So it's you. Heh heh. I even saw you today... who would've thought that you're one of us. The 'Black Underworld' of the Empire is indeed infinitely resourceful. It looks like my mission this time will be a lot easier than expected." Duke was also quite surprised when Camilla revealed herself.

"It's very dangerous for the two of us to meet here. The 'Dark Mantle' organization of the Lancelot Empire isn't that easy to handle either. I've had a few run ins with them here. They're like flies that buzz around you. If my identity is revealed, not only will I immediately die a gruesome death, but I'll also fail to live up to the Empire's cultivation of me. Cut the blather. What business did you have in contacting me?" Camilla rushed Duke impatiently to get down to business.

Nodding, Duke said gravely, "I have many responsibilities about me on

this trip to the Lancelot Empire. If it wasn't for the inability to resolve them myself, I wouldn't dare to call upon your 'Black Underworld's' agents. I've asked Master Fanny of the necromancy major today and heard that apart from each major's library, there's also a secret library? We need to look up a few materials and would like to ask you where the library is located, and how we get in?"

"There is indeed a secret library with many rare books stored inside. I've not only heard of this library, but I've been so privileged as to make it inside before. However, there's a magical boundary personally cast by the headmaster. No one can go inside without the headmaster's approval."

"I was going to research curses of the dark major last time, that was how I made it in, accompanied by the headmaster. If you want to break into the secret library, I'm sure you'll be discovered by the headmaster. You'd best think of another plan!" Camilla gravely warned Duke with a face full of resignation.

Duke thought with a darkened face for a while after hearing Camilla's words and said to her, "If this is the case, then I'll have to impose upon you and think of a way inside. The Empire would like to know everything regarding the 'Eye of Darkness'. Go inside and see if there's anything with regards to this. Before I made this trip, those on top in the 'Black Underworld' said that I could make use of you in critical moments. I hope you understand."

"If the Empire wanted to investigate this matter, they could have directly given me orders through the 'Black Underworld'. Why would they trouble you with a personal trip?" Camilla looked at Duke in confusion and didn't immediately agree, opening her mouth and asking Duke.

"You don't need to know that much about this matter. The Empire has its own arrangements in sending us. You just need to go to the secret library and help me understand everything there is to know about the 'Eye of Darkness'." Duke's forehead creased as he said a bit unhappily.

"What item is that? It sounds like something from our dark major. Tell me what it looks like and its basic information."

“It’s not something from your dark major. It was created by the necromancers in an era when necromancers were strong. The secrets of opening the cemetery of death are hidden inside. It’s said that the cemetery of death is sacred ground for necromancers. Many years ago, when necromancers rampaged over the lands, the cemetery of death was a place of evil that no one dared to mention on the Continent. The tomes of frightening necromancy secrets may be kept inside. The Empire needs the secrets inside, so you need to comprehend the secrets of the ‘Eye of Darkness’ to the best of your abilities!”

Camilla’s face changed slightly as she thought briefly and then said, “Since this is the case, then I’ll think of a way to get inside. However, the headmaster is always present whenever we go inside, so I can only do my best.”

“Alright then, let me know as soon as you go inside, whether or not you make any discoveries. I’ll be staying at the wind major for the foreseeable future, exchanging some knowledge of wind magic. You can make use of other excuses to openly come find me.” Duke nodded and said to Camilla.

The two had reached an agreement by this point and didn’t continue further discussions afterwards. The two of them left the classroom building one by one after dispersing.

After Han Shuo retrieved his original demons, he went through their conversation in his mind and contemplated a bit with a furrowed brow, finally slowly drifting off to sleep.

# Chapter 92: Are you really a mage?

Early the next day, Han Shuo could already hear the topic of the stolen lingerie outside the window before he'd even gotten out of bed. Under the efforts of a conscientious person, this person was quickly found out and the topic immediately spread to every corner of the necromancy major.

Gene and Fanny were utterly exhausted from overworking early in the morning and were worrying over this matter. The students had quickly gathered within the training fields. Expressions of anger and fright were apparent on the female students' faces, whereas the male students were also full of astonishment. Some were also delighting in the misfortunes of others.

Han Shuo had also been gathered in the training fields. He listening to the noisy chatter of the crowd as his eyes constantly flitted towards Fitch. Fitch looked normal, but his eyes kept dancing and also swept towards Han Shuo every now and then.

"The fallout from this matter is exceedingly devious. Nothing like this has ever happened in our necromancy major before, but now that this matter has cropped up, it must be thoroughly investigated." Gene also had a face full of fury as he expressed his opinion.

"Lisa, you girls truly lack alertness. How could you have let the thief so easily succeed, and not pick up any disturbances whatsoever?" Fanny lectured Lisa with a furrowed brow.

"This is the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, we didn't think that the thieves would be so bold either. Nothing happened in the necromancy major for such a long period of time, add to that the fact that dirty clothes are nothing valuable. Who would've thought that such a perverted lecher would appear?!" Lisa said with a pained expression.

Amy, Athena, Bella, and the other girls all wore expressions of rage as they chattered and complained ceaselessly. They called out loudly that when they found the thief, they would surely exact a harsh punishment upon him.

“Such a thing happening in our necromancy major has already caused an extremely negative impact. The school authorities have already taken over the investigation. I wonder who has been so shameless and bold as to commit such an infuriating act.” Fanny was a bit irritated, but much more enraged as she said angrily.

Many animated discussions took place within the training fields, and those who'd had their lingerie stolen were incredibly angry and couldn't be calmed. Han Shuo calmly observed everything and waited for further developments.

“Who do you think did it?” Lisa had drifted next to Han Shuo after some time and opened her mouth to ask him.

Shrugging, Han Shuo smiled. “How would I know? But the person who's done this should be quite familiar with our territory. Otherwise, how could he have succeeded so easily? Although you're a bit weak, but I think you girls would've noticed something if someone ordinary and unfamiliar with the surroundings tried to do something like this. None of you girls noticed a thing, so I quite admire this person's methods.”

“How can you still be cracking such jokes at a time like this? My, my bra was stolen too! This person is a shameless lecher. If I know who did it, I'm not going to let him off the hook!” Lisa clenched her fists and bit off her words.

“You'll have to catch him first.” Han Shuo conversed carelessly with Lisa, but his eyes roved continuously over Fitch's face.

Just as there was a hubbub on the training fields, a middle-aged swordsman walked in. His name was Vida, and he was in charge of all trivial matters within the Academy. Han Shuo had seen him once before. This person was famous for having great strength. If there were any fights that broke out between the students, or any strange circumstances that appeared, it was always him who appeared to handle things.

“I have already grasped the general gist of the situation. I looked around the girls' dormitory building just now. Huh. I can already hazard a guess as to who committed this act.” Vida's eyes immediately swept towards

where Han Shuo and the others had gathered when he arrived and spoke coolly.

“Uncle Vida, who did it!? Hurry and tell us!” Amy stood next to Vida and asked anxiously.

Vida’s expression was stiff as he looked towards Han Shuo, “The person who did this would be most aware of this in his heart. I hope that he will voluntarily admit his mistakes. As long as he steps forward voluntarily, I can at least promise that I won’t send him to the Empire’s Judiciary, but if he stubbornly refuses to plead guilty, then I won’t be kind to him.”

“Mister Vida, what do you mean by that? You’ve been yelling at our students all along, do you think that one of them has committed this act? That’s too ridiculous!” Fanny said unhappily when she saw Vida’s glance patrol continuously over a few male students’ faces with a cold and stern look on his face.

“Master Fanny, this isn’t ridiculous at all. It has to be one of your dear students. I looked around the girls’ dormitory and found a pair of exceedingly faint footprints that went from the female student’s dorm windows, avoiding the trees and shrubbery, and making for the boys’ dormitory. Heh heh, I’ve handled many cases like this before and don’t even think of concealing the truth from me. I think Master Fanny should well understand what problem this lays out?” Vida thought himself clever as he chuckled and made a judgment on this matter.

It looked like Fitch had paid quite a bit of attention to detail. He’d even purposefully left footprints behind for Vida to point the way. However, this Vida didn’t seem too intelligent. This caused Han Shuo to somewhat dismiss him and lowered his view of this person in his heart.

When these words were spoken, they immediately caused an uproar. All the boys immediately called out and denied that they’d been the ones to commit such a dastardly act. The group of girls with Bella at their head looked angrily in their direction. Their gaze at all the boys was quite unfriendly, as if every was under suspicion for doing the deed.

“Lisa, you don’t need to look at me that way. I feel quite uncomfortable.”

Lisa also swept an odd gaze over Han Shuo's face. Although Han Shuo hadn't done anything, he still felt all the hair on his body stand on end when she stared at him with that look, as if he'd really become that shameless perverted demon.

"Hehe, I'm just having fun with you. I believe that you would never do something like this." Lisa smiled sweetly at Han Shuo when she saw that his scalp was a bit numb.

Vida was already a bit impatient at this point and spoke with a cold expression on his face, "I think one amongst you can admit your guilt at this time. We can resolve this matter privately within the Academy if you're willing to voluntarily admit your wrongdoings. However, if you hold the mentality of getting by on a fluke and have no intention of repenting and mending your ways, then don't blame me for being harsh."

As the thief, Fitch had already safely stowed the items in Han Shuo's room. He was quite proud right now and naturally wished ardently for Vida to investigate. All the other students had done nothing and naturally weren't afraid of anything. Each of their expressions were more serious and with a clear conscience than each other. Fitch even spoke with a noble spirit, "This should be thoroughly investigated. Such a matter should definitely not be treated with leniency."

Bach and the others murmured noises of assent, expressing the attitude that this thief should be harshly punished. It was as if the firmness of their attitude would be enough to prove their innocence.

"Bryan, why don't you say anything?" Amy couldn't help but ask curiously when she saw Han Shuo standing there with a faint smile on his face, saying nothing and presenting a sharp contrast to the other students full of noble wrath.

"Is he feeling guilty? Heh heh, but it's rather odd. Nothing happened in the days when he wasn't in the necromancy major. Something immediately took place when he happened to be in the dorms last night. This seems like quite a coincidence!" Bella had some old grudges with Han Shuo. It was as if she'd discovered a new frontier when she suddenly

exclaimed softly.

Her exclamation and her words seemed to make a bit of sense. The gazes of all assembled fell onto Han Shuo. All of them were filled with suspicion, and disdain could be even found on a few people's faces, as if Han Shuo was that pervert.

"There's no point in proclaiming my stance. I think Mister Vida will be able to successfully investigate who did it. I await his discovery with great anticipation." Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders and said faintly.

Seeing that no one was stepping forward, Vida snorted coldly, "Alright, since this is the case, don't blame me for taking drastic measures. Not too much time has passed since the matter occurred till now. I think the thief would've only hid the items on him or in his room. Master Fanny and Gene, we'll search their bodies first. Once we've concluded the body search, we'll move onto searching their dorms. I think he wouldn't have buried the items."

Under Vida's requests, the male students all stripped off their clothes until they were standing in their shorts. It was up to Vida and Gene to search through the clothes on their bodies.

When Han Shuo also took off his clothes, Vida displayed a surprised expression as he looked hotly at Han Shuo's naked body. He suddenly asked, "Are you really a mage?"

Everyone present couldn't help but pay attention to Han Shuo when Vida spoke these words. They were greeted with the sight of even and perfect muscles on Han Shuo's naked body, a body full of masculine energy and strength. His figure looked even stronger and more perfect than ordinary warriors. This was a stark comparison to the short, skinny, or fat students. No wonder Vida was so surprised.

"When did you become so fit? I remember you were skinny and small before?" Lisa's eyes gleamed as she stared intently at Han Shuo's revealed naked body and sighed in the best of spirits.

All the other female students were incredibly surprised when they saw Han Shuo's greatly alluring masculine body. When they compared it to



the room full of fat and bones, they immediately felt that Han Shuo's extraordinary body was absolutely perfect. The shy Amy blushed faintly and lowered her head to whisper something to Athena. This also made Athena's face redden as her gaze towards Han Shuo became a bit odd.

Fanny's face was also flushed and she didn't seem to dare to look at Han Shuo's body directly. She first looked away and then snuck intense glances at Han Shuo's body when no one else was paying attention.

"I was malnourished before and wasn't well developed. Of course I develop well now that I'm eating well." Han Shuo looked ambiguously at Lisa's chest and said meaningfully.

"You suck!" Lisa became panicked upon seeing Han Shuo stare at her chest and admonished Han Shuo embarrassingly.

When this interlude had passed and everyone's clothes had been turned over by Vida, he opened his mouth after failing to discover anything, "It looks like it's been hidden within the dorms. Let's begin our investigation of the dorms."

"Bryan seems to also have a space ring." Bella suddenly spoke up just as everyone was about to leave.

Vida's departing form halted upon hearing Bella's words. He then looked with astonishment at the space ring on Han Shuo's hand and exclaimed, "So that's a space ring, I almost missed it, but space rings aren't easily searched. This will be a bit difficult. How about this, give me the space ring first and I'll go find the headmaster. As a space archmage, she'll have the ways to open your space ring. I hope you cooperate with the course of my duties."

Han Shuo first looked coldly at Bella in the distance, saying directly to her, "Ugly woman, you are seriously unlikeable."

Bella first displayed an expression of extreme fury, but then remembered Han Shuo's berserk rage in the Dark Forest when she saw the ruthless chill in his eyes. She involuntarily took one step back in fright and opened her mouth, but couldn't bring herself to say another word.

Han Shuo's heart had sank at this moment as he suddenly felt put on the spot. There were some sensitive items within his space ring. It would create a lot of trouble for him if the headmaster discovered them.

"What's wrong, is there something that shouldn't see the light of day in your space ring?" Vida asked as he saw Han Shuo hesitate to cooperate.

"I trust that he wouldn't do anything like this. I think we should investigate the dorms first and then discuss his space ring if nothing is found." Fanny thought for a moment and spoke up when she saw Han Shuo display a conflicted expression.

Vida looked in surprise at Fanny and then woodenly nodded his head. "Then you look after him during this time. Don't let him out of your sight and get up to any tricks. You're responsible if anything goes wrong."

"Let's go, let's go search the dorms." Gene smoothed over the situation with his suggestion and took the crowd of people towards the male student dorms.

All the students stayed below Fanny's watchful eye. Gene and Vida entered the dorm and sounds of things being rifled through and upended rang out. Fitch watched Han Shuo and Fanny stand together with a look of cruel joy. He gleefully went over the punishment that Han Shuo was about to face and he felt a contentment that he'd never felt before.

"Thank you Master Fanny." Han Shuo thanked her sincerely as he looked at Fanny by his side.

Rolling her eyes at him, Fanny whispered with her sweet voice, "What awkward items are within your space ring? Even if the headmaster saw them, she wouldn't have you detained for having them. What are you afraid of?"

"I kept a bit of the weapons and medicines from the town of Drol last time. If the headmaster searched my space ring, she'll surely discover this bundle of stolen goods. Our major has divvied up the items and the gold coins. If the headmaster saw it, our entire major will be strung up for it. Don't you think something's wrong with Bella's brain?" Han Shuo said.

Fanny suddenly felt like a fool after hearing these words. Her brow then knit together as she contemplated this matter with a face full of anxiety.

Suddenly, Gene and Vida walked out from the building towards the arrogantly smirking Fitch. Vida asked coldly, "Did you think I wouldn't discover them simply because you hung them on a hook beneath the bed?"

All the looks full of disdain and disgust suddenly landed on Fitch's proud face. Just as Fitch was dumbfounded, he was utterly drowned by a shrill, angry tide of curses from the female students.

# Chapter 93: Great Formation of the Divine Zombies and Five Elements

Fitch was utterly destroyed this time. He was mercilessly hauled away under everyone's curses and contemptuous gazes as he continuously called out, "This is an evil plot! I was framed!" Vida said to Fanny before he left, "This filthy piece of scum will never appear in the Academy ever again!"

Everyone kept discussing Fitch's despicable acts for a long time after he'd been dragged away. Several of the female students' fury still hadn't abated as they chattered busily, cursing Fitch. No one sympathized for him.

Fanny was a bit flabbergasted. She hadn't expected that Fitch would be that kind of person. She even suspected the truth of the matter a bit, but the truth was right in front of her and she had nothing to say. She could only continuously shake her head and sigh.

Having caught the thief, Han Shuo naturally didn't have to worry about the issue of his space ring being searched. He laughed coldly inside as he watched Fitch caught in his own trap. He'd been asking for it and couldn't fault Han Shuo for being ruthless. If Han Shuo hadn't discovered this beforehand, he would most likely be the one facing the crowd's jeers and taunts now.

This matter made the students buzz with excitement and discussion all day, but Han Shuo didn't get involved. He didn't attend class in the morning, but rather headed to the training grounds alone, practicing how to summon zombie warriors over and over again.

Since his direction was correct, he only needed time. After a morning of repeated practice, he finally successfully summoned a zombie warrior. This meant that Han Shuo had added another powerful spell to his arsenal. The manipulation of zombies was much more difficult than skeletal warriors. In order to fully deploy the exceptional offensive capabilities of the buff and clumsy zombies, the technique and familiarity

of the manipulator was even more critical.

Han Shuo stayed within the training grounds for the next three days and practiced controlling the zombies with more familiarity. As he stood in the midst of the various obstacles within the training field, Han Shuo summoned a zombie that wielded a heavy iron club. Under the control of Han Shuo's mental strength, the zombie twisted its body and evaded a few of the obstacles. The iron club in its hand crashed solidly down on a target under Han Shuo's guidance.

Han Shuo kept careful surveillance on the dark major's old witch, Camilla. During these two days, the old witch visited the headmaster's office once, but strong magical pulses were present in the headmaster's office. Han Shuo was certain that a magical boundary existed within the headmaster's office.

As a grand magus of space magic, the headmaster possessed extraordinary magic. Han Shuo didn't dare brashly insert his original demons into her office to eavesdrop. Therefore, he had no way of knowing what Camilla discussed with the Headmaster, and he didn't know whether or not Camilla had already visited the secret library.

However, judging from the amount of time that Camilla had spent in the Headmaster's office, Han Shuo felt that Camilla hadn't paid a visit yet because she walked out a few minutes after entering the office.

"You're in the training grounds alright, I knew I'd find you here." Han Shuo had remained within the training grounds this morning while the others were listening to the lecture within the classroom. Fanny suddenly walked in and spoke to him.

"What are you doing here? Don't you only have classes in the afternoon?" Han Shuo didn't stop practicing after Fanny had walked in and only responded carelessly, continuing to manipulate the zombie to agilely circle past another obstacle.

"I came looking for you. Eh, you've grasped it quite quickly. Heh heh, according to the speed of your improvement, I think you'll be able to make it into the next stage before too long." Fanny smiled faintly and

complimented him when she saw that Han Shuo could already adeptly control zombies.

She halted, crinkled her slender brows, and then asked in confusion, “Bryan, although your potential is quite good, the speed in which you’re concentrating mental strength shouldn’t be this quick. The meditation of mental strength doesn’t have much to do with the quality of potential, particularly when one is just starting out. Mental strength is slowly increased through accumulation over many months and years. Why are you able to possess the mental strength of a novice mage after just a few months? This is quite queer, just how are you doing it?”

It was natural for Fanny to be perplexed. Han Shuo’s mental strength had increased quickly largely due to the effects of the “Eye of Darkness”. Han Shuo improved with rapid speed without rhyme or reason whenever his mind was about ready to split open from pain. Now that his magical yuan had entered the “molded spirit” stage, the potential of his brain had been unlocked and the speed in which he gathered mental strength increased yet again when he meditated. With the overlapping effects of his training, it would’ve been difficult for his mental strength to not increase in speed of concentration.

Shrugging, Han Shuo said, “How would I know? My body’s quite strange to begin with. Not only am I much stronger than ordinary mages, but the speed at which I gather mental strength when meditating is also quite fast.”

“Can it be that you possess the legendary body of divine favor?” Fanny first blanked, with a look of extreme joy appearing on her face as she spoke with excitement.

Han Shuo was also dumbfounded by her words. He asked blankly, “What’s a body of divine favor?”

“There are an exceedingly few amount of people in this world who are born with bodies different from others. It’s rare for even one of these people to appear out of ten thousand people. Their bodies are different from ordinary people. Some of them have natural aptitudes for training

fighting aura, and some are naturally born to become mages.”

“If these people can find the correct realm for them, their accomplishments are often incredibly brilliant. Because these people’s bodies are different from ordinary peoples’, the legends say that they’ve attracted the favor of the gods. Some of the preeminent characters on the Continent now possess these bodies of divine favor. Can it be that you’re one of them too?” An inexplicable light of excitement danced in Fanny’s eyes as she stared at Han Shuo and exclaimed in surprise.

“Perhaps!” Han Shuo knew that the peculiarities of his body were completely attributed to the training of magical yuan. That likely had nothing to do with a body of divine favor. However, Han Shuo naturally couldn’t find any reasonable explanation. If he was tagged with such a label as a body of divine favor, it would be a reasonable excuse.

After Fanny had finished being excited, her face suddenly became solemn and she said, “If this matter is true, then you can’t tell anyone before you become strong enough. This body of divine favor may bring to you untold riches and glory, but it can also lead to your murder by those who harbor evil designs before you’ve fully matured.”

Han Shuo fully understood Fanny’s words. If it was as she’d said, these kinds of people were a priceless treasure to every country, and would be the targets of seizure between countries. Some would also seek to destroy this kind of potential at all costs. Therefore, people with these kinds of bodies were actually quite dangerous.

Nodding to indicate his understanding, Han Shuo evaded the subject and asked Fanny, “You said you were looking for me earlier, is something the matter?”

“I mentioned a test to you last time. It’s conducted to understand the true strength of all the students and to record the students’ current level from magic apprentice to adept mage. Our Academy has the authority to confirm the levels and these levels will be recorded within the files of Magic Association and will follow you for the rest of your life. It’s also the symbol of your strength and identity.”

“You’ll be viewed as having graduated from the Academy after surpassing the level of adept mage. When you wish your strength to be confirmed after raising it in the future, you must pass the specialized exams of the Magic Association. To a mage, a verified and defined level is the certificate for your future development, and thus it’s quite useful.” Fanny explained with a smile when she saw Han Shuo inquire about it.

“So this is the case, when will the test start?”

“Tomorrow morning. If students feel that their strength has increased, they will voluntarily participate in this test. You’ve never participated in the test, so I think it won’t be too hard for you to pass the test for novice mage. I’ve already signed you up. The test will be conducted on the dark major training grounds early tomorrow morning. I’ll be there as well, so don’t forget.” Fanny reminded Han Shuo.

“No problem.”

“Oh right Bryan, the magics of ‘Corpse Reanimation’ and ‘Canopy of Necromancy’ that you mentioned to me last time, never, ever tell anyone about them no matter how you obtained them, and don’t use them in front of anyone. These magics may bring a large amount of trouble to you before your strength is strong enough, do you understand?” Fanny suddenly gravely reminded Han Shuo before she was about to leave.

Han Shuo understood this even without Fanny’s reminder. He nodded and said, “Master Fanny, be at ease. I haven’t mentioned them to anyone aside from you. I know you’re quite good to me and that’s why I told you without reservation. No one else can even think of obtaining any trust from me!”

“Who’s good to you, you only know how to speak nonsense!” Fanny’s face blushed as she looked a bit happy. She walked outside with a small smile after rolling her eyes at Han Shuo.

“Our beautiful and kind Master Fanny with a perfect body of course!” Han Shuo said flirtingly as he watched Fanny’s departing figure, chuckling as he spoke.

However, Fanny paid no more attention to Han Shuo, finally speaking



lowly just before vanishing through the door, “You brat! You’re becoming more and more unbridled.”

Han Shuo didn’t continue practicing how to manipulate zombies after Fanny left. He thought for a moment and left the training grounds, using the original demons to scout out the four corners and then moved to the concealed corner in the tomb of the mountains at the back of the Academy grounds, returning to the cemetery of death.

Since he’d promised Lawrence to get a piece of black iron ore for him, Han Shuo wouldn’t go back on his word, even if he was doing it only for the five thousand gold coins. He brought the little skeleton with him into the mine and busied himself with roars and thuds all afternoon before mining a small piece of black iron ore. It looked like it would satisfy Lawrence’s request.

The supply of black iron ore within the mining cave wasn’t inexhaustible. As mining went on, Han Shuo discovered that he had to penetrate even further into the depths of the mine and needed to excavate for quite some time before digging up a few black iron ores. Black iron ore was an exceedingly rare metal and this seemed to prove that point. They’d only started digging for a short while and were already exhausting the supply.

He trained his magical yuan for a bit beneath the raging waterfall, and suddenly recalled something on his way back to the cemetery of death. There was something about zombies left behind in Chu Cang Lan’s memories, and Han Shuo had also heard of the previous existence of zombies in his original world.

When he carefully went through Chu Cang Lan’s memories, Han Shuo suddenly felt a bit agitated. According to Chu Cang Lan’s memories, zombies were only a lower form of existence. They were normally created when someone died in a place with a heavier concentration of yin qi, and formed after absorbing some of the yin qi of the heavens and earth.

Low level zombies were also a special herd creature. If they happened to be buried in a place with a thick concentration of yin qi, and that place

also happened to be an extreme place of the five elements, there was a very small possibility that it would turn into a very strong zombie after absorbing the yin qi and rare resources of the extreme place of five elements over many months and years.

According to the elements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, the five extreme places were divided into – extreme place of metal, extreme place of wood, extreme place of water, extreme place of fire, and extreme place of earth. Once sufficient yin qi and power of the five elements were absorbed, there was a small chance that it would become a metal elite zombie, wood elite zombie, water elite zombie, fire elite zombie, and earth elite zombie.

When the five types of zombies were formed, their bodies were much stronger than ordinary zombies. The most wondrous thing was that these zombies, that had formed after absorbing enough yin qi and five elements, could use the powers of the five elements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. If the five types of zombies congregated together, they would form the “Great Formation of the Divine Zombies and Five Elements”, and their strength would be incredibly frightening.

However, these zombies were rare to begin with and they historically couldn't be controlled by anyone. They even viewed each other with enmity and were hunted down by practitioners. Therefore, it was exceedingly hard for a scene of all five elemental zombies gathering together to appear.

Detailed descriptions of the five elemental zombies were present in Chu Cang Lan's memories, including his secret methods to encourage the birth of these zombies. He seemed to have researched this topic. When Han Shuo received all this, he felt that he'd received a priceless treasure and immediately wished to refine these five types of elemental zombies.

With the constraints of necromancy, these zombies would unequivocally obey Han Shuo after creation. Han Shuo had long since discovered that the location of the cemetery of death was an extreme place of earth. The other four extremes could be searched for slowly, he only lacked a few of the materials needed in Chu Cang Lan's secret methods to quicken the

development of these zombies before he'd be able to refine earth elite zombies.

Han Shuo immediately made up his mind after this thought appeared, and he planned on trying to see if he could refine these five unique zombies to create the “Great Formation of the Divine Zombies and Five Elements”.

# Chapter 94: Wondrous speed in meditation

The next day, within the training grounds of the dark major.

The dark major was a large major within the Academy and its training ground facilities were more comprehensive than the necromancy major's. Its surface area was also more vast. When Han Shuo arrived at the dark major training grounds, he discovered that some people had already gathered inside. There were those who were ready to undertake the test and others who were just here for the show. A loud din of noises prevailed inside.

As the teacher of the necromancy major, Fanny sat with a few other teachers from the dark major and was busily registering the information of students who were going to take the test. The old witch Camilla of the dark major was still within the dark major, under the observation of Han Shuo's original demons and hadn't made a showing.

Han Shuo looked around after entering and discovered that Amy and Athena from the necromancy major were the only familiar people there. He began to walk towards the two girls.

"Eh, are you also here for the test?" Amy waved her hand in greeting when she saw Han Shuo approach from afar.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "Yes, I've yet to pass the test. What areas should I be looking out for?"

"There's nothing much to be concerned about with these tests, it's just a matter of testing your mental strength and then releasing a few magics for them to see. Oh, right. Us necromancy majors also need to demonstrate manipulating summoned creatures. There's nothing terribly complicated about it, only the more advanced tests, like the one for adept mage, are more complex. Apart from these basic tests, you'll need to know all sorts of techniques and grasp certain magical concepts. Finally, you'll have to complete a mission. Only after you meet all these requirements will it

count as you having officially graduated.” Athena flicked a glance at Han Shuo as she explained in detail for him.

Standing with the two girls on the outside, Han Shuo observed for a bit and discovered that some of the dark major students all demonstrated their magic one by one according to the rules. Some teachers then quizzed them on their comprehension of certain magical concepts at their current level, finally giving them a grade based on their performance.

“Bryan, you prepared for the magic apprentice level right?” Athena asked when she saw Han Shuo didn’t respond and was only silently monitoring the performance of all the other students within the training grounds.

“No, I’m here to see if I can make it to novice mage.” Han Shuo looked towards Fanny sitting primly in the distance and replied.

“What? Are you joking? If I recall correctly, you were still an errand slave for the necromancy major a few months ago. How is it possible that you’re advancing to novice mage so quickly?” Athena raised her voice and looked at Han Shuo in disbelief.

“No way?” Amy also exclaimed softly.

Smiling faintly, Han Shuo nodded his head firmly, explaining, “I’m only giving it a shot and may not pass.”

Even though Han Shuo had spoken so, Amy and Athena still couldn’t believe that Han Shuo was here to attempt the novice mage tests. The two girls chattered ceaselessly with their questions, finally stopping only when it was Amy’s turn to be tested.

“Good luck Amy! I think you’ll be able to successfully advance to novice mage this time.” Athena encouraged Amy when she heard Amy’s name being called. Han Shuo also good naturedly wished her luck.

Amy walked out and then test her mental strength in front of those assembled. She then released the three magics that a novice mage should have grasped: Agony of the Soul, Bone Spears, and summoning zombies. She then manipulated the zombies to attack a target within the training

grounds. Finally, Fanny and some of the other dark major teachers asked a few questions regarding comprehension of magical theory.

After a while, Fanny opened her mouth and said, "Congratulations Amy, you will be a novice mage from today onwards. All of your information within the Magic Association will be changed today."

Athena also walked out for her test as Amy was still celebrating excitedly. She underwent the same tests, but maybe she was nervous during the process as her bone spear magic suddenly exploded halfway through. She also tripped over herself when facing the magical knowledge questions.

It wasn't a surprise when Athena was notified that she had failed this test. She walked back to Amy's side with a depressed look. Han Shuo didn't have time to speak words of comfort before his name was called out by Fanny.

He walked unhurriedly towards the inside of the training grounds and caused a bit of a disturbance. Some of the dark major students standing around were quite surprised to see Han Shuo, originally an errand slave, appear within the great hall. All of them started discussing with each other in low whispers and a great many of them held a mocking attitude as they observed this happening.

"Heh heh, don't be nervous. Just follow the previous procedures and go through the tests one by one. I believe in your strength and that you can successfully advance to the rank of novice mage." Fanny spoke a word of encouragement and had Han Shuo follow the same procedures that had taken place before him.

The test of mental strength came first. Han Shuo gathered his mental strength as he faced a testing stone made of special magical material. A dark major teacher then held up the testing stone to measure Han Shuo's mental strength.

His mental strength coalesced at an extremely fast pace due to the potential of his brain having been unearthed. The testing stone had slowly brightened when the other students had their mental strength tested by

the stone, until it finally stopped at a certain level of brightness.

However, Han Shuo's case was a bit different. The darkened testing stone didn't slowly brighten continuously, but immediately lit up in the two breaths it took for Han Shuo to concentrate his mental strength, and then stopped at a certain level of brightness and didn't change any further.

"This, what's going on?" Several of the dark major teachers displayed surprised expressions as they sat on the viewing table, as if they hadn't anticipated the testing stone to have such an odd reaction.

Han Shuo dispersed his mental strength and suddenly became a bit nervous inside upon seeing the astonishment of those around him. He'd been worried originally that he didn't have enough mental strength. This is why he's used his entire strength. In addition, Han Shuo also didn't know that his speed in gathering mental strength was truly that speedy. He'd planned on keeping a low profile after listening to Fanny last night. He could only smile wryly and say, "Perhaps there's something wrong with the testing stone, why don't you try another?"

"Don't voice nonsense, how could something be wrong with the testing stone?!" The dark major teacher holding the stone glared at Han Shuo and spoke firmly.

"His mind was hit by the necromancy magic of the Agony of the Soul before, and sank into a period of mental confusion for a while. This may have caused some oddities in his brain. I think we don't need to pay this much attention to it." Fanny glared at Han Shuo ferociously on the stage, seeming to blame him for wanting to show off, and then said with a faint smile to those assembled.

"So this is the case. I think I've also heard of this before. To think that the Agony of the Soul magic of your necromancy major has such marvelous effects, it seems a bit interesting!" The teacher holding the testing stone said with a frown and an odd tone.

"Master Alex, if you're interested, I can cast it on you too. Heh heh, but I can't guarantee that you won't lose your mind!" Fanny chuckled lightly and teased him.

“No o, never mind. I don’t have that kind of guts. Alright, this test is over. We can commence to the next stage of this test.” The dark major’s Master Alex didn’t tarry much more and nodded at Han Shuo.

Athena had made mistakes because she was nervous. Han Shuo now had weathered some hardships and the training of his mental state was even more extraordinary. He naturally wouldn’t get cold feet.

The three magics that a novice mage should have mastered were deployed very smoothly by Han Shuo, with not the slightest bit of unfamiliarity. After the zombies had been summoned, Han Shuo’s manipulations were even more adept than Amy’s. The movement of the zombie in everyone’s eyes wasn’t clumsy, but rather gave people a feeling of nimbleness.

Han Shuo handled the last section of magical theory questioning even more easily. The main questioner was Fanny. Fanny knew of Han Shuo’s level in grasping magical knowledge and didn’t ask much at all. She carelessly asked a couple of the questions that Han Shuo had asked her two days and ago and let him easily pass.

Han Shuo smoothly obtained the qualifications for the rank of novice mage without any mishaps. Fanny smiled, “Congratulations Bryan, from this day forth your information will be recorded in the Magic Association. Heh heh, although there are many novice mages, you’ll be able to garner a good occupation for yourself in the future. However, I think with your potential, this won’t be the limit of your ability!”

Han Shuo left the training grounds dashingly with Fanny’s blessings, walking directly towards the knight school, intending on exchanging the black iron ore with Lawrence’s gold coins.

Chu Cang Lan had left instructions for a combination of special ingredients for forming the five elemental zombies. Han Shuo had heard of some of these materials and knew that they were quite expensive in this world. This made Han Shuo realize that he would have to pour in large amounts of gold coins if he wanted to refine an earth elite zombie. Gold coins became an issue that he had to consider.



However, when Han Shuo was halfway there, the original demon that had been monitoring Duke, who had stayed put in the wind major area all this time, suddenly notified Han Shuo when he left around noon and also made for the knight school. Having originally intended to find Lawrence, Han Shuo had to temporarily put aside his idea and used the original demon to keep an eye on Duke's movements.

After Han Shuo followed Duke to the knight school, Duke met up with Erick, who'd gone missing for a few days. Apart from Duke and Erick, there was another person with them. It was the earth rider knight Clark, whom they'd met in the Dark Forest. This greatly surprised Han Shuo.

# Chapter 95: The Dark Mantle stronghold

Clark had expressed his obvious love for Fanny during the trials within the Dark Forest, but had been forced away by Han Shuo's evil scheme. Who would've thought that Han Shuo would soon see him again within Academy grounds a few months later?

Duke and Clark spoke within a house in the knight school, with the senior swordsman standing guard in front of the door as if deathly afraid of someone coming over and bothering the two.

Duke personally set up a wall of wind within the house. When Han Shuo's original demon approached, it could only keep an eye on senior swordsman Erick standing guard outside, because they felt a faint pulse of magic. The original demon didn't dare to brashly enter, and thus was unable to overhear what the two were talking about.

When Duke and Camilla had met last time in the classrooms of the dark major, they had chosen to meet in the middle of the night. They must've surely thought that no one would discover them, and so hadn't taken these extra preventative measures, but it was daytime now, not to mention that they were in the middle of the knight school. No wonder Duke took such precautions.

Duke and Clark walked out from the house after a while. Duke retraced his steps and left the knight school alone. The original demon followed behind Duke and Erick and discovered that Duke returned to the wind major buildings, whereas Clark remained within a training ground of the knight school to practice his techniques.

This was precisely the time of day when knight students would practice their techniques, and Han Shuo didn't stay in the same place to continue observing. He headed directly towards one of the training grounds to find Lawrence, according to the directions he had previously left.

Apart from a variety of weapons in the training grounds, there were also several battlesteeds, fully clad in heavy armor, that looked quite fierce. The biggest difference between knights and swordsmen was that knights relied

heavily on horses during battles. Ability in controlling horses was an important skill that knights had to master. They could make use of a battlesteed's force and speed to deploy an even greater amount of strength.

Lawrence was dressed in bright silver armor and wielded a long spear, dashing to and fro within the training ground. The battlesteed beneath his leads leapt over several high obstacles. As they charged forward, the spear within his hand was like a flash of lightning as glorious fighting aura blossomed from it in midair.

"Hi Lawrence!" Han Shuo stood in front of the door, observed for a while, and suddenly opened his mouth in greeting.

Lawrence turned his battlesteed around after a shrill whinny, using the long spear in his hand to start a fierce attack towards Han Shuo. Lawrence's spear stabbed directly towards Han Shuo's chest, accompanied by the clapping sounds of the horse's iron hooves.

Although the attack was unparalleled in ferociousness, Han Shuo was unmoved until Lawrence had dashed in front of Han Shuo on his battlesteed. It was only then that he suddenly whipped out the Demonslayer Edge, infused it with raging, violent demonic qi and stabbed it towards the long spear.

Under the impact from the Demonslayer Edge, the long spear was broken into two, starting from its point. It was a good thing that Lawrence let go of it in time, otherwise the Demonslayer Edge might have injured his hand after decimating the long spear.

However, the combined force and speed of the battlesteed also made it a bit difficult for Han Shuo to withstand this attack. The irresistible force of the charge also made his arm, that grasped the Demonslayer Edge, tremble uncontrollably.

Hauling back on the reins and stopping the horse, Lawrence leapt off and arrived excitedly in front of Han Shuo after taking off his heavy armor. His two eyes were focused on the Demonslayer Edge in Han Shuo's hand as he exclaimed in astonishment. "What kind of strange weapon is

that, it's so sharp!"

"Heh heh, black iron ore, black gold ore, and many rare metals were mixed in to birth this weapon. It was personally forged by dwarves, it'd be strange if it wasn't sharp." Han Shuo explained to Lawrence only after putting the Demonslayer Edge away.

Lawrence picked up a towel and wiped away the traces of sweat on his forehead, "So that's the case, your weapon is indeed quite uncommon. Oh right, have you come to find me this time because you've already acquired some black iron ore? Heh!"

Nodding, Han Shuo brought out the black iron ore that he had excavated yesterday from his space ring, "That's right, this piece of black iron ore should satisfy your wishes. Let's wrap up our business!"

"No problem, give me your crystal card, I'll transfer five thousand gold to you." Lawrence looked joyfully at the black iron ore in Han Shuo's hand as he said, too impatient to wait.

After Han Shuo and Lawrence had concluded their transaction, Han Shuo discovered that another five thousand gold had appeared in his crystal card and a trace of a smile broke out across his face.

Just as both were basking in their comfortable feelings, the earth rider knight Clark walked in from outside. Clark has just walked in and was about to speak when he suddenly saw Han Shuo. His face immediately changed as he shouted lowly, "You!"

Turning his head to see that Clark had come in, Han Shuo also gave a slight start of surprise internally. He nodded towards Clark and smiled, "Hello Clark, long time no see. Why did you leave without a word last time in the Dark Forest?"

"Huh. I was framed by a sordid person and had no choice but to leave." So much time had passed that Clark must have certainly understood the truth of what had happened. He immediately made innuendos as soon as he saw Han Shuo, cursing a certain someone.

Pausing for a bit, Clark looked at Han Shuo, "How is Master Fanny? I

was planning on paying her a visit and also expressing my apologies.”

“Master Fanny is very well and doesn’t need your concern!” Han Shuo immediately said with a cold look on his face when he heard that Clark had yet to forget Fanny.

“Hey hey, what’s up with the two of you? Eh, senior Clark, didn’t you graduate already? What are you doing here? How do you know Bryan?” Lawrence saw that the two were practically spitting fire at each and hastened to speak up.

“I’ve come back to the knight school this time to investigate the matter of my younger brother Claude’s disappearance. My brother seems to have had dealings with Bryan in the town of Drol. If I discover that he had anything to do with my brother’s disappearance, I’ll make him pay.” Clark’s face darkened as he responded to Lawrence and Han Shuo.

Jumping in horror inside, Han Shuo also looked at Clark with some shock. He’d never thought that Clark would be Claude’s brother. This meant that he was the eldest son of the chief of the Gryphon Legion. Although he’d done away with Claude in a clean fashion that time in Drol, Claude had indeed met him in a bar. If Clark really wanted to investigate this, this matter would be a bit difficult to handle.

“What does that have to do with me, I don’t know Claude that well. Besides, his martial arts techniques are so advanced, what could have happened to him?” Han Shuo’s face was calm as he said indifferently. He then spoke to Lawrence after thinking for a while, “Alright, I have no further business, so let’s end here today.”

Han Shuo didn’t wait for Lawrence to respond after he’d finished and directly left the training grounds. He left the knight school at an even faster pace, hastening off towards the Academy grounds.

The three original demons had to be recalled back into Han Shuo’s body due to the issue of distance. When he found out Clark’s identity, Han Shuo felt that something was amiss with this matter.

As the eldest son of the chief of the Empire’s Gryphon Legion, why would he meet with an emissary of the Kasi Empire and stay in that room

so surreptitiously? Although he didn't know what the two had talked about, Han Shuo felt that the earlier he reported something he couldn't control to the senior executives of the "Dark Mantle" for them to fret over, the better.

There was large manor to the northern part of the city that was only three hundred meters away from Phoebe's collapsed residence. Han Shuo took out the "Dark Mantle" medallion that was his identity and knocked on the metal door after being unable to detect any abnormalities from the outside. A thin, short youth opened the door after a long while.

He first looked at Han Shuo up and down, sizing him up, then asked brusquely, "Who are you looking for?"

Han Shuo didn't say much and only handed the medallion over to the youth. The youth looked at the medallion and turned his body to the side to let Han Shuo pass by. The youth returned the medallion to Han Shuo after the latter had entered. The youth had relaxed his facial expression and said faintly, "You've just joined us haven't you? I've never seen you before. Your medallion is also one that a newcomer would carry. Who's in charge of you?"

As he followed the youth inside, Han Shuo discovered that there wasn't any particular magical boundaries or mechanisms within the entire manor. This made Han Shuo feel quite astonished and he observed his surroundings even more closely. He responded carelessly, "I just joined a few days ago, an old man called Candide is in charge of me!"

"Wh-what? Are you certain? Sir Candide is in charge of you just after you've joined?" The youth was noticeably surprised as he asked Han Shuo with a soft exclamation.

Nodding, Han Shuo asked, perplexed, "Yes, is there a problem?"

"Eh, not a problem per se, but Sir Candide is one of the three heavyweights who grasps true power within our 'Dark Mantle' organization. Sir Candide can directly deploy the troops of every city through the Empire without obtaining approval from His Majesty first. He can directly kill ordinary nobles and military officials. You're a newcomer,

yet you're directly reporting to Sir Candide?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo said, "How would I know? He's the one who brought me in anyhow. I've come looking for him this time. Right, I've looked around and discovered that this secret stronghold doesn't seem to have any defensive capabilities. What's going on here?"

"Heh heh, you're a newbie alright. Come with me, I'll show you around!" The skinny person adopted a tone of an elder as he led Han Shou in with a smile.

# Chapter 96: The Three Heavyweights of the Dark Mantle organization

After traversing a short distance through the manor, Han Shuo learned that the lanky man's name was Chester, and that he was a bandit. Han Shuo also learned about some of Dark Mantle's current situation from Chester.

Dark Mantle members were separated into the three divisions, Dark Star, Dark Moon, and Dark Sun, according to the amount of contributions they had made to the organization. The scattering of stars over the curtain of night represented that the Dark Star members could be found everywhere, in all corners of the Empire. The Dark Moon level was only higher by one step, but they still couldn't see the light of day and could only live in the darkened corners. However, the higher level Dark Sun members could appear in the public's eye like the sun, making a brilliant appearance in the day.

The three divisions of Sun, Moon, and Star were further divided into five levels according to their contributions to the Empire. Han Shuo currently held the rank of Dark Star, and the minute star on the back of his iron medallion represented that Han Shuo was the lowest one star member of the Dark Stars.

As a member's contributions to the Empire rose, the medallion would slowly accumulate two stars, three stars, four stars, and eventually five stars. One would be promoted to a Dark Moon member when they surpassed five stars, and then would advance to a Fifth Star Moon member from a One Star Moon member similar to the way he advanced from Dark Star, and so on and so forth until being a Dark Star member at the top levels.

Once one advanced to a higher level, not only would their monthly stipend greatly increase, but he would also enjoy more of the Dark Mantle organization's special authority. When one made it to the highest levels, like Candide, he would directly answer to the king. He would be below one



person and above tens of thousands. All wealth and prosperity would be within reach.

“We’ve arrived!” Chester finally brought Han Shuo to a house in the center and stopped in front of it after covering a long distance.

Han Shuo had released the three original demons along the way and discovered that there was no one here in the manor apart from Chester and himself. There were no defensive measures set up around the expansive manor at all. This made Han Shuo quite confused.

This room wasn’t large, and Han Shuo still didn’t discover anything out of the ordinary after looking around. He asked Chester with a surprised expression, “Is there anything out of the ordinary here?”

“Heh heh, of course there’s something different here. The entire manor is just as you saw, with no defensive measures whatsoever. This manor is just a cover. The real ‘Dark Mantle’ isn’t here at all.” Chester explained with a faint smile, and then fumbled with something. Somehow, a crack suddenly appeared on the smooth floor and revealed a bright passageway.

“So there was another hidden mechanism. Heh heh, where does this lead to?” Han Shuo couldn’t help but ask when he saw the passageway appear in front of him.

“Come, I’ll take you to the true ‘Dark Mantle’ stronghold!” Chester smiled and jumped down into the bright passageway, calling for Han Shuo to come down as well.

Han Shuo felt that his landing spot was quite soft after he’d also jumped down. There were solid walls around him, with strong pulses of magic suddenly coming from the passageway interior.

The solid walls around them broke apart into a large door, accompanied with a soft sound. A very bright passageway revealed itself in front of the two like a maze. There were several passageways intersecting with each other up ahead, and strong magical pulses emanating from the walls on the sides. There were also many namelessly strong crossbows locked and loaded, their cold, sharp gleams pointing at all corners within the passageway.

“Why do I feel like this place is similar a cave?” Han Shuo asked involuntarily after he looked around.

Chester walked out from inside and indicated for Han Shuo to follow him, explaining as he did so, “Your feeling is correct. This is Mt. Ordas behind the Empire’s palace. This towering mountain is strictly off limits to trespassers. The stronghold of our ‘Dark Mantle’ is located within the heart of the mountain, that is where security is truly the heaviest. The Empire’s army is also stationed around it. As the king’s secret hand in the shadows, all sorts of the Empire’s talents are gathered inside and many confidential documents are also stored as well. There hasn’t been an incident for many years, and its security level is on par with the Empire’s own palace.”

Han Shuo felt that the security here was extremely high, and some of the surrounding magical pulses noticeably encompassed strong danger. He didn’t dare release the lowest level demon general, the original demon, in a place like this. He could only make use of his perceptive senses to detect the various dangers concealed in his surroundings.

He followed behind Chester and traversed a few passages. He met a few other Dark Mantle members along the way, and a few stone chambers also appeared along the way. Han Shuo could sense the breathing and heartbeats inside, and knew that there were people within this stone chambers.

“Master Candide is one of the three heavyweights of our Dark Mantle, so I don’t have the qualifications to personally lead you to see him. However, I can make a report for you. If you were really inducted by Master Candide, I think he’d be willing to see you!” Chester’s look at Han Shuo held a bit of envy, as if Han Shuo was truly lucky to be under the care of Candide.

“I’ve heard you mention the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle a few times. Who are the other two apart from Candide?” Han Shuo asked as he walked along.

“There’s also Lord Amyes and Lady Cecilia. Lady Cecilia is in charge of

all Dark Mantle affairs outside of the Empire. It's also said that she's a charming lady. Heh heh, it's a pity that a small character like me will never see her in my life. Lord Amyes and Lord Candide deal with all the matters within the Empire, but Lord Amyes is primarily in charge of surveillance and investigation of all the nobles and high ranked officials within the Empire, and is a man who absolutely lives in the public eye from our organization."

"If the results of his investigation show that these officials have done something contrary to the Empire's gains, he can arrest them directly and report to the king after. He can even directly execute some of the lower ranking nobles without asking His Majesty for approval. Therefore, to most of the Empire's nobles, Lord Amyes is their nightmare. Lord Candide is in charge of the Empire's internal affairs, including smoking out all the various hostile kingdom's spies and putting them to death, obtaining intelligence that is useful to the Empire, and exterminating all hidden threats to the Empire." Chester explained in detail the specifics of the three Dark Mantle heavyweights as they walked.

The two stopped in front of a metal door as Chester continuously explained. After arriving, Chester indicated for Han Shuo to halt and spoke into a small hole in the metal door. "There's a Dark Star ranked member who identified himself as Bryan here to see Lord Candide. He says that he's under Lord Candide's direct supervision!"

"Wait a moment, I'll go seek Lord Candide's opinion." A completely emotionless, cold voice sounded from the small hole. The metal door opened abruptly after roughly two minutes to reveal several round dials. One of the round dials had magic pulsing from it. The voice sounded again, "Bryan can come in. Stand on the round dial. Chester, you wait outside. When Bryan comes back out later, you lead him out along the original path."

"Yes." Chester responded and explained in a low voice, "When we came in just now, we took a short distance magic transportation matrix. There's a similar transportation matrix within the heart of the mountain, he will take you to where you should go."

Nodding, Han Shuo indicated that he understood and rose to walk towards the dial carved with wondrous magical images. A short distance transportation matrix wasn't difficult to set up, any space mage above the adept class would be able to set one up as long as they had sufficient materials.

But a long distance transportation matrix, like the one that Han Shuo had taken to the cemetery of death in the Dark Forest, one that spanned thousands of miles, wasn't one that ordinary mages could set up. This not only needed someone of archmage level or above, it also needed a large quantity of magical ingredients. Without the support of a great power, this level of transportation matrix would be impossible to materialize.

Once more internally sighing in appreciation of the wonders of the cemetery of death, Han Shuo stood directly on the magical dial and then reappeared in a spacious stone chamber under the operation of the matrix. This stone chamber was furnished in a very bright and comfortable manner, and was even more luxurious than the Boozt Merchant Guild. Exquisite magical drawings were carved on the surrounding walls, with a few landscape paintings hanging on them as well. The chandelier above his head sparkled with a soft and brilliant light, radiantly illuminating the entire stone chamber.

Candide was sitting at the table near the front of stone chamber, flipping through a scroll with a furrowed brow. As Han Shuo took in his surroundings and once again rested his gaze on Candide, the latter finally put the scroll in his hand down. His hooked face turned towards Han Shuo and opened his mouth to ask darkly, "What's the matter, have you discovered something?"

Nodding, Han Shuo summarized the events of the past couple of days for Candide, including Duke meeting with Camilla, the conversations about the "Eye of Darkness", and the son of the chief of the Gryphon Legion, Clark's meeting with Duke. He relayed all these matters in their entirety.

As Han Shuo's explanation went on, Candide's originally grim-looking face became even uglier and twisted. Candide remained silent without a word after Han Shuo had finished speaking, his brow tightly knit together

as if considering something.

After a while, just when Han Shuo was growing impatient from waiting, Candide broke out into a smile and said to Han Shuo, “Bryan, you’ve done very well, well to the point where I am astonished. It looks like you were born for this type of profession. With your strength, I’m truly surprised that you’ve managed to obtain so much valuable intelligence in such a short amount of time. Duke is a wind archmage, and even Camilla is a dark adept mage. Clark is a great earth rider. You’ve obtained so much valuable information under unsuspecting circumstances, I can only use magical as the only qualifier to describe your performance.”

“You praise me too highly.” Han Shuo said humbly.

“You don’t need to be humble. You’ve handled this matter perfectly. Although I’m very curious how you did it, you’re one of mine and I wouldn’t interfere and question you. Heh heh, you don’t have to think about what comes after this, I’ll send someone to handle this matter.” Candide used the eyes of one looking at a monster as he looked at Han Shuo and complimented him.

Han Shuo breathed a sigh of relief. The thing he’d been most worried about previously was that Candide would suspect the veracity of his words. After all, to conceal himself from so many people yet obtain so much intelligence with the level of his strength, it should’ve been impossible, logically speaking. What made Han Shuo feel gratified was that Candide didn’t doubt the truthfulness of this matter at all. He didn’t even ask how Han Shuo had obtained this information, this made Han Shuo feel very surprised.

“You don’t need to find it odd, for our Dark Mantle organization, we only need to know the final results of the mission. We won’t ask about the process. Every member has their own way, and we don’t care what methods members use when we set a mission, just that it’s completed properly. Therefore, you don’t need to worry about anything. We won’t affect your life when there’s no mission, you can go about your daily routine and enjoy yourself.” Candide seemed to see through Han Shuo’s thoughts and explained patiently to him.

“Alright, then there’s nothing to do with me for the time being?” Han Shuo quite approved of the Dark Mantle’s principles and responded with a smile.

“Give me the medallion that represents your identity. I’ll record this very important intelligence in your medallion and the organization’s files. I have the obligation to add two stars for you. Some members are unable to obtain even one star with ten pieces of information, but the worth of your information is enough to qualify you to gain two stars.” Candide looked at Han Shuo and smiled at him.

Candide then took Han Shuo’s medallion and did something to it so that when it landed in Han Shuo’s hand again, two little stars had magically appeared on its back. This meant that Han Shuo had directly skipped two levels and entered the ranks of Third Dark Star.

“I’ll be taking my leave now if there’s nothing else.” Han Shuo was also a bit delighted to see that one mission was enough to make him a Third Dark Star like Chester and smiled as he spoke.

Nodding, Candide said, “Alright, you may go now, but you need to report to the organization every month. If you learn of any new intelligence that benefits or harms the Empire during this time, you can come directly and make a report. Your contributions will be calculated according to the accuracy of the intelligence and recorded in your organization files.”

“Heh heh, many Dark Star members advance through the ranks in this fashion. You need to report in every month, even if you have no intelligence. This allows the organization to know your status for one, and the organization will also see if there are any missions suitable for you for another. Of course, you have the right to choose some missions and the right to reject some.” Candide added.

Han Shuo nodded, indicating his understanding without saying much more and prepared to leave. But when he reached the door, Candide seemed to have an awkward subject to disclose and called out, “Wait one moment, Bryan.”

Halting, Han Shuo turned back to look at Candide and asked in

bafflement, “Is there anything else, Lord Candide?”

“You must appropriately handle your relationship with Lawrence, this may have a great impact on you in the future. Lawrence’s identity is much more complex than you can imagine, and I can only tell you this much. You should keep your wits about you.” Candide also seemed to be in a difficult position and stopped after saying these words.

“I’ve heard that he’s the son of a finance minister, is this what you wanted to tell me?” Han Shuo had heard Lisa mention a few things about Lawrence before and thus opened his mouth to ask Candide again.

Nodding first but then shaking his head after, Candide opened his mouth once again under Han Shuo’s perplexed gaze, “Lawrence is the son of a preeminent finance minister, many are aware of this, but apart from this, Lawrence has another identity. The implications of his identity are too great, and your current level doesn’t have the right to know this information. I’m not at liberty to disclose too much and only wanted to remind you to take care so that you’re not embroiled in something you shouldn’t be in.”

Candide waved his hand and indicated for Han Shuo to leave. Han Shuo felt uncertain, but now that he knew a few of the Dark Mantle rules, he didn’t ask much. He nodded to indicate that he’d pay attention and left Candide’s room.

“Well, did you gain anything?” Chester asked Han Shuo excitedly as the two retraced their steps after the latter had met up with Chester again.

“Nothing much, just that Candide added two stars for me. I’m a Third Dark Star like you now, heh heh!” Han Shuo didn’t feel like there was anything that needed to be concealed from Chester’s interest, and smiled as he spoke to Chester.

Chester was astonished and incredibly envious to hear Han Shuo’s words. He sighed and shook his head at Han Shuo after his surprise, saying, “Your speed of advancement is indeed incredible with Lord Candide. I joined the Dark Mantle three years ago and reported twenty some pieces of information before becoming a Third Dark star. You’ve

been in the organization for not even a week and have already risen to the rank of a Third Dark Star as well. Ai, comparisons are odious, treatment is indeed different when someone is taking care of you from above.”

Han Shuo shrugged and didn't say much with regards to Chester's reflection. Although he'd gotten the intelligence by virtue of his own strength, these types of matters were unexplainable and he simply decided not to say anything.

“If there's any mission that needs to be completed by two people in the future, can you bring me along? Just treat it as giving me a hand as well?” Chester first sighed with emotion and then scratched his head, broaching this awkward subject with a bit of embarrassment.

“Sure.” Han Shuo agreed readily.

“Thanks so much! I'll remember you and do my best to follow your instructions.” Chester was overjoyed and his attitude became even more enthusiastic than before. He kept describing all sorts of Dark Mantle matters to Han Shuo and sent him back to the quiet manor in the northern district again.



# Chapter 97: Curious and exotic materials

On the day he returned to the Academy, Han Shuo discovered that Camilla had suddenly left one night with a hurried look on her face. He still hadn't caught sight of her after a day or two, and learned that something had happened at Camilla's home after asking around, and that it was likely that she wouldn't return to the Academy in the short term.

This was the explanation on the surface, but according to Han Shuo's instincts, they'd probably never see her again. Since she was a spy from an enemy kingdom, she wouldn't be left to flourish within the Empire, according to the Dark Mantle's way of dealing with things.

When Camilla disappeared, Duke and Erick held a secret discussion and didn't dare continue reside within the Academy. They used the conclusion of the exchange as an excuse to immediately leave the Academy and return to the Kasi Empire. Clark, who'd been about to head to the necromancy major to pay his respects to Fanny, left the knight school at almost the same time as them.

As a member of the Dark Mantle, although Han Shuo didn't know exactly what had been going on, he could be assured that it must've been Dark Mantle making a move and assuming control. Otherwise, the three of them wouldn't have had such strange reactions and disappear without a trace in such a short period of time.

Over the next couple of days, Han Shuo lived a leisurely and content lifestyle. He continuously studied magical knowledge and would immediately ask Fanny if he ran into something he didn't understand. He could always obtain the right answer from Fanny, but maybe because he had trained his magical yuan to the "molded spirit" stage, he would often blurt out the outrageous comments he'd always hidden within his heart whenever he was with Fanny.

Whenever this happened, Fanny would pout and berate Han Shuo, and whenever he recollected himself, he'd tried to find a way to salvage the situation. If he couldn't, he'd just continue playing dumb and try to gloss

over the situation.

When Han Shuo woke up this morning, he discovered that the weather had suddenly turned chilly. Han Shuo thought for a bit and felt that Phoebe should've had enough time to prepare enough rations for the dwarves to make it through the winter. Thus, he left the Academy and set out for the Boozt Merchant Guild. He also wanted to purchase from Phoebe the various materials needed to refine an earth elite zombie.

When he arrived at the Boozt Merchant Guild, Han Shuo discovered that the guards had once again been swapped out. When Han Shuo offered his name this time, the guards immediately let Han Shuo in quite respectfully. Fabian dashed over from a distance after a short while, the very image of health and radiance. He called out from a long ways away, "Hi Bryan! Long time no see, how have you been doing?"

"Oh, Fabian, it's great to see that you're alright. I thought you'd be... well. since the house collapsed on you last time." Han Shuo was also quite surprised by Fabian's appearance. He'd thought that Fabian had already died from the collapsed building, thanks to the earthquake spell that had been cast when the experts of "Shadow Ghost" had visited last time.

"I hid beneath the bed last time when the house collapsed. Candice came by afterwards and found me, saving me from the wreckage of the demolished house. That's how I managed to escape." Fabian's face bore traces of jubilation from having escaped near death as he explained joyfully to Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo looked over Fabian. "You look very well now. It looks like your good luck has already arrived!"

"Haha, that isn't the case, but since Grover died, the men of 'Shadow Ghost' haven't appeared again. Now that Miss Phoebe has officially taken over the Guild, my life with her is much better." Although Fabian protested against the idea of good luck, the happiness on his face depicted the joy and pride within his heart.

Many of the decorations and settings within the Guild hadn't changed, but the guards within had all been replaced. Han Shuo suddenly stopped

halfway on his way further into the Guild and looked at the artificial mountain on his left. He remembered that Phoebe and him had had no choice last time but to hide within one of the cracks of the artificial mountain in order to evade Ellis' pursuit.

When he cast his eyes upon this place again, it had obviously been spruced up. Many potted plants and flowers had sprung up in the surroundings next to it. A rocking chair and a table had even been placed by the crack in the artificial mountain, as if used to admire the views around the area.

"Eh, how come changes have been made here? I recall that this area wasn't like this before?" Han Shuo looked around in surprise and turned his head back to ask Fabian.

"Heh heh, you truly are observant. This place has been redecorated according to Miss Phoebe's wishes. Miss Phoebe has forbidden others to enter this area. She comes here alone to bask in the sun, sip tea, and admire the flowers when she has free time. However, I don't think the view here is that beautiful, but for some reason Miss Phoebe just likes it here." Fabian explained with a look of confusion on his face.

Glancing at the crack that the two had taken shelter in together last time, Han Shuo recalled the two's embarrassingly ambiguous position. His heart leapt, could it be that Phoebe was keeping this place as a souvenir of their awkward encounter?

Han Shuo thought this was unimaginably queer when his thoughts traveled to this point and he repeated that this was, "impossible!". Phoebe was a very proud and high spirited person, and her looks were exquisite, not to mention that she held the Boozt Merchant Guild in her hand at the moment. Rationally speaking, she wouldn't give heed to a minor student from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

Fabian had already brought Han Shuo to the lobby when he was thinking this. The former then called over a maid to serve tea and snacks, then left to ask Phoebe to come see Han Shuo.

Phoebe walked in wearing a simple, white, and practical training outfit.

There were faint traces of sweat on her forehead. She seemed to be rather thirsty as she walked in front of Han Shuo, poured an empty cup full of tea, and only focused her beautiful eyes on Han Shuo after taking a few sips. "You're here for the rations, right?"

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, "Of course, why else would I come to the Guild if not for the rations?"

Phoebe curled her lip in a pretty fashion and rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, saying unhappily, "Can't you just come to see me, your friend?"

Laughing out involuntarily, Han Shuo teased, "It's only been a few days since we last saw each other, and you've just taken over the Guild. You must be very busy. I'd like to come see you, but was worried that you didn't have the time!"

"Humph. Not having thought of me is not having thought of me. Don't make excuses." Phoebe's graceful and long neck lifted. She seemed to be a bit put out at Han Shuo. She thought for a bit and then said, "The amount of rations you need fills two rooms. Your space ring should be of the lowest quality and surely has other items within it. You won't be able to fill it with that much stuff."

"Indeed, but I can make several trips. Heh heh, don't worry, I won't think badly of you." Han Shuo had long since prepared to make several trips and smiled faintly at Phoebe. Pausing, Han Shuo then took out a piece of paper covered with various ingredients and handed it over to Phoebe, "I also need these materials as well. Take a look, will you be able to collect them for me?"

Looking at Han Shuo with some surprise, Phoebe seemed to be unable to understand why Han Shuo needed to buy all sorts of special items lately. Phoebe took Han Shuo's paper and started murmuring, "Ice earth, hot earth, wet earth, blood earth. And something snow, something leaves, something something fruit. What are all these things you've written? I don't understand a lot of them!"

Knowing early on that Phoebe would be suspicious, Han Shuo smiled faintly and explained, "Ice earth can be found in places of extreme cold,

hot earth can be found in burning hot areas. It can usually be found in places with lava. Wet earth is usually found in places that are wet all year round and never see the light of day. Blood earth is found where the earth has been dyed red from the blood of fallen soldiers after two armies have fought. There's also the Ice Snow Flower, found in places that produces ice earth, lava from hot earth, a weird black, green grass from wet earth, and fruit that looks like tumors produced from within blood earth..."

Phoebe's expression grew more and more confused with Han Shuo's explanations as he described the items on the list. Although the names of these items would be different from the names in Chu Cang Lan's memories, they should be the same shape and have the same characteristics with names that Phoebe knew. There were also a few items that even Phoebe had never heard of before, and she said that she'd have to inquire with other people after Han Shuo's detailed explanations.

When Han Shuo had reeled off the thirteen ingredients needed to form an earth elite zombie, Phoebe felt completely woozy from Han Shuo's assorted collection of ingredients. If it wasn't for the fact that this person was Han Shuo, Phoebe likely would've not been able to hold herself in until now. She said with a bit of temper, "What do you need all these random ingredients for? If you aren't willing to tell me, I won't help you!"

Looking at Phoebe in resignation, Han Shuo saw that she was rather huffy and seemed to be in a bad mood. He spoke an incantation and the bone wielding little skeleton materialized in front of Han Shuo. Under his command, the little skeleton dashed back and forth the great hall with an extremely nimble body, finally sending the bone dagger in his hand towards Phoebe.

Phoebe gave a great start of fright as fighting aura flared from her long sword, clashing with the little skeleton's bone dagger. The bone dagger spun and returned to the little skeleton's hand. Han Shuo opened his mouth to ask, "What do you think are the differences between this little skeleton and the skeletons summoned by ordinary necromancers?"

"No difference, but that this one is incredible. I've long since seen skeletal warriors summoned by necromancers, there is a difference of

heaven and earth between them and your little skeleton. I can feel that your skeletal warrior has only the outward appearance of a skeleton, but that there's a demon hidden within its body. Even I'm a bit afraid." Phoebe's expression was grave as she looked at the bone dagger wielding little skeleton with some trepidation.

"He used to be an ordinary skeletal warrior, even weaker than ordinary ones. He only knew how to throw away trash for me, but you can see that he's different now. After my secret methods of refinement, he's still a skeletal warrior, but he's slowly growing. You've tested his strength just now as well. I can only tell you that the materials I need are for refining a zombie, a zombie that will be as amazing as him." Han Shuo looked intently at Phoebe and slowly opened his mouth.

Apart from him, no one in this world would be able to grasp the way of training magical yuan. Han Shuo wasn't afraid of letting Phoebe know, not to mention that Phoebe had long since witnessed the miraculousness of the little skeleton's might. In addition, Han Shuo truly did trust Phoebe, this is why he gave her a simple reminder.

"Incredible, this is incredible. Your method will surely lead the necromancers in a magical revolution. How did you do it Bryan? You're amazing!" There was a light that could be identified as admiration in Phoebe's eyes as she softly cried out in excitement.

Shrugging, Han Shuo said, "I achieved this using my exclusive method. We're friends Phoebe, so I can tell you this. However, you probably know that if anyone else learned of this matter, it will bring me trouble. Therefore, I hope you can keep this secret for me."

"You've never told anyone apart from me?" Phoebe first started in astonishment, and then looked at Han Shuo with a bizarre look.

Nodding, Han Shuo said firmly, "Absolutely not!"

A streak of faint red magically appeared on her stunning cheeks, Phoebe promised joyfully to Han Shuo, "Alright, I won't speak of our secret, even if someone threatens my life. You can be certain of that!"

"Thank you Phoebe, I'll remember this favor. I hope you can purchase

these special items for me. I know that only large Guilds like yours can traverse cities and obtain these sort of items from all over the Empire.” Han Shuo was a bit touched as he said sincerely to Phoebe.

“No problem, I’ll try my best. I’m thinking that these items will cost plenty of gold. You’ll need to prepare enough gold coins! Heh heh, I’m not doing this for you for free!” Phoebe winked a bit playfully at Han Shuo and teased him with a faint smile.

In the beginning, Han Shuo had felt that Phoebe was a coldly arrogant person who was difficult to get along with. However, as time went on and the two went through several experiences together, he discovered that this cold haughtiness was just the face that Phoebe put on for outsiders. Once she made a true friend, she was easy to talk to and would no longer display any hoity toitness. This also made Han Shuo truly approve of Phoebe from within his heart, no longer viewing her as a simple business partner.

He spent another hour to explain in detail the formation and location of these particular materials to Phoebe, until Phoebe has used pen and paper to take down all of them. Han Shuo took his leave and returned to the cemetery of death after he had filled a space ring with the amount of rations he needed from the warehouse that Phoebe had set aside for him.

# Chapter 98: The arrogant elf

Han Shuo didn't linger long after arriving at the cemetery of death and headed directly for the dwarves' village. He finally reached their village when it was almost dusk.

Bennet and the dwarves were still as friendly as ever. They took out their limited fine food for Han Shuo to taste as soon as he arrived, and filled Han Shuo's cup full with their specially brewed fruit wine.

"You haven't come for a few days Han, how have you been?" Bennett looked at Han Shuo and asked.

"Thank you for your concern, I've been quite well. I've come to bring you the rations that I promised." Han Shuo took out bags of rations as he spoke. There was some wheat and plenty of milk and bread. There was also some cured meat.

"Oh, my magical friend. Everyone in our entire village will thank you for your grace and bounty." Bennett cried out softly when saw so much food appear on the ground as Han Shuo's space ring sparkled. This moved him beyond belief as he'd already felt that the past few days had been quite a struggle to get through.

The female dwarves and children in the distance also put down whatever they were working on and converged on this area with shouts of joy. They hugged each other with warm tears in their eyes as they celebrated.

Seeing the dwarves become this agitated over the rations in front of them, Han Shuo understood that their lives must not have been easy. Every winter must be a type of suffering for them, but because of Han Shuo's appearance, they wouldn't have to worry about their day to day living this year.

Chief Calvin was bringing the other youths and strong dwarves of the village over from the forges, and was a bit surprised to see the excited cheering coming from this direction. When he drew nearer and saw the piles of rations on the ground, he very gravely expressed his thanks to Han Shuo.



“Elder, this is only the first delivery. My space ring can only hold so much. I think I’ll be able to bring all the food you need with a few more trips. Don’t worry elder, I’ll bring over the next batch of food as soon as possible. I think all of you won’t have to worry about rations this winter.” Han Shuo responded humbly and smiled as he explained to Calvin.

Some noises sounded from outside the village at this moment as the dwarves standing guard outside the village brought a few elves in. These elves were wearing clothes with intricate detailing and had flowers and grass woven into a circlet decorating their heads. They held bows or magic staves in their hands, and all the males and females were equally beautiful and handsome.

“Dearest dwarf friends, we’ve brought beautiful jewels with us that are enough to trade for the weapons you’ve forged. We’ll use those weapons to scare off all the man-eating monsters away from here. Are you willing to sell the weapons to us?” The foremost young elf opened his mouth and spoke gracefully. He wore a green bow on his back and faint magical pulses came from the bow. It seemed that this bow was a magical weapon. This made Han Shuo quite curious.

“Sorry Benedict, I think I’ve been clear enough. The weapons that we’ve forged will absolutely not be sold to you, no matter how much you offer to pay. We’re not interested.” Calvin shook his head and rejected the young elf Benedict quite decisively.

Benedict was visibly upset with these words and he said anxiously, “Why? I know there’s only a hundred or so dwarves in your village, but the weapons you’ve forged recently number more than a hundred. You won’t be able to use them all yourselves. If black iron ore weapons forged by you are imbued with our elven magic, then they’ll become even more powerful magical weapons. Why is it that you’re not willing to trade with us even when you have no use for them? Is it that our price isn’t high enough?”

“Because these weapons have been forged for our best friend Han. These fruit wines are also for Han. So I’m very sorry Benedict, I think that we can’t trade these weapons to you just because of some jewels.” Calvin resolutely expressed his apologies to Benedict, and then turned his head to

call out to Bennett. “Bennett, take the others to bring the weapons we’ve forged. We’re going to give them all to Han today.”

“Understood, chief!” Bennett responded brightly and clearly, and then took a few young dwarves on a high spirited trip to the forges. All of the dwarves ignored the temptation of the jewels from these elves.

“Pardon, is he the Han that you speak of? Humans are the most despicable and evil of all races within the Dark Forest. You actually chose to trust a human instead of the envoys of nature? Elder Calvin, you can’t do this!”

When the elves saw Calvin point at Han Shuo and direct Bennett and the others to give the forged weapons to Han Shuo, they immediately started complaining with an infinite amount of suffering.

“Han is different from other humans. We trust him and help each other. So I’m truly sorry Benedict, I don’t think we’ll be able to trade these weapons to you.” Calvin was unmoved by Benedict’s complaints and said stubbornly.

The last time he’d left the dwarf village, Han Shuo hadn’t thought of using rations to trade for the dwarves’ weapons at all. Except, the dwarves would only accept Han Shuo’s rations if they undertook such a transaction. Who would’ve thought that the elves would eye this batch of dwarf-forged weapons interspersed with black iron ore not too long afterwards. What made Han Shuo surprised was that the dwarves had already repeatedly rejected Benedict’s sincere trading request and had solidly kept the weapons for Han Shuo.

“Elder, you can absolutely make your own decisions with these weapons. I wasn’t lusting after your weapons in gifting you these rations.” Han Shuo thought and explained sincerely to Calvin.

Nodding, Calvin smiled faintly, “You don’t need to explain Han. We know your good intentions. However, we can’t accept your items without any cause or reason. The teachings from our ancestors have taught us that everything needs to be gained through your own hard work. If we directly accept your gift, that will be a violation of the teachings our ancestors left

behind, and will bring a bad atmosphere to the village, so I think you know what I mean.”

As Han Shuo and Calvin were speaking, Bennett and another crowd of dwarves had already brought over more than ten weapons. There were blades, swords, long spears, heavy mallets, double-edged axes, and all sorts of weapons. The weapons all gleamed with a shiny sparkle. The heavy mallets and double-edged axes gave one a thick and solid feeling, whereas the sharp edges of some of the blades, swords, and long spears appeared quite coldly sharp.

When Benedict and his entourage saw these weapons, their eyes all glinted with excitement. However, just as they were overcome with emotion, Han Shuo sighed with resignation and said, “Since the elder has spoken, then I’ll have to hesitantly accept these.”

Under the greedy gaze of Benedict and the other elves, these ten or so black iron ore infused, dwarf-forged weapons all made their way into Han Shuo’s space ring after he’d spoken.

“This human friend, I wonder if you’re willing to trade the dwarf-forged weapons to us? We’ve been preparing for a great battle recently and are going to suppress the presence of the forest trolls. If we have these weapons and our elven elders imbue it with magic, they will become astonishingly powerful magical weapons. The strength of experts like us will be greatly increased. We’re willing to use jewels to trade with you, what do you think?” A flash of disappointment streaked through Benedict’s eyes when he saw the weapons make their way into Han Shuo’s hands. He thought for a bit, and then seemed to suddenly think that it’d be easier to trade with Han Shuo, and so immediately spoke with some excitement to Han Shuo.

“Humans are the most despicable and evil of all races within the Dark Forest. How do you noble elves deign to transact with us base and lowly races?” Han Shuo smiled oddly as he looked at Benedict and flung the latter’s words back at him.

“In order to make the even more greedy and shameless forest trolls pay

the price, us noble elves are willing to make a compromise and allow you, human, to trade with us.” What shocked Han Shuo was that Benedict didn’t seem to hear Han Shuo’s strong sarcasm at all, and rather self righteously displayed his magnanimity.

“Sorry, I have no interest in conducting any sort of transaction with you noble elves!” Han Shuo felt between tears and laughter, and had finally experienced the arrogance of the elves. He couldn’t help but shake his head as he turned them down.

Han Shuo suddenly heard all sorts of branches and twigs being broken off after he’d spoken, as if many people were approaching this location. Before Benedict had a chance to respond, Han Shuo frowned and asked, “Is there another entourage of elves coming from your side?”

“No, just us. What’s wrong?” Benedict asked, askance.

His thoughts moving, the three original demons suddenly swarmed out and vanished in three different directions outside the village. After a short while, Han Shuo made use of the original demons’ vision to see a dense crowd of five hundred to six hundred forest trolls, making their way over towards them, in massive columns.

The forest troll head that Han Shuo had met last time was fawning over another more bulky looking forest troll and describing something. It looked like the status of this forest troll was even higher. This made Han Shuo understand that there would be great trouble this time.

# Chapter 99: A worshipped little skeleton

“Elder Calvin, has the village been discovered by forest trolls?” Han Shuo’s face turned grave as he turned towards Calvin, asking him in a solemn tone.

“Han, why are you suddenly asking such questions? There have been quite a few encounters with the forest trolls recently in the past couple of days, but even we don’t know if they’ve discovered something.” Calvin first started and then explained.

According to the field of vision coverage from the original demons, Han Shuo discovered that the current amount of forest trolls present numbered around five or six hundred this time. There were forest trolls, warriors, hunters, and priests. They all advanced in an orderly fashion, and coordinated with each other in exceedingly reasonable ways. This indicated that this batch of forest trolls must surely come from a strong faction. Five to six hundred forest trolls grouped with the right amount of troll hunters and priests would make for a sizeable force.

There were only 50 or 60 dwarves who were strong enough to participate in this battle within the village. Add to that Han Shuo and a few elves, their strength was completely subpar to that of the forest trolls’. This made Han Shuo understand that it would truly be tough to tide over this time’s danger.

“Five to six hundred forest trolls are headed in this direction. It looks like your village has truly been exposed.” Han Shuo sighed lowly and slowly revealed the truth.

Benedict had listened to Han Shuo’s words with some disbelief, but the group of dwarves that Calvin was leading immediately panicked upon hearing that five to six hundred forest trolls were headed their way. They were at a loss of what to do and proposed wild plans.

“What to do, what should we do?” An iron mallet waved in Bennett’s hands as he gave a glance at the female and children behind him, appearing very worried and resigned.

The dwarves weren't a race that was cowardly and afraid of danger, but they couldn't be irresponsible towards their females and children. When danger arrived, their first thought would be how to protect the women and children.

"Chief Calvin, I know that your village is hidden within a mountain valley. Are there any other ways of leaving the valley? No matter how suitable the valley is as a place to reside, I think we need to evacuate as quickly as possible. We'll be hard pressed to fight against five to six hundred forest trolls." Han Shuo tried persuading.

Calvin's brow was knit tightly as he appeared quite anxious. After thinking for a while, he spoke to Bennett first. "Go assemble all the villagers and have them pack their belongings and prepare to leave from the rear side of the mountain valley. We'll stay back and see if we can bring some retribution to these villains."

Bennett immediately left with Calvin's orders, calling out continuously towards the small houses in the back of the village, exhorting all the villagers to pick up rations and weapons, and to temporarily leave everything else behind.

At this moment, the two dwarves, who had been standing guard outside, finally rushed in with looks of panic, they started yelling out loudly before arriving where the chief stood, "Bad news! Terrible news! A lot of forest trolls are headed our way. They're everywhere within the shrubbery!"

Benedict had been a bit hesitant, but no longer doubted Han Shuo's words now. The group of elves, with Benedict as their leader, all unsheathed their weapons and wiped them down with calm expressions. Benedict held the bow behind his back in his hand, appearing ready for combat at any time.

"The forest trolls are the natural rival of us elves. I'd like them to taste of our power this time." Benedict didn't display any signs of fright and rather spoke with eagerness.

By this time, Bennett had already finished giving the dwarves behind him their orders. Utilizing his original demons. Han Shuo discovered that

the forest trolls were indeed headed towards the mouth of the village. He looked back involuntarily at the dwarves around him and said to them, "I think we should block off the narrow passageway that leads to the village at this time, and endeavor to buy time for the women and children to leave first."

Han Shuo nodded at Calvin when he said these words and took a few steps forward to the mouth of the village. Benedict hesitated and indicated his intentions to the elves, and followed behind Han Shuo, heading for the entrance to the village.

Up until now, Han Shuo could basically be certain that these forest trolls were aiming for the dwarves. Otherwise, they wouldn't have all appeared here by such coincidence. The five hundred or so forest trolls had already started searching through the nearby shrubbery beneath the yells of the particularly stocky forest troll, searching for the entrance to the dwarves' village.

According to how the situation was developing, the shrubs and leaves covering the village entrance wouldn't be able to conceal it for much longer. Han Shuo didn't become panicked after arriving here and recited a portion of magical incantation. Several skeletal warriors and two bulky zombie warriors appeared in front of him.

"We should take this time to set up some simple traps. The entrance to the village will surely be discovered, but it's not spacious enough here, so we can take advantage of this to create some trouble for them," Han Shuo said calmly when these dark creatures appeared.

The skeletal warriors and zombies immediately started digging traps under Han Shuo's command. The zombie warriors possessed strong bodies and were in charge of moving rocks over long the distances to block the path. The dwarves had set up some traps here to begin with, Han Shuo merely added a few more measures. The dwarves also all mobilized themselves to help Han Shuo set up.

"Necromancy magic is the most disgusting magic, to think that you, human, are an evil necromancer!" Benedict seemed to abhor the

appearance of the skeletal and zombie warriors as he complained.

Han Shuo was completely unmoved by Benedict's complaints and only concerned himself with setting up the traps. When Han Shuo felt that all was pretty much in readiness, he took out a few crossbows from his space ring and distributed them to the dwarves around him. He then directed them to retreat to the rear and disperse themselves within the strong growth of trees and shrubs.

The dwarves were masters of forging weapons, but the complex bows didn't need superb crafting skills, rather required precise designs and thought instead. The firing range and power of a crossbow was exceedingly high, and was one of the most outstanding inventions created by humans in recent years. Their drawbacks were that they were too heavy and that the frequency of firing wasn't that quick. Every crossbow needed a small amount of time to reload after firing, unlike how a bow and arrow, which could be quickly reloaded.

Han Shuo's body was strong, thus he could easily lift such heavy crossbows. Although the dwarves were diminutive in stature, their strength was also equal to Han Shuo's, and so they too lifted the crossbows easily.

As Han Shuo and the dwarves stood ready to defend, a loud forest troll shout traveled in from the distance. The forest trolls then immediately cheered and rapidly approached with loud yells. Through the eyes of the original demons, Han Shuo knew that one of the forest trolls had already discovered the concealed entrance.

Indeed, the new forest troll leader gave orders in the forest troll language as more than a hundred forest trolls came charging over with weapons in hand. The troll warriors were in the vanguard, with hunters and priests following close behind, as they carefully and slowly attempted to brush away at the coverings.

Han Shuo roared lowly and didn't wait for the forest trolls to walk through the entrance. The crossbow in his hand had already been fired, and the dwarves beside him also sent crossbow bolts whistling through



the air.

Some of the forest trolls, that had just entered this area and hadn't had the time to peel back the coverings, were sent flying by the enormous momentum behind the crossbow bolts. One of the forest trolls, that Han Shuo had hit, was pierced through by his crossbow bolt and nailed to a tree that was the width of two people.

"Look at the power of my magical arrow." Benedict glanced disdainfully at Han Shuo and suddenly pulled back on his bowstring. Faint magical pulses came from the bow in his hand and the arrow suddenly began burning fiercely in mid air after it was shot out. When it landed amidst the forest trolls, it suddenly exploded ferociously with sparks. Ten or so forest trolls were struck by splash damage from the sparks and started burning. Three of them didn't put the flames out in time and were swallowed by the spreading tongues of fire.

Han Shuo was truly surprised, he hadn't expected the arrow to have such power and involuntarily looked askance at Benedict.

"Benedict, you shouldn't waste such precious magical arrows on these cursed forest trolls. You know that these magical arrows are all very precious!" A female elf was a bit angry at seeing Benedict show off and lectured him.

Benedict stuck out his tongue and made a face when the female elf lectured him and then spoke self righteously to Han Shuo, "Did you see that just now? The magical arrows that have been imbued with magic from our elders have such strong power after being shot out with a magical bow. If those dwarf-forged weapons are modified by us, they will immediately turn into powerful magical weapons and bring lots of trouble to the forest trolls. You should give those weapons to us."

It looked like the elf still hadn't forgotten his duty, even now, and was still attempting to use his naive and laughable words to persuade Han Shuo. It was a pity that apart from flicking him a glance in the beginning, Han Shuo paid no more attention to him and only calmly gave a few orders to the dwarves around him.

After the first batch of forest trolls paid a heavy price in casualties, they were much more cautious the second time around. They first had the troll warriors approach, and then the priests added blessings on them, making their bodies more nimble and strong. The enhanced forest trolls immediately shoveled away the weeds at the entrance with great enthusiasm.

At this moment, the crossbows in Han Shuo's and the dwarves' hands continuously shot out across the tall grass, but whenever their crossbolts appeared, the long spears of the troll hunters would rake through the air, also falling on Han Shuo and the dwarves' hiding place.

But because the crossbows had a longer firing range, this caused the forest trolls' judgement of distance to be off the mark. The long spears fell in rows in front of the group, without causing any damage to them.

After paying the price of the lives of a few more troll warriors, the forest trolls finally cleared away the obstacles to the village entrance. With another loud yell, the forest trolls raised their weapons and charged in with large steps.

The traps set at the entrance to the village started displaying their lethality. The forest trolls out in front all fell into deep holes with sharp sticks in the bottom, and they lay there moaning in pain. The entrance to the village was finally overcome, but not without the mounting forest troll death toll and casualties.

"There are simply too many forest trolls, I think we should retreat." Han Shuo looked at the village entrance thronging with forest trolls and understood that the difference between the two was simply too great. He shook his head and sighed.

Benedict also displayed his fright at this time and nodded in agreement with Han Shuo's words. "Yes, I think we should retreat first and wait for me to go back to the tribe to alert our people. When our people arrive, these cursed villains will pay a painful price."

When Han Shuo and Benedict said so, the ten or so dwarves around them seemed to be a bit dejected as they all laid down their weapons. One

of them said, “The chief said that we should listen to Han. If Han wants us to retreat then we’ll retreat.”

Han Shuo smiled faintly upon hearing his words, “Since this is the case, then all of you should come back, otherwise we’ll be in big trouble.”

The dwarves, who had been bent on fighting to their deaths, all retreated to the back of the village in accordance with Han Shuo’s orders. The crossbows within their hands continued to fire. In the face of a densely packed forest troll advance, the crossbow bolts would all hit their targets, without needing to be aimed.

Upon seeing that the dwarves had already retreated, some of the dwarves also stood tactfully in the back. Han Shuo thought for a moment and summoned the little skeleton. He wanted to use the seven bone spurs on the little skeleton’s back to shed a last wave of blood and create some trouble for the forest trolls.

However, out of Han Shuo’s expectations, when the bone dagger wielding little skeleton appeared at the village entrance, he hadn’t even had the time to shoot out his bone spurs when the forest trolls in the very front all displayed very excited expressions. They laid down their weapons with a thud and bowed down to the little skeleton with highly raised hands, calling out continuously, “Datara, Datara, Datara...”

Han Shuo was flabbergasted and stunned where he stood. He didn’t know why the forest trolls were worshipping the little skeleton so faithfully.

# Chapter 100: The demon's representation?

“Datara, Datara.”

The forest trolls on the outskirts also bowed down reverently in the din of the forest trolls' shouts and began shouting loudly as well.

“What, what's going on?” Not only Han Shuo, but the dwarves and elves around them were also astonished by the sudden change. One of the dwarves asked in sudden stupefaction.

“The skeletal warrior with wings seems to be similar to the demon that the forest trolls worship. This demon is innately evil and loves to seize everything. I've heard elders within the tribe mention that the demon the forest trolls worship is called Datara!” Benedict seemed to recall something at this point and suddenly cried out.

Not too far in the distance, a forest troll priest, so old that it seemed like it would close its eyes in final slumber at any moment, crawled swiftly towards the little skeleton on its knees. Han Shuo was rather taken aback that he crawled pretty fast, and had reached the little skeleton in a short while. The old forest troll priest murmured some things in the forest troll language at the little skeleton.

The little skeleton stood there in a stupor with his bone dagger, scratching his bright and clean skullcap, as if not knowing what was going on. He turned back to look at Han Shuo with an empty gaze, as if waiting for Han Shuo to give him orders.

Upon hearing Benedict's words, Han Shuo had a pretty good idea that something marvelous had happened. These forest trolls must have thought that the little skeleton was the demon that they worshipped. The old priest seemed to want to take the little skeleton somewhere, judging from its interactions. All the forest trolls in the back were frozen in worship on the ground, and no one mentioned the matter of invading the dwarf village again.

“Han, what's going on, what should we do?” A dwarf looked at Han Shuo and asked blankly.

Han Shuo was thinking furiously when he heard the dwarf's question. His head also ached with the difficulty of the situation. He waffled for a second, unsure what would happen afterwards and said to them, "I'll think of a way to delay the forest trolls. You guys leave the valley immediately and find a safe place with the chief and Bennett. I think I will be able to find you guys again."

"Will it be dangerous for you?" The dwarf was a bit uneasy at leaving Han Shuo's side and spoke a bit reluctantly.

"No worries, I have my ways to handle them. Benedict I think your party should leave as well. My skeletal warrior is a bit odd, but I don't think he's the demon that the forest trolls worship. I can't predict how well the situation will develop afterwards either, I think you'll be safer if you left with them." Han Shuo tried to slowly persuade the dwarves and elves that he was looking at.

"We'll be leaving, it's very dangerous here. I think we should notify the elders first." Benedict thought briefly, nodded and retreated with the other elves after speaking.

Under Han Shuo's urgings, the dwarves also left slowly, unwillingly to the mountain valley. One of the original demons, that had continuously been observing the forest trolls, suddenly split off and followed the dwarves as they retreated. This allowed Han Shuo to clearly view the path that the dwarves were taking to escape.

After a short while, there was no one else in the entrance to the village apart from Han Shuo and the little skeleton. Han Shuo's original demon had been observing the dwarves' movements and discovered that they were traversing a cold river and leaving from a diagonal crack in the mountain valley.

"Does anyone here speak the common tongue of the Continent?" Han Shuo walked out from the back and stood beside the little skeleton, asking in the language of the humans.

The old priest, that had been kneeling in front of the little skeleton and talking to him in the forest troll language, suddenly looked up at Han

Shuo, using the language of the humans in a slightly unpracticed manner, “You are with the mighty Datara, why are you a tricky human?”

“Are you sure that he’s the same as your Datara?” Han Shuo didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as he shook his head and asked oddly.

The face of the forest troll was a ghastly green and the dry skin that hung all over his body was like old tree bark that had been weathered by the wind and rains for many years. He displayed a look of extreme contempt and said, “Of course I wouldn’t be wrong, this is the representation of the divine Datara on this earth.”

As the old priest spoke, he solemnly took out a treasured ancient scroll from a leather bag. The scroll was slowly unfurled as his wizened hands opened it. Apart from a few squiggly lines in the forest troll language that were hard to make out, it was a picture of an enormous skeleton with wings on its back. The skeleton’s bones were a pure white and the wings on its back were bare of feathers. Based on the photo, the wings truly did bear a great deal of resemblance to the bone spurs on the little skeleton’s back.

There was a barren mountain peak beneath this large, white skeleton’s foot with all sorts of gold, silver, and jewelry piled up on the mountain peak, including some jewels that looked quite precious. The white skeleton had an empty socket for one eye and a black eyepatch covering the other, the outfit of a single eyed pirate who would burn, raid, and loot.

“This is the appearance of our mighty Datara, we wouldn’t be wrong. He is the representative of Datara in this world and will lead us to even more gold, silver, and jewelry. We’ll have so many jewels and food that we will never starve. The mighty Datara will lead our tribe to seize the lands of the tricky humans!” The tone of the old forest troll priest had become strangely fervent and he shouted loudly.

Apart from being slightly smaller and not pure white, the little skeleton was indeed quite similar to the Datara depicted on the scroll. No wonder the greedy forest trolls had thought the little skeleton was the representative of the looting demon Datara.

Although the unimaginably queer situation made Han Shuo feel quite surprised, a sudden thought struck him as he mused carefully. A trace of a wicked smile appeared on his lips as he gave a command to the little skeleton.

The little skeleton that had originally been dumbly standing there with bone dagger in hand suddenly waved the bone dagger at this moment, as his empty left hand made a gesture indicating for everyone to rise.

“Oh! Datara has heard our prayers!” The old forest troll priest immediately capered in great excitement as his chicken-like feet, withered hands also waved, speaking very ceremoniously in the low forest troll language.

The forest trolls that had knelt in homage all shouted loudly and stood up from the ground, taking off the pockets tied to themselves and shaking them strongly.

The little skeleton waited until all the forest trolls had stood up to use its empty left hand to point at Han Shuo, according to his orders. Under the puzzled gaze of the forest trolls, he used his empty hand to point to himself.

“He means for me to become his liaison and interact with you.” Han Shuo drew himself up proudly and spoke cockily to the old priest. The little skeleton nodded in a very timely fashion after Han Shuo gave the order, as if verifying what Han Shuo had just said.

“Why, why should this tricky human be your liaison?” The old forest troll priest obviously couldn’t accept this and immediately asked in confusion.

The little skeleton had extended the bone dagger and was already resting it on the old priest’s neck as soon as the old forest troll priest had finished speaking. The little skeleton stood on its tiptoes, trying to appear taller than he was. His two empty eye sockets stared directly at the old priest as bone chilling clattering teeth sounds came from his mouth.

The old forest troll priest was immediately frightened to the point of losing all strength in his body, crashing to the ground and genuflecting

again. He raised his hands high above his head and cried out, "I will never dare question your decisions again, please don't take all we have!"

None of the forest trolls standing around dared to make a move when they saw the most venerated old priest within their tribe being publicly threatened. The only stood there with their heads hung and spoke something in the forest troll language.

"Get up, get up, your noble Datara has forgiven you. I think you'll acknowledge my status as liaison now?" Han Shuo was cackling inside as he spoke with every appearance of seriousness to the old priest.

Clutching his head, the old priest spoke with visible reluctance on his face and nodded, "Will great Datara and the liaison come with us to grace our tribe with their presence? We have some things to offer to the great Datara!"

"Didn't you come to rob the dwarves?" Han Shuo started slightly and opened his mouth to ask.

"No, after I heard members of the tribe describe the great one last time, I immediately told the tribe to search for traces of the great one. Those annoying dwarves are only a small village of a hundred people and isn't worth sending out so many elites from our tribes. We've heard that the great one had appeared nearby, which is why we sent out so many tribesmen this time, so we could welcome the great one back to its sacred ground." The old forest troll priest shook his head and explained to Han Shuo.

"Sacred ground, what sacred ground?" Han Shuo asked in surprise.

"A palace that our tribe has built especially for the great one. There are even antiques passed down from generation to generation. It's said that this was the great Datara's place to begin with, and so we will offer it all to the great one this time." The old priest looked at Han Shuo with some distaste, but didn't dare violate the little skeleton's orders as he explained impatiently.

"Very good, very good! Let's set out then!" Han Shuo was overjoyed when he heard these words and immediately urged the forest trolls to be on



their way.

The old priest didn't say much and waved his hand. The most burly looking forest troll in the distance walked humbly towards the old priest. After giving a round of orders in gobbledegook, the leader immediately gave the order for the five, six hundred forest trolls to ignore the matter of the dwarves and set out for the deeper parts of the Dark Forest with great fanfare.

Four tall and burly troll warriors carried a luxurious carriage made of black jade with several brightly shining jewels embedded in it. There were soft feathers spread on within it as the little skeleton rode in it on their way into the depths of the Dark Forest. It looked like the forest trolls had come prepared.

The little skeleton lay leisurely within, looking to and fro. As a liaison, Han Shuo couldn't enjoy such comfort and could only proceed on foot with them. They met many magical creatures along the way, but ordinary magical creatures didn't dare approach such a large group of five to six hundred forest trolls. Even several level three or two wild and ferocious beasts decided not to continue the hunt when they saw the large group proceeding with great fanfare. Instead, they chose to stay far, far away from this large group made of a villainous tribe.

In the outskirts of the Dark Forest, the innately greedy forest trolls, with a love for robbery were renowned and greatly feared. Whether it was some of the more uncommon tribes living in the outskirts of the Dark Forest or the adventurers and merchants who'd ventured into the Dark Forest, they would always be robbed to a certain degree whenever they were met with forest trolls.

Apart from a few stronger lifeforms within the depths of the Dark Forest, these infamous villains on the outskirts of the Dark Forest were universally hated and feared. As hated rivals, the elves had fought numerous times with the forest trolls and hadn't been able to obtain victory. Nobody could stop their innate impulse for robbery.

As they neared the depths of the Dark Forest, even the formerly

blustering forest trolls began to proceed with caution the deeper they entered into the Dark Forest, as if deathly afraid of creating any disturbances.

“Why is it that you become more timid the farther in you go?” Han Shuo had detected the abnormalities of the forest trolls and couldn’t help but ask the old priest beside him.

Flicking a glance around, the old priest explained, “We’ve now entered the middle area of the Dark Forest. There are many high level beasts here and several special tribes. The humans that appear here are also difficult to deal with. We hope that we won’t run into them, or there’ll be trouble.”

A thundering crash came from not too far away as a six to seven meter tall, frighteningly large white stone giant slowly moved away with a large tree thrown over his shoulder. A low caw sounded from the sky as an enormous black shadow flew over them. When the shadow was cast over the ground, two long, slender necks could easily be made out.

“The one covered in white stone dust is a mountain ridge giant. Their nature is fairly peaceful and they don’t like to fight. However, if you make him angry, it’ll be a disaster. What just flew overhead was the lowest level twin headed dragon. They’re actually not dragons, just a level two magical creature, but they can spit out venom and are tough to deal with.” The old priest spoke up in explanation upon seeing Han Shuo’s astonishment.

Nodding, Han Shuo sighed with great appreciation. “I finally understand why you dare act wildly only in the outskirts of the Dark Forest!”

# Chapter 101: A place of extreme wood

The group followed carefully behind the old forest troll priest towards recessed terrain, finally stopping beside a river after a half day's time and passing through a broken section of mountain rock.

There was a river in the back and primitive houses made of wood all around there. There were also a few simple traps set up and several weird, towering trees. When they arrived, the original demon, that had been keeping an eye on the dwarves had to come back due to the distance between Han Shuo and the dwarves becoming too large. It circled this area and started surveying the various corners.

Leveraging the increased field of vision with the three original demons, Han Shuo discovered that this was an extremely large area. He made a rough calculation that there were several hundred huts here. It looked like this was the hideout of the forest trolls. Many green-skinned forest trolls clutched weapons in their hands, whether they were children or females, and were being trained by a strong forest troll warrior.

From the elves' description earlier, Han Shuo understood that the forest trolls were born with a natural inclination for raiding and looting. There was no such thing as self providing and self sufficiency in their lives. Whether food, drink, or items of use, they all naturally thought that these items should be earned through stealing. They, who worshipped the demon of raiding Datara, also treated children and women as a training target as this would increase their strength during raids.

When the old priest arrived, he used the language of the forest trolls to call something out loudly. All the forest trolls in the tribe, whether children, the elderly, or females, excitedly ripped off the pockets on their body and waved them in the air, calling out, "Datara, Datara!"

After continuing in this fashion for a while, the old priest finally continued conversing with Han Shuo in the language of the humans, "Come, I will take the great Datara and his liaison to the sacred grounds."

"Mm, hurry up. The great Datara is impatient." Han Shuo said with a

darkened face.

The forest trolls continued carrying the little skeleton and Han Shuo continued on foot. Several troll warriors pushed in several wooden rafts from afar. Han Shuo and the little skeleton walked towards the wooden rafts when indicated by the old priest. Afterwards, some of the forest trolls paddled their wooden oars and set out for the river current.

The wooden rafts advanced slowly, docking at a patch of swampy earth after roughly half an hour. Han Shuo followed the old priest up the shore and discovered that all the trees here were towering and extremely large. The vibrant growth of the grass and shrubbery was enough to drown a person, and even the weeds here grew with great vigor.

The plants and trees on all sides seemed to be growing quite well, and a bizarre presence seemed to permeate the air. Pushing past the thick shrubbery, several troll warriors led the way. The old priest pointed out the road and Han Shuo followed behind him, heading for an even deeper part of the area.

As he made his way deeper, a feeling grew within Han Shuo that something was amiss, as if he'd heard of this place somewhere. He finally stopped in front of a tall house that looked like it was being hauled upwards by a towering, huge tree with this bemused mindset.

The thickly leafed branches of five to six very tall trees were intertwined, with the entwined branches supporting a large house in midair. The plants were growing exceptionally well around it, and there were also some bizarre flowers bearing some strange and exotic fruit.

Looking around the surroundings and blanking for quite a bit, Han Shuo's heart shook and he suddenly cried out in astonishment, "A place of extreme wood. Haha, this is actually a place of extreme wood! No wonder all the plants have developed so perfectly. So this is the case!"

A naturally formed place of extreme wood. The presence of the element of wood within it was much more dense than in other places. All the plants and trees that grew in a place of extreme wood were naturally much more luxuriant than in other places. Although the forest trolls

worshipped the demon of raiding, Datara, it was said in legends that they were a race evolved from trees, and so they had a natural affinity for wood.

“The air here is clearer than anywhere else. Our ancestors searched for many years before discovering this place, and so built the palace of the sacred ground here. The stone statue of Datara was erected for worship inside. There are tributes offered to the great Datara every year in hopes that the great one will ensure our successful raids.” The old priest genuflected piously towards the house hovering in mid air and said all this softly.

After thinking for a while, the old priest seemed to think that this was inappropriate and immediately started bowing down to the little skeleton. He spoke some gobbledegook to the troll warriors lifting the little skeleton’s carriage. The troll warriors lowered the carriage and indicated for the little skeleton to depart from the carriage.

At this moment, Han Shuo was thinking of how his wood elite zombie was already at hand and was incredibly excited. He’d actually forgotten to continue giving orders to the little skeleton. The old priest made a number of sincere requests and discovered that the little skeleton was still sitting motionless within the carriage. His brow tightly knit together, he sank to his knees in front of Han Shuo. “Liaison, why doesn’t the great Datara descend from the carriage? Have we done something wrong?”

The old priest’s words immediately startled Han Shuo from his daydream. He turned his head and discovered that the little skeleton was lying there lazily, as if he’d fallen asleep. Han Shuo gave an order and the little skeleton’s legs straightened, standing up abruptly and looked around with his shiny skull, the bone dagger in his hand.

“Datara was contemplating just now and didn’t hear your calls. Come, we go up now!” Han Shuo snickered inwardly but spoke seriously to the old priest.

Timidly nodding his head, the old priest didn’t dare to ask anything else. He walked to the back of one of the towering trees and started climbing up after pulling down a soft ladder, woven from tree branches. Han Shuo

followed behind the old priest and climbed up, also making use of the soft ladder.

The little skeleton walked out from within the carriage and moved to somewhere in the distance before Han Shuo had a chance to give orders to the little skeleton. What happened next was something out of everyone's expectation as it made use of the momentum from charging forward, extended both leg bones, and flew into the sky when the seven bone spurs on its back flapped around randomly. It landed in front of the door to the big house in the sky before Han Shuo and the old priest reached it.

His body wavering in front of the big house, the little skeleton slowly regained his footing and shook his head. He then pulled open the door and entered the house, with pilipala sounds of items being rifled through sounding out.

"Datara, Datara!" The old priest wore an expression of excitement as he started calling out in gobbledegook.

Finally, the old priest and Han Shuo had climbed up to the steps in front of the big house. Some other forest trolls were standing guard outside and no one else had been allowed up.

Han Shuo followed the excited old priest into the house and immediately saw an enormous sculpture of a skeleton in the middle of the room. It was exactly the same as the one that Han Shuo had seen on the old priest's ancient scroll earlier, with the only difference being that the enormous skeleton wearing an eyepatch wielded a weapon that looked similar to the scythe that the Grim Reaper carried in its right hand. It grasped a large satchel in its left hand, and it bulged as if holding many spoils from raids.

It was brightly lit inside, with all sorts of colored jewels embedded in the wooden walls. Gold and jewelry could be seen everywhere on the ground. The Han Shuo of now wasn't someone who didn't recognize wealth, and he noticed that all the various jewels in the wooden walls were absolutely priceless as they exuded radiant and sparkling glimmers. The cups and cutlery were placed on a jade table and were all made of beautiful jade and gold, dazzling Han Shuo's eyes.

The little skeleton hefted its bone dagger as it ran a hand over its gleaming skullcap, circling continuously around the enormous stone sculpture erected in the center of the house. He would occasionally touch the featherless wings behind the giant stone skeleton sculpture, and would run its hand along its back to touch the seven bone spurs, seeming to be quite puzzled as to why the great stone sculpture looked so much like him.

Except, compared to the stone sculpture, the little skeleton was almost half its size. The scene looked quite odd with a little skeleton standing next to a big skeleton.

When Han Shuo and the old priest entered, they noticed in confusion that the little skeleton was circling around the statue of Datara. As Han Shuo observed the little skeleton, he suddenly discovered that the little skeleton's movements were quite human like. This prevented Han Shuo from giving any orders to the little skeleton, causing him to be astonished. He looked intently at the little skeleton with a heated gaze instead, intending to see what he was up to.

Just as Han Shuo was astonished, he saw the little skeleton suddenly stop right in front of the statue of the demon Datara. His empty sockets stared at the eyepatch over Datara's left eye, and then extended a hand to feel his own left eye socket, as if wondering why he didn't have an eye patch.

The little skeleton suddenly jumped up and extended a hand to rip off Datara's eye patch. When the little skeleton landed, it was with an eye patch in hand. There was a purple gem concealed in the left eye socket of the now eye patch-less Datara, as if it was an eyeball. The originally lifeless stone sculpture of the demon Datara now appeared to have a few traces of life to it with the addition of a purple eye. It gave Han Shuo the misguided feeling that the sculpture was looking at him.

At this moment, the purple eyeball seemed to rotate once and glow weakly with soft, purple light, as if the demon Datara had revived suddenly.

“Oh, the great Datara has opened the ‘Purple Demon Eye’, the great Datara has manifested!” The old priest displayed jubilation as he went crazy with excitement and buried his head in the ground, hollering loudly.

The little skeleton, previously standing there dumbly, suddenly moved a small table in front of the statue of the demon Datara and leapt onto it. He stood on his tiptoes and reached a hand towards the left eye of the statue of the demon Datara. As Han Shuo’s scalp grew numb, the little skeleton firmly gouged the purple demon eye out and lifted it high for a glance before stuffing it into his own left eye socket.

Han Shuo didn’t know what to do here either, but before he’d thought through what should be done, he suddenly felt a spitting pain in his head. He looked at the little skeleton and realized that the little skeleton had somehow firmly stuffed the purple demon eye into his own eye socket.

However, when the purple demon eye entered his left eye socket, the little skeleton also appeared to be in pain. His body shuddered and he then clutched his head to roll on the ground in pain. As the host, Han Shuo shared a mental connection with the little skeleton and also felt the same wracking pain. An enormous, foreign energy was emanating from the little skeleton’s purple demon eye. Han Shuo could clearly feel that the purple demon eye was trying to intrude into his and the little demon’s body, as if trying to take control of the two bodies.

“Great Datara, liaison, what’s happening to you two?” The old forest troll priest lifted his head to see that something was amiss with Han Shuo and the little skeleton, and immediately cried out in inquiry.

“Get out, leave first! The great Datara has some things to do.” Han Shuo roared as he held up beneath the searing pain.

The old forest troll priest was startled as he frantically walked out of the house in confusion. He stayed outside to observe what was happening within the sacred ground.

Han Shuo immediately clutched his head when the old priest left and curled into a ball with the small skeleton. Han Shuo’s heart was filled with baffled fear. If this purple demon eye really did belong to the demon



Datara, then this strange, energy invading his body would naturally come from Datara. A demon was a type of deity and their power wasn't something that humans could withstand. This made Han Shuo at a loss for what he should do at the moment.

This enormous power was spreading out from the purple demon eye within the little skeleton's left eye socket. Han Shuo first gave the order to remove the purple demon eye, but the little skeleton had shoved it into his eye in a way that no matter how the little skeleton grappled with the purple demon eye, he was unable to remove it again.

As one human and one skeleton rolled around continuously inside and convulsed with pain, another wondrous power emanated from the eye patch that the little skeleton had held onto during all this time. Because his brain was hurting to the extreme, Han Shuo's perception grew tremendously and he suddenly detected the abnormality. He grasped at every possible solution in his panic and gave the little skeleton the order to put on the eye patch.

It was magical that the mysterious power attempting to take over their bodies suddenly vanished without a trace after the little skeleton frantically put the eye patch on. The profusely sweating Han Shuo slowly returned to normal.

The eye patch looked quite appropriate on the statue of the demon Datara, but it was noticeably bigger on the little skeleton. The eye patch almost covered the entire left side of his face, and he looked a bit comical and funny.

"Never remove the eye patch no matter when or what." Han Shuo recovered himself and ignored all these bizarre happenings, giving the little skeleton this order first.

# Chapter 102: Looting the tribute to the demon

There seemed to be an evil power of Datara's contained within the purple demon eye. The eye patch also seemed to have the ability to seal that power, making Han Shuo feel that it was very strange. His eyes kept looking over at the comical eye patch on the little skeletons' head, attempting to discover something, anything.

However, Han Shuo quickly realized that his efforts were futile. He could no longer detect anything out of the ordinary from the purple demon eye after it'd been covered by the eye patch. Apart from the jewels and beautiful jade scattered throughout the entire house, there was nothing else worth noticing. When Han Shuo no longer felt endangered, he rose to summon the old forest troll priest.

When the old priest entered, his gaze instantly converged on the statue of Datara, now missing the purple demon eye. He was incredibly astonished and asked, "What, what's happened? Why is the purple demon eye that the great Datara left behind gone?"

Pointing at the little skeleton, Han Shuo smiled faintly and explained, "The eye has already been reclaimed by the great Datara of this world. Do you not see the eye patch on his left eye?"

The old priest finally reacted when Han Shuo gave this reminder and looked at the little skeleton in astonishment. The old priest immediately fell to his knees and cried out, "Congratulations to the great Datara! My tribe has always protected the purple demon eye according to your final wishes, and now that the purple demon eye has returned into your grasp, my tribe has fulfilled what you have entrusted us with."

"Apart from the purple demon eye, was there anything else you offered as tribute to the great Datara?" Han Shuo thought and stared at the old priest in question.

The old priest was startled and mused thoughtfully with his brow

furrowed. He shook his head and said, “We watched over the purple demon eye in accordance with the great one’s last wishes. Apart from this, all the treasure has also been offered to the great Datara.”

“Very good, very good.” Han Shuo nodded his head and said to the old priest. “Leave for now, the great Datara will emerge to guide you in a moment.”

The old priest reverently backed out of the great house, and Han Shuo started unstintingly looting everything within the house. The gold, jewels, and jade scattered across the ground vanished one by one into Han Shuo’s space ring. Han Shuo slightly estimated the wealth within and felt that it was likely worth tens of thousands of gold coins. They were all items that the forest trolls had offered to the demon Datara after stealing from others.

Han Shuo temporarily ignored the heavier items, and also didn’t immediately attempt to pry the jewels embedded into the wooden walls out. He first put away the jewels, gold, and jade scattered on the floor, and then took inventory of his haul. He felt that it was a good place to stop for now.

Apart from a few larger antiques and the jewels embedded into the house, many of the valuable jewels, gold, and jade had made their way into Han Shuo’s space ring.

However, the capacity within Han Shuo’s space ring was limited and there were some other items stored within as well. He’d only taken one third of the items within the house, but the value of this one third was likely tens of thousands of gold coins as well. It looked like the forest trolls had reaped rich rewards after many years of raiding.

Since the little skeleton had become the forest trolls’ great Datara, Han Shuo once again started thinking furiously. He would be able to compel the forest trolls to do certain things by taking advantage of the little skeleton’s identity. He wasn’t worried that the items within the house would magically disappear – they should be quite safe in here. He’d have to come back sooner or later to refine the wood elite zombie, so Han Shuo

wasn't in a hurry.

The forest trolls were a race that was universally hated and disdained within the Dark Forest. With the presence of the little skeleton now, Han Shuo could swagger about in borrowed influence and compel them to action. The only thing he was hesitant about was – what could he do with these forest trolls?

Han Shuo suddenly felt a huge headache as he thought. These forest trolls were naturally greedy and loved looting from others. This wouldn't be changed no matter what. This made Han Shuo not know how to control them. If it wasn't for the fact that they had mistaken the little skeleton for the demon Datara and was worshipping him, Han Shuo didn't mind killing them all and taking all their belongings.

However, with the little skeleton now, Han Shuo could make use of them. It seemed too much of a waste to kill them then. He wracked his brains painfully for a bit. Han Shuo felt that their innate raiding nature would be unable to be changed, the only thing he could change was who they raided. If the target they raided could shift to the equally infamous goblins or man-eating monsters, or the troops of some enemy empires, then a bad thing would become something good.

When he thought this point through, Han Shuo left the house with the little skeleton. He made use of the surveillance of the three original demons to obtain a full grasp of the place that the forest trolls were guarding. When he descended from the house, Han Shuo opened his mouth to give orders, "The great Datara has just descended here and is unfamiliar with the current state of this world. The great Datara needs to familiarize himself with the Dark Forest and then point out the way for your future. Do not continue to raid the dwarves during this process, the great Datara needs them alive and well."

Although many questions existed within the heart of the old forest troll priest, he didn't dare question Han Shuo's words. He only drooped his head and asked respectfully, "Do you need us to send out warriors to help the great Datara get to know these surroundings?"

“No need, The great Datara and I will remain within your tribe over the next couple of days. You can just stay here and wait.” Han Shuo didn’t take the forest trolls’ wooden raft after these words and left with the little skeleton after giving a few more commands.

Han Shuo didn’t immediately return to the cemetery of death after leaving the area, but took the little skeleton with him on a trip to case the area.

Since he wanted to collect the five divine zombies, Han Shuo would naturally not let go of a naturally formed place of extreme wood. Apart from the forest trolls guarding the wooden house and some amazingly exuberant growth of trees and grass nearby, there was nothing else.

Han Shuo finally felt at ease after releasing the three originals demons and having them scout out the area. He planned on returning to the outskirts of the cemetery of death.

Han Shuo had closely observed the surroundings through the original demons on his way here and the way back had long since been imprinted in his heart. He didn’t directly head towards the river to return, but walked unhurriedly along the river current. He felt a bit hungry halfway through his trip and looked at the strange fish joyously swimming around in the clear waters. A thought struck him, and the Demonslayer Edge flew out with a whoosh. It sank into the water according to Han Shuo’s intentions and returned to Han Shuo’s hands after piercing through two large fish.

The little skeleton left with bone dagger in hand under Han Shuo’s orders and came back with a bunch of wooden materials after a while. He agilely constructed a rack, whereas Han Shuo lit the fire and set the two big fish on the rack. He then took out spices from his space ring and sprinkled it over the baking fish. A tempting smell slowly began to spread out.

A black shadow dashed in from the far skies. When a great gust of wind flapped Han Shuo’s clothes, a pungent and disgusting stink attacked his nose, making disgust well up within Han Shuo. When he raised his head and looked up angrily, the black shadow had risen from low to high and

returned high up in the sky, forming a black dot.

“Damned ugly bird, so disgusting!” Han Shuo cursed and turned the almost ready fish onto the other side.

Just at this moment, the black shadow swept down from the distance with a whistling sound, rising back up into the air when it was not too far from the top of Han Shuo’s head, but Han Shuo had been prepared and saw the black shadow clearly this time – it had the body of an eagle, but the face of an exceedingly ugly woman, a harpy.

Harpies and Deepwater Venom Pythons were all level three magical creatures. She had the face of a human, but couldn’t make human sounds. A disgusting scent could always be found on her since she liked to scavenge the corpses of humans. When one caught the eye of a harpy, she would continuously test them until she found the right opportunity to suddenly dive at your scalp and use the disgusting scent on her body to disorient you, then use her sharp claws to rip your head apart and start eating.

Within the Dark Forest, it would be very tricky when one caught the eye of a harpy because of her agile flight speed. When Han Shuo discovered that he had caught the attention of this harpy, he used piercingly cold eyes to look at the harpy circling overhead and snorted lightly, “Looking for death?”

Maintaining his position of baking fish, Han Shuo ignored the continuous feints from the harpy overhead. The little skeleton wielding the bone dagger was a bit restless at his side, seemingly to want to bring this annoying harpy down, but temporarily took no action beneath Han Shuo’s soothing.

At this moment, several people slowly emerged in the distance. They looked like they belonged to a young adventurer’s crew. They had mages, archers, and warriors, numbering six in total. They looked at the circling harpy and cursed lowly at the irritating harpy.

Han Shuo had been staring intently at the harpy and planning on taking care of her, when he finally realized that the harpy’s original target

seemed to have been them when he heard their curses. She'd suddenly switched targets when she saw him here alone, and attempted to eat him first.

One of the swordsmen had discovered Han Shuo via the delicious smell of the baking fish. He pointed out Han Shuo to his companions and the band of six young adventurers with males and females started heading his way.

# Chapter 103: The Fruit of Dagmar

“Hello friend, are you adventuring alone in the Dark Forest?” The swordsman called out softly when he was quite a distance away from Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had long since discovered these six and had desummoned the little skeleton again since he didn’t want to reveal his status as a necromancer. He lifted his head when he heard the other’s voice and nodded at the swordsman. “That’s right.”

The cross legged harpy whooshed past overhead, but didn’t dare to continue testing Han Shuo’s patience when she saw the six adventurers meet up with him. She flew to a higher vantage point to observe the happenings from the sky.

The six adventurers were a team of three warriors, two mages, and one archer. The archer was a female elf, and the three male warriors consisted of one senior swordswoman and two journeyman swordsmen. In addition to them, there was one male journeyman mage and one female adept mage.

After Han Shuo had participated in the test given by the Academy, he now knew of some of the level differentiations and symbols used by the Magic Association and the Knight Association.

Mages would have an exquisite, small magic staff embroidered on the shoulder of their mage robes according to strength. Novice mages would possess the image of a magic staff, and each successive level would add another magic staff. Swordsmen and Knights had similar ways of differentiation, with swordsmen using swords as their emblems and knights using battlesteeds.

The robes of the mages and swordsmen looked like they’d been verified by the Magic Association and the Knight Association, and thus emblems representing their strengths were attached to the clothes they were wearing. Han Shuo could easily determine their strength with just a glance.



The six of them weren't weak, but a bit too weak if they were to venture into the depths of the Dark Forest. This was why the harpy dared to follow them when she discovered these six. If any of them were an archmage that could fly, then the harpy would've run as far as possible and wouldn't dare to look for chances to attack them.

"I'm called Odysseus. These are my companions. I think you've noticed the harpy's disturbance earlier. I'm very sorry to say that the harpy has been targeting us and shifted her attentions to you when she discovered that you were walking alone."

"As a level three magical creature, it was truly difficult to fight a harpy since she can fly in the air. If you don't mind, you can walk with us. The harpy shouldn't dare come down and cause trouble if the seven of us are together." The senior swordsman, Odysseus, spoke sincerely to Han Shuo.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo declined with a smile, "That's alright. I think you want to head further into the Dark Forest, but I'd like to go back to the outskirts. We're not taking the same path, so I won't trouble you."

"How can this be? If you continue to walk alone, the harpy will never give up on you. I think you should stay with us, or you'll be in greater trouble or even die!" One of the female adept mages Aphrodite said softly.

The others also protested when they heard Aphrodite's words, but Han Shuo didn't agree to leave with them. Although the six weren't that weak, only the archer's arrows had any ability to cause trouble for the harpy. Once the flight capable harpy dashed up in the air, the swordsmen would pose no threat to her whatsoever and magic may not be effective because of the distance.

However, Han Shuo was armed with the Demonslayer Edge and the crossbow, add to that the fact that the little skeleton could also fly up into the air using his bone spurs, if the harpy was so oblivious as to dare attack him, then painful wallops from Han Shuo and the little skeleton would be awaiting her. Therefore, Han Shuo wasn't that afraid of the harpy. This was why he'd turned down the invitation from the six adventurers and chosen to set off alone.

“Heh heh, thank you for your concern, but I don’t think it’d be that easy for the harpy to catch me.” Han Shuo responded with a smile and grabbed his two baked fish. He didn’t respond to the six young adventurers again and walked back in the direction they’d come from alone.

The six young adventurers were startled when they saw Han Shuo leave leisurely. The senior swordsman Odysseus opened his mouth to say, “Let’s observe in the distance. If he truly has a method to deal with the harpy, then we’ll decide to leave. Otherwise we’ll help him, to prevent him from being eaten.”

“Captain, that person’s already turned us down, do we have to do this?” Journeyman swordsman Gordon was rather unwilling as he spoke sullenly.

“The harpy’s original target was us and only troubled others because we started heading in this direction. I think we should own up to this responsibility.” Odysseus lectured Gordon and directed the others to follow him, trailing far behind Han Shuo.

After walking roughly five minutes, the harpy circling over Han Shuo finally made another move. She dived down from high up in the sky and once again soared back up into the clouds with a screeching whistle when she’d almost landed on his head, baiting Han Shuo with extreme patience.

However, Han Shuo was even more patient than her. Although his two hands looked empty, the Demonslayer Edge was ready to erupt into the air at any time, and his crossbow was already prepared to fire within his space ring. As soon as the harpy dared enter within range, Han Shuo wouldn’t mind killing this level three magical creature with one shot.

As for the six adventurers following at a distance, Han Shuo could see everything clearly. He didn’t pay much attention to their kindheartedness and continued walking towards the cemetery of death at a leisurely pace.

The harpy finally couldn’t contain herself after repeatedly testing him and once again swooped in directly towards Han Shuo with her sharp claws curved, quickly approaching Han Shuo’s skullcap.

A disgusting stench assaulted his nostrils and immediately wafted

around Han Shuo's being. Most people would be temporarily dizzy and disoriented after catching a whiff of this stench, but Han Shuo's body had been trained to an unknown level of indomitability and wasn't affected by this at all. He still fakely swayed in accordance with the harpy's intentions, as if he would crash to the ground at any given moment.

"Oh no! He's been disoriented by the stench of the harpy's body, he's in danger! We should go save him!" The adept mage Aphrodite suddenly called out as the six adventurers no longer concerned themselves with concealment and walked out from the shrubbery behind him. The archer frantically shot arrows towards the harpy.

At this moment, the harpy, who'd been afraid to commit herself to a full descent, finally seemed to think that the timing was finally right. She'd maintained a distance of seven or eight meters from the ground when she suddenly shot like lightning down towards Han Shuo, a pair of iron claws locked onto Han Shuo's head, seeming to want to rip Han Shuo's bones apart.

A cold smile blossoming from the corners of his mouth, Han Shuo's body swayed even more and stiffened right before the harpy's iron claws landed on his head. He quickly fell straight backwards so that the claws, that had been reaching for Han Shuo's head, landed on empty air.

Just as the harpy called out strangely and was going to try to make another move, the Demonslayer Edge, interspersed with red light, suddenly slashed through the air and brought with it a fierce, flaming surge of strength that flooded into the harpy's body.

A desolate, low call sounded as the harpy flapped her wings, wobbling in a hurried attempt to leave the ground. The crossbow was already grasped in Han Shuo's hand at this moment and shot out ruthlessly after locking onto the harpy's thin neck.

Red light flaring out from her body, the harpy cried out in continuous pain. She was absolutely unable to stabilize her body at this time and naturally didn't notice an even more lethal attack nearing. The crossbow bolt strongly pierced her neck and sent her body flying backwards. Her

neck maintained the position of looking back up at the sky as she suddenly fell onto the ground.

“Oh, my gosh, he shot down the harpy!” Swordsman Andrew arrived swiftly after closing the distance and suddenly discovered that the harpy’s body had fallen to the ground. He exclaimed in surprise and found it hard to believe the sight.

The other adventurers, who had planned on reciting incantations or shooting down the harpy, also stilled the movements of their hands and looked at the harpy fluttering weakly in the distance, their faces also filled with astonishment.

Under Han Shuo’s thoughts, the Demonslayer Edge had used the magical flames of the “Mystical Glacial Spellfire” after plunging into the harpy’s body to incinerate her internal organs. No smoke appeared, but the harpy’s body quickly turned into a charred mess and the thick scent traveled even further.

Standing up and patting off the dust on his body, Han Shuo walked over to the thoroughly fried harpy, held his breath, and took out the Demonslayer Edge. Excavating the core of a level three magical creature from her body, he then chopped off her two iron claws and stored them within his space ring.

A level three magical creature wasn’t actually that easy to deal with, otherwise the six adventurers wouldn’t have had such a headache. The harpy has always relied on the overwhelming stench within her body and her position from high up in the air to be successful in every endeavor.

It was a pity that her two advantages were completely ineffective against Han Shuo, and she finally became a target for Han Shuo to take advantage of. Add to that the unparalleled sharpness of the Demonslayer Edge and the fact that it could strike at will in accordance with Han Shuo’s wishes, that was what caused her to die so quickly and terribly.

“Hi friend, you’re quite strong indeed. It looks like our concerns were indeed extraneous.” Odysseus had finally made it to Han Shuo from the distance and faced the latter merrily.

Although these people hadn't been of any help, Han Shuo had gained an understanding of their conversation and methods through the originals demons. He felt that these people were quite decent, and now that their captain Odysseus spoke thus, Han Shuo nodded with a faint smile, "I was only lucky, my real strength isn't even close to your level."

"Heh heh, you're too humble." Odysseus obviously didn't believe Han Shuo's words as he responded politely.

"Captain, since he's not in danger, I think we should continue deeper into the southern parts of the Dark Forest to continue searching for the 'Fruit of Dagmar'." Gordon walked over from the distance and rushed towards Odysseus.

"Ai, I wonder if the 'Fruit of Dagmar' that we're searching for really exists. A fruit that looks like a human brain, I've never heard of something like this!" Adept mage Aphrodite sighed.

Han Shuo had been about to take his leave when he heard Aphrodite's words and didn't leave immediately. He rather looked at Aphrodite in confusion and asked, "What kind of item is this 'Fruit of Dagmar'? Why is it shaped like a human's brain? This is really a bit incredible, can you tell me about it?"

"I've heard everything about the 'Fruit of Dagmar' from our captain Odysseus. He knows more about it." Aphrodite smiled in a friendly fashion at Han Shuo and pointed at Odysseus.

Odysseus smiled faintly, "Are you also interested in the 'Fruit of Dagmar'? Heh heh, the legends say that Dagmar was a demon who enjoyed eating human brains. It's possible for a very strange fruit to be produced in the place where he's buried. The fruit is the size of a fist and has dark brown veins running over it. It looks very similar to a human brain."

"It's said that the 'Fruit of Dagmar' has magical properties. Ordinary people will become confused and turn insane if they eat it, but it's said that if the 'Fruit of Dagmar' is crushed by a pharmacist, it can be made into very precious medicine. I've recently received a request from someone

and have decided to try my luck within the Dark Forest to see if I could find the ‘Fruit of Dagmar.’”

Han Shuo was suddenly bizarrely gleeful after he heard Odysseus’ words. In Chu Cang Lan’s memories, there was a fruit called “Divine Brain Fruit”. It had the effect of forcefully expanding the human brain. It could turn an ordinary person into a madman, but if a demon practitioner in the “molded spirit” stage like Han Shuo partook of this “Divine Brain Fruit”, then he could leverage the effects to greatly increase his level of training.

Han Shuo hadn’t contemplated in this direction to begin with because he’d thought that it was impossible for the “Divine Brain Fruit” to exist within this world, but Odysseus’ description of the “Fruit of Dagmar” were the exact same shape of the “Divine Brain Fruit.”

He was unable to resist the temptation of gaining a fruit that could greatly improve his current level of training. Han Shuo thought no more of it as he asked directly after Odysseus finished explaining, “If you don’t mind, I’d like to go search for this ‘Fruit of Dagmar’ with you?”

Odysseus and the six adventurers suddenly looked at each other after Han Shuo spoke. They all felt extremely surprised as they wouldn’t have thought Han Shuo would have such a proposal.

# Chapter 104: Forming a team for an adventure

“We’re actually not holding out too much hope on finding the ‘Fruit of Dagmar’, and are just trying our luck in the depths of the southern parts of the Dark Forest. We only know that someone has once seen this fruit somewhere, but we’re uncertain if that was the ‘Fruit of Dagmar’, or if it’s been taken by others already. Have you really decided to join us on this expedition to search for the unknown?” Odysseus looked at Han Shuo and explained seriously before asking him.

Han Shuo knew that this group of people didn’t have much surety after hearing Odysseus’ words, but he thought about it, and felt that he didn’t seem to have much to do temporarily, and would just be returning to the cemetery of death to engage in endless rounds of training to improve himself. If he was lucky enough to obtain the “Divine Brain Fruit”, then Han Shuo’s “molded spirit” realm would be greatly enhanced.

Increasing his realm meant that this would also benefit Han Shuo’s mental strength. Therefore, Han Shuo gravely considered and felt that the risk was worth taking with them.

Nodding, Han Shuo looked at Odysseus and said firmly, “Yes, I would like to go with you into the depths of the southern part of the Dark Forest, but if we are truly able to discover the ‘Fruit of Dagmar’, I wish to receive one as well.”

“Since you insist, we’re very happy to have you join us. I’m just trying my luck for the ‘Fruit of Dagmar’, so don’t have high hopes. Our main goal is to venture into the Dark Forest because it’s said that there’s even more tempting items hidden in its depths. Heh heh, if we do discover the ‘Fruit of Dagmar’, we only need one to fulfill our mission, you can take the rest, no problem.” Odysseus smiled.

The further one delved into the Dark Forest, the greater the danger became. The real danger would only be slowly revealed. There were even stronger magical creatures within, some mystical races, and all sorts of

lethal plant species.

But various alluring riches and fortune could also be found amidst the danger. Some exotic plants would grow only in the deeper parts, and many would fetch high prices. There were also many things that could be sold from the bodies of level one, two, and three magical creatures, but the caveat was that you had to kill them first.

The two sides reached an agreement and didn't continue tarrying. Odysseus introduced Han Shuo to his other companions and the group of seven set off deeper into the area.

The sacred ground that the forest trolls were protecting was not too far up ahead. The forest troll warriors were standing guard over the area. Although there was still some riches within the sacred grounds, Han Shuo already viewed it as his personal property. So under Han Shuo's purposeful guidance, the band of people avoided the area and continued forward after making a small detour.

They didn't run into much danger after walking for a day, and everyone made camp on the banks of a river when it was nightfall. They shoveled out some of the luxuriant growth of shrubbery in the surroundings and Aphrodite took out some tents from the space ring that she wore on her hand, similar to Han Shuo's. Everyone set up their tents, made a bonfire, and started cooking food.

There were fat fish swimming about in the clear river waters on the side. As a water adept mage, Aphrodite cast a minor water magic and caught roughly ten fish. Everyone used their self made wooden forks to spear the fat fish and start baking them.

After everyone had eaten the fully cooked fish and talked for a short while around the bonfire, everyone headed into their own tents to sleep. The female elven archer and the water adept mage Aphrodite slept in one tent, while the four males slept two to a tent. Han Shuo eagerly volunteered to take the watch, and found an isolated place to train his magical yuan when everyone had entered the tents and settled down.

With three originals demons by his side, Han Shuo didn't need to pay



much attention at all, but training his magical yuan was the foundation for Han Shuo's future development, therefore he couldn't slack off for a single second. He held up beneath the onslaught of sudden pain and pleasure in his mind and silently sank into his training.

It wasn't until the second half of the night when a sudden strange sound startled Han Shuo out of his training. He raised his hand to wipe the sweat away from his brow as everything his three original demons was observing fell into his vision. One of the original demons left its post and flew out towards the source of the sound, quickly approaching the origin in the night.

A twin headed dragon was staggering in from the distance. Fresh, green blood was flowing from one of its necks and it seemed to have suffered from heavy injuries. It flew swiftly, heedless of direction, towards their location. Although a twin headed dragon wasn't really a true dragon, it was still a strong level two magical beast. Han Shuo didn't know why it was so bedraggled and had fallen to the straits of fleeing for its life.

One of the original demons kept an eye on the twin headed dragon's movement, another split off and sped back in the direction that the twin headed dragon had come from, attempting to see what was out there that'd made the twin headed dragon run off, injured. It was a pity that Han Shuo didn't discover anything after the original demon had flown a certain distance.

Upon seeing the disoriented twin headed dragon was headed in their direction, Han Shuo immediately stood up and swiftly sped towards the people's tents, shaking their tent poles and calling out loudly, "Wake up, something's happening!"

Deeply asleep, the adventurers all groggily heard Han Shuo's shouts and swiftly put on their clothes, walking out of the tents within ten seconds. It was about to enter wintertime and the temperature at night was exceedingly cold. The six adventurers were solidly wrapped up with only their faces peeking out.

Because Han Shuo's surveillance had been conducted through the

original demons, the six people still couldn't detect anything out of the ordinary, even though the twin headed dragon was speedily approaching. Odysseus looked in confusion at the surroundings and then back at Han Shuo, "Everything seems very orderly, where's the situation?"

"A twin headed dragon is five hundred meters north of our position and is quickly approaching. I believe he'll be of danger to us and we need to prepare immediately." Han Shuo didn't have time to explain much to them and immediately voiced the truth.

Gordon didn't seem to believe Han Shuo's words and was about to open his mouth in doubt when Odysseus suddenly said in a low voice, "If this is the case, we'll make preparations immediately. A twin headed dragon's temper is violent and is not kindly disposed towards humans. I think it will bring trouble to us if it discovers our presence."

The female archer took out two arrows and said with some concern, "A twin headed dragon is a level two magical creature. Not only can it spray poison, but the two heads can attack directly with sharp teeth. It will be a difficult fight for us!"

Han Shuo took out his crossbow and climbed onto a nearby big tree, saying rapidly, "Don't worry, this twin headed dragon has already been injured. It can't even fly now. If we prepare accordingly, it won't be able to escape at all."

The band of people looked at each other in the eye after Han Shuo had spoken and all displayed expressions of surprise. If the twin headed dragon hadn't been injured, it would've been difficult for the team of adventurers to fight against, but if it couldn't even fly after being injured, this meant that the twin headed dragon was injured quite heavily. This was a heaven sent opportunity that they wouldn't let slip away.

Full of overjoyed surprise, some of them climbed up into tall trees like Han Shuo while some others hid in the shadows of the trees. They all took out their weapons or concentrated their mental strength to ready themselves to handle the twin headed dragon with a horrible sense of direction.

A rustling sound came from the shrubs that it swept past, and the injured twin headed dragon finally appeared in everyone's vision amidst great expectation.

Gordon, who had been doubtful of Han Shuo's judgment earlier, flashed him an admiring glance in the distance and gripped his longsword with excitement, intending on hitting the twin headed dragon with a swift attack.

The twin headed dragon with a bad sense of direction finally slammed headfirst into the wall of water that Aphrodite had set up. The enormous impact caused Aphrodite's wall of water to turn into numerous droplets in the air.

At the same time, Han Shuo and Nia (the female elven archer) attacked at almost the same time. Han Shuo couldn't fire the crossbow in quick succession, so the bolt he shot out landed on the back of the twin headed dragon's neck. Nia sent out three arrows, and apart from it dodging the first arrow, the other two were all nailed to its forehead.

The thunder journeyman mage within the group shot out a ring of lightning to attack the twin headed dragon's back. The three warriors who'd lain in wait for a while took advantage of this opportunity to rush out and dash towards the twin headed dragon, releasing their fighting aura to attack ferociously.

Up in front, Aphrodite created another two beings of water to attract the twin headed dragon's attention and create more opportunities for Han Shuo and the archer Nia to attack.

In this way, the level two magical creature, the twin headed dragon, didn't even have time to spray out poison under the heavy barrage. He'd already been injured and finally fell down listlessly in its blood.

The adventurers were incredibly excited when they saw that they'd killed the twin headed dragon and walked out cheering from their places of concealment, preparing to strip the trophies from twin headed dragon's body.

Han Shuo's face suddenly twisted drastically at this moment and he

suddenly yelled fiercely, “Hurry up and leave this place! The person who had been pursuing the twin headed dragon is heading this way and we have no chance of winning a fight against them!”

# Chapter 105: Not listening to advice

The six people had been ready to enjoy the fruits of victory when they were immediately startled by Han Shuo's violent yell. They all immediately reacted and sensibly gave up looting the trophies from the twin headed dragon's body. Their questioning gazes all swiftly locked onto Han Shuo.

After Han Shuo had repeatedly demonstrated his superb perception and corresponding strength, all of them now treated Han Shuo as the new leader at some unbeknownst time. Even Odysseus didn't possess any dissatisfaction and seemed to acknowledge that all this was a matter of course.

There could only be one leader within a team. Apart from possessing strength that compelled others to place their trust in him, he would need to maintain a calm mind and sensitive decision making abilities.

"Follow me!" When Han Shuo discovered that he had become the target of their acceptance, he didn't waste any time with empty blather or humility and opened his mouth to make this statement.

Han Shuo swiftly passed through the area with a turn of his body and shot to the left. None of the six young adventurers called his decision into question and immediately dropped everything they were holding, ignored the exposed tents and the body of the twin headed dragon on the ground, which was still warm, and darted out after Han Shuo.

A patch of enormous, towering trees suddenly appeared within everyone's vision. The towering trees here had thick foliage, covering the bright moonlight. The branches of these enormous trees were like the tentacles of a strange creature in the dark of the night and were a bit frightening.

When they reached this place, Han Shuo stared at one of the large trees and used the entangled branches to climb up. His body suddenly disappeared halfway up the tree. Of the six, the three swordsmen were quite agile and were only ten seconds behind Han Shuo. The two mages and the archer also climbed onto the branches with the assistance of the

others.

The group suddenly discovered that there was an opening halfway up the large tree. This big tree, that looked beyond solid and strong, was actually hollowed out. The seven entered through the opening, with four of them shifting to the bottom. Han Shuo, Odysseus, and Aphrodite in the back stuck half their heads out and looked into the distance.

“What is it?” Everyone finally caught their breaths at this time and Odysseus immediately looked at him in confusion.

“It’s a super level magical creature, the unicorn. This unicorn seems to have been chasing the twin headed dragon from the beginning. No wonder it fled desperately.” Han Shuo frowned as he explained to Odysseus.

The unicorn was as swift as lightning and its body had the marvelous property of being resistant to magic. The horn on its forehead encompassed an even more wondrous power. It was the antidote to a hundred poisons, the cure that could bring others back from the dead, as well as purify dirty places. According to the legends, the unicorns would only come near pure young girls and hated human males. Normally, unicorns wouldn’t do anything inappropriate if they weren’t infuriated.

However, Han Shuo could feel the wrath of this unicorn through his original demons, as if the twin headed dragon had done something to make it lose all reason. The super level magical creature had an extremely durable body and was resistant to magic. Magical and physical attacks wouldn’t have much effect on it, particularly because the strength of Han Shuo’s group wasn’t advanced enough, which makes it extremely difficult for them to harm the unicorn.

It was said that the unicorns had received the blessings of the gods. If anyone ever harmed or killed a unicorn, then this person would be cursed and have repeated bad luck. Therefore, despite a unicorn possessing a body full of treasures, very few people would throw caution to the wind and pursue a unicorn.

Odysseus and Aphrodite both inhaled sharply when they realized the

creature that had been pursuing the twin headed dragon was a furious, super level unicorn. They all counted themselves lucky to have escaped in time, otherwise they might've suffered painful consequences from the unicorn's anger.

As Odysseus and Aphrodite were rejoicing, a snow white unicorn with a horn on its head and a pair of beautiful blue eyes trotted out with elegant hoofsteps to the side of the twin headed dragon's body. Han Shuo and the others, a distance away within the hole in the tree, immediately concealed their presence. Add to that the fact that they were a bit of a distance away, they weren't afraid that they'd be immediately discovered by the unicorn.

The unicorn had been a bit agitated to begin with, but suddenly stilled upon seeing the dead body of the twin headed dragon when it arrived. It circled the body with light, graceful steps, and even extended a snow white hoof to kick the body. When it discovered that the twin headed dragon really didn't exhibit any movement, it stood stockstill and craned its pure white neck around, a very human-like confusion was displayed in its blue eyes.

The unicorn hadn't discovered anything after looking around like this. It then shook its head and shook itself all over, returning back to where it came from. The unicorn wasn't a carnivore, so the body of the twin headed dragon held no attraction for it. No matter what the twin headed dragon had done to infuriate it, it was now dead and thus the unicorn was satisfied.

One of the original demons closely followed the unicorn until it picked up speed and vanished without a trace. Han Shuo then had the original demon withdraw and said to the others, "The unicorn has left. We can dig out the magical core of the twin headed dragon now."

The others were full of confidence and acceptance towards Han Shuo's decisions and leadership abilities by now. Even Gordon, who hadn't fully trusted Han Shuo in the beginning, now looked at Han Shuo with a gaze full of sincere admiration. Everyone cheered happily after Han Shuo spoke these words and slowly crawled out from the hole within the tree, planning to collect the spoils of war from the twin headed dragon.

A strange sound suddenly arrived in their ears as a manticore bearing a silver haired youth with an inflexible will suddenly appeared next to the twin headed dragon.

There was a paralyzing venom within every manticore's tail and its claws were ferocious when tearing into flesh. Add to that its agile movements and powerful jumps, it was a level one beast trickier than the twin headed dragon to handle. The manticore was a very headache inducing existence within the Dark Forest. Who would've thought that such a magical beast would be tamed by others?

The owner of manticore was a twenty seven or eight year old youth. He was dressed carelessly, wore a space ring on his left hand, and carried a broadsword in his right hand. The lines of his face were resolute and angular. Although he wasn't a stunning man, he had his own allure.

"Oh. Looks like I'm quite lucky today to meet a twin headed dragon that'd just died." The youth murmured lowly to himself and urged the manticore to stop in front of the twin headed dragon, it seemed like he intended to reap the spoils of Han Shuo and the others.

At this moment, Han Shuo was a few steps ahead of Odysseus and the others and had jumped down from the hole within the tree. When he saw the youth was matter-of-factly viewing the twin headed dragon as his prey, he was immediately ticked off. Han Shuo chuckled coldly in the distance and said, "Friend, we killed this twin headed dragon with great effort. It's not the right thing to do, collecting the spoils without asking for the owner's permission right?"

The youth lifted his head to look at Han Shuo and say contemptuously, "All magical creatures have no owner within the Dark Forest whether they are alive or dead. Since I was the one who had discovered the twin headed dragon, it's mine."

The youth ignored Han Shuo after saying this and pulled out a dagger from his calf, tending to his own business and attempting to yank out the poisonous fangs from within the twin headed dragon's head.

Han Shuo wasn't someone who possessed a good temper and pulled out



his crossbow to lock onto the other when he saw that the latter was completely ignoring his words. Han Shuo smiled coldly, "I'll shoot and kill you where you are if you dare move!"

"Oh, then I'll move for you to see!" The youth looked amusedly at Han Shuo and said this remotely. He immediately flicked the dagger and plucked out one of the twin headed dragon's fangs.

Han Shuo nodded and didn't say anything else. He planned on immediately shooting out this bolt and kill this stubborn fellow. Just at this moment, Odysseus suddenly called out, "No!"

Odysseus quickly rushed to Han Shuo and explained anxiously, "He should be the legendary Trunks. This is a demon riding a manticore. Anyone who irritates him will face enormous trouble. If he wants the twin headed dragon, then he can have it."

Han Shuo's expression changed as he looked in surprise at the youth, finally remembering that this person was the magical creature hunter Trunks within the Dark Forest.

The person's origin was mysterious. As a swordsman within the Dark Forest, this person's temper was eccentric and his personality aloof. It was said that not only did he hunt magical creatures, but he also hunted some of the adventurers within the Dark Forest as well. He was very adept at doing battle within the Dark Forest, and apparently even a great swordsmaster had met their death at his hands. He was a universally feared cold-blooded killer within the Dark Forest.

"Your friend's suggestion is good, you should listen to him!" The youth reached out a hand towards the twin headed dragon's other poisonous fang and looked at Han Shuo from afar, seeming to have concluded that Han Shuo wouldn't dare make a move.

Except, the whistling sound of a crossbow bolt tearing through the air greeted him. Han Shuo's expression was cold as he didn't listen to any of Odysseus' words at all. The aimed crossbow in his hand directly fired at Trunks.

Trunks was just about to remove the other fang and was quite

dumbfounded to see that Han Shuo had actually shot his crossbow. His body was already moving when he revealed his surprised expression, and he'd already taken a step backwards like a ghost.

Pfft. The force behind a crossbow bolt stuck the bolt deeply into the ground where he'd been standing, leaving behind only half a bolt that continued quivering in the ground.

If Trunks hadn't dodged in time, his body would've been pierced through when this bolt landed!

# Chapter 106: A terrifying enemy

When they heard that this person was Trunks, the other five adventurers, who'd rushed over, didn't dare act rashly or blindly. They only looked cautiously at Han Shuo. Who would've that what they feared would happen as Han Shuo had really made a move?

Trunks evaded the crossbolt and his face abruptly chilled. His sharp eyes gathered instantly on Han Shuo's body as he nodded his head and said, "You've got guts!"

He didn't make a move to take the other poisonous fang as Trunks grasped his broadsword in his right hand, walking towards Han Shuo with an even pace and looking at him with an obviously unfriendly expression.

"Misunderstanding, this must be a misunderstanding! My friend must've been too nervous and shot out that bolt!" Odysseus suddenly cried out loudly and explained to Trunks with a rueful smile.

At this moment, the crossbow that had paused was suddenly reloaded with another bolt, and as Odysseus was explaining frantically, Han Shuo took aim at the slowly approaching Trunks and shot another bolt out.

It was as if a slap had been flung directly at his face. Odysseus' expression was gobsmacked as the explanation in his mouth withered to ashes, halting him in his tracks.

Trunks' slowly approaching footsteps wavered as he once again wondrously avoided the crossbow ambush. He still walked slowly towards Han Shuo, his eyes staring firmly at him without a hint of relaxation.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo put the crossbow away because it was useless at close range. He then took out the Demonslayer Edge and was ready to withstand Trunk's attack at any time.

"All of you will pay for this!" Trunks' approaching body suddenly stopped as he said coldly.

"Eh, all of us... us?!" Water adept mage Aphrodite's face grew frosty as she murmured.

“It looks like we’ve run into trouble, then we don’t need to be polite then.” Odysseus had been avoiding a headlong conflict with Trunks during this time and sighed softly as he saw that they would be hard pressed to extract themselves from the situation.

When the captain, Odysseus, had spoken, the other five adventurers stopped hesitating and quickly took their positions, readying their weapons and prepared themselves to handle this thorny fellow, who had suddenly emerged from the Dark Forest.

Just when Trunks was about to reach Han Shuo, he suddenly unsheathed the broadsword in his hand and milky-white aura enclosed the broadsword. A beam of white light drilled through the air, making for Han Shuo.

The shrubs on the ground suddenly exploded and filled the air with powder wherever the white fighting aura passed over. The ground cracked open as well. There was a heart stopping frightening power encompassed within the fighting aura. Having fought with Phoebe, another swordmaster, Han Shuo could clearly feel that the destructive power Trunks’ fighting aura was even more domineering.

He activated the “Glacial Mystical Spellfire” and the surge of magical yuan flowed entirely into the Demonslayer Edge. After taking in abundant magical yuan, the Demonslayer Edge glowed with a fiery red light. When the white fighting aura drilled fiercely onto it, Han Shuo tightly grasped the Demonslayer Edge and abruptly slashed it downwards.

An explosion rang out as the milky-white fighting aura and the emanation of red light from the Demonslayer Edge collided into each other. A round hole, about a meter deep, suddenly appeared out of nowhere and charred smoke rose from the shreds of shrubbery within it.

Trunks stood where he was without moving, his sharp eyes still looking forward. Han Shuo, wielding the Demonslayer Edge, abruptly backed up five or six steps and sat down with a thud. The right arm that was holding the Demonslayer Edge was a bloody mess and it looked quite frightening.

“You’re actually not dead. You do have some basis to be arrogant.”

Trunks looked at Han Shuo and opened his mouth with some confusion

Han Shuo shook his right arm, shaking off the droplets of blood that had oozed out. He moved his body numbly, magical yuan circulating at a speed throughout his entire body that it never had before. He finally stood up again after pushing off forcefully with both feet.

Last time he'd faced Lawrence, Han Shuo had tested himself and found his strength to be higher than a journeyman swordsman. He'd brought his full force to bear when facing off against Trunks, who rumors had placed him at having already reached the realm of swordsmaster. He'd imbued ten percent of his magical yuan into the Demonslayer Edge and taken one of Trunks' hits.

The truth had proven that the strength of a swordsmaster did indeed far exceed Han Shuo's expectations. Perhaps Trunks hadn't used his full force in that blow, but he'd already caused significant injury to Han Shuo. If it wasn't for his wondrous magical yuan and durable body, an ordinary person's right arm would've likely exploded from this blow and would've been unable to recover from it for the rest of his life.

"Protect our companion." Odysseus called out calmly as the group of six adventurers immediately surrounded Han Shuo.

The archer Nia and two mages had already shot out their attacks before Trunks made another move, the latter still staring curiously at Han Shuo. The three warriors didn't take a step away from Han Shuo as they surrounded him on three sides, protecting him solidly.

Trunks swiftly evaded the attacks from Nia and the two mages. He didn't continue fighting as the manticore suddenly popped out for Trunks to mount.

"Friends, I'm going to get something to eat. You make your preparations, I'll keep playing with you later." Contrary to everyone's expectations, Trunks didn't continue attacking and rather spoke coldly from the back of the manticore. He then patted the manticore and it obediently brought him swiftly away.

One man and one beast crossed leisurely over the patch of luxuriant

shrubs under the wary gaze of Odysseus and the others. Those assembled heaved a sigh of relief when they discovered that Trunks truly had vanished. They sat a bit wearily on the ground after having their nerves stretched taut for a while.

“What’s the matter, why were you so impulsive?” Odysseus finally looked oddly at Han Shuo as he inquired.

Laughing ruefully, Han Shuo shook his head and said, “I’m truly sorry, I’m a bit of an odd person. Sometimes even I can’t control the things that I do.”

According to Han Shuo’s previous personality, he absolutely wouldn’t have chosen to become enemies with such a strong character, but for some reason, Han Shuo could accept being threatened by others less and less now. Even if the threats were backed up with a strong destructive power, Han Shuo would still throw caution to the winds and defy them.

To be honest, when Odysseus had offered Trunks’ name, Han Shuo immediately hesitated internally when he understood the strength represented by this name. He’d even planned on putting down the crossbow in his hand and let him take the twin headed dragon away. He was unwilling to make such a strong enemy.

But he’d still made a move in the end, and he’d made a very resolute move. He hadn’t considered the consequences in the form of a devastating revenge at all. Even Han Shuo found his personality changes a bit baffling, and could only attribute it to the effects of the magical yuan.

“Perhaps we were too weak. To be honest your methods were quite admirable, but I think we’ll meet great trouble in the future.” Odysseus said as he nodded, looking at Han Shuo with a fervent light as sincere admiration surfaced in his eyes.

“The fact that you could exchange a blow with him and not die already explains that you’re quite powerful. Are your injuries any better?” The elven archer Nia walked to Han Shuo side and seemed to inquire after him with some semblance of concern.

Taking out gauze from his space ring and dressing the wounds of his

right arm simply, Han Shuo withdrew his weapon and finally spoke to the others, “I’m sorry for bringing so much trouble to everyone, and am very thankful for all your actions just now. Trunks won’t give up easily, I think we should discuss how to handle him after we remove the rest of the items from the twin headed dragon.”

Although the appearance of a new enemy made everyone a bit depressed, they’d still kept the twin headed dragon in the end. Now that Han Shuo mentioned the trophies from it, everyone’s morale lifted slightly and they happily took out daggers and walked towards the twin headed dragon, removing its remaining poisonous fangs and its magical core.

The poisonous fangs of the twin headed dragon were an important ingredient that could be used to refine some poison powders. If an alchemist transmuted it, it could even be used in magical arrows and explode with poison halfway through flight, causing lethal injuries to enemies within a short range. As a level two magical creature, the core of the twin headed dragon was also very precious and could be sold for at least one thousand gold coins.

Under Han Shuo’s insistence, the magical core was given to Odysseus as a sort of compensation for the aid that Odysseus and the others had given just now. Han Shuo placed the poisonous fangs of the twin headed dragons in his storage ring, planning to use them amply in the future if there was the chance.

After finishing these tasks, the sky was already beginning to brighten. The group packed their luggage and continued south, deeper into the Dark Forest.

The band discussed as they walked, attempting to find a way to fight against Trunks.

“Trunks has been viewed as a terrifying existence ever since he appeared in the Dark Forest. The beasts and people that appear within the deeper reaches of the Dark Forest are very strong. The adventurers that win a few battle trophies there would often sink into struggles of life and death. Even the companions that accompany you here are very likely to betray

you at crucial moments. Chaotic slaughter exists there, and those who can grow accustomed to that environment need a cold heart apart from extraordinary strength.”

“Trunks is amongst the elite of these kinds of people. In addition he is very familiar with the environment inside and is quite adept at leveraging the environment within the Dark Forest to brutally attack his enemies. Since we’ve run afoul with him this time, I think we’ll be attacked for sure later on in the Dark Forest. Therefore, we need to be on our guard and prevent sudden ambushes from him.” Odysseus described the chaotic conditions of the deeper reaches of the Dark Forest and the frightening parts of Trunks to ensure that everyone would be cautious.

“Be at ease, he won’t have a chance to ambush us!” Han Shuo smiled confidently after Odysseus had finished.

Everyone’s expressions were quite flabbergasted with these words. However, they didn’t immediately suspect Han Shuo’s words as they’d seen his miraculousness before. Gordon looked at Han Shuo with great interest and asked, “Why?”

Smiling mysteriously and meaningfully, Han Shuo swept a gaze at those assembled, “The twin headed dragon was five hundred meters away from us, but I still discovered its movements. It’s impossible for Trunks to ambush us. Be at ease, there’s absolutely no chance that Trunks can ambush us based on his great familiarity with the Dark Forest.”

With the existence of the three original demons, Han Shuo would be able to clearly discover any man or beast that approached. As familiar as Trunks was with the environment, he’d be unable to successfully ambush them as long as the original demons were there. Han Shuo wasn’t boasting emptily when he spoke of this.

“I think he chose to leave earlier because he didn’t have absolute certainty in capturing all of us, and decided to slowly handle us with the methods that he was most familiar with. If he’s unable to ambush us, then with the combined might of our seven people, Trunks may not have an upper hand, even with his manticore. We really don’t need to be afraid of



them.” Odysseus spoke happily upon seeing Han Shuo speak so firmly.

“I promise!” Han Shuo spoke affirmatively.

The group continued further south into the Dark Forest over the next two days. Beneath the astonished gazes of Odysseus and the others, when Han Shuo took off the gauze, his open wound had already completely healed and bore no traces of having been injured.

“This is amazing, it’s already all healed!” Gordon’s mouth was open with shock as he stared dumbfoundedly at Han Shuo’s right arm, observing it for a while and attempting to discover the secret behind Han Shuo’s insanely fast recovery speed.

The other five adventurers also looked at Han Shuo with eyes as if gazing at a monster. They hadn’t seemed to think that Han Shuo would fully heal within two short days. They were incredibly astonished when such a baffling matter was laid out in front of them.

After repeated reforging from the magical yuan, the durability and miraculousness of his body was something that they couldn’t even begin to understand. Han Shuo didn’t open his mouth to explain this as he found an excuse of a medicinal powder to gloss things over.

When night fell and everyone headed back into their tents, Han Shuo suddenly said, “Trunks wants to make a move. I think he’ll attack us tonight. We need to make some simple preparations and then you should attack on my orders. I’ll let Trunks understand how laughable his ambush is this time!”

# Chapter 107: A hysterical ambush down to the most minute details

One had to say, Trunks was truly familiar with the terrain of this area. He was like another magical creature when he was on the back of his manticore. He had extraordinary abilities to begin with, add to that the help from the manticore, and his overall knowledge of the entire terrain, he was a top notch expert in every sense of the word.

If it hadn't been for surveillance from Han Shuo's original demons, the group would've been at a loss on how to deal with Trunks' attacks. They would've surely suffered serious casualties in the dark of the night. After all, none of the seven adventurers present, including Han Shuo, would be able to take many of Trunks' attacks if they fought him alone.

However, with complete end to end surveillance from the original demons, all this had changed. Originally the hunter, Trunks would possibly become someone else's prey for the first time.

"He's coming." Han Shuo, sharing the same tent with Odysseus, suddenly opened his mouth.

Odysseus didn't express too much curiosity with regards to Han Shuo's remarkable perception. He only grasped the longsword in his hand tightly after hearing Han Shuo's words and stared at him, "How should we handle this?"

"Don't worry, Trunks is currently observing us. Let's go into action when he makes his move." Han Shuo closed his eyes and crossed his legs, opening his mouth in explanation.

Trunks was as agile as a monkey on several trees surrounding the area. He leveraged the pliable branches to pile up boulders between several trees and didn't make any noise. No one could've noticed him within the darkness.

There was still a bit of distance between the manticore and the camp. It was now slowly circling the tents. As an animal exceedingly adept at

hunting down prey, he was a hunter with quite a lot of patience, just like Trunks.

Trunks slowly landed on a tree above the tents of Han Shuo and the others. He looked down coldly at the tents below him, as if debating how to proceed.

He held a few small stones in his hands, sending two of them flying towards the tents, landing softly into the nearby bushes with a light sound. Several startled shouts rang out from the tents as Han Shuo and Odysseus abruptly walked out of the tents, investigating the area that Trunks had created a disturbance in with the little stones.

The manticore purposefully made a sound at the same time from the other side. Gordon and another swordsman looked at each other and headed in the direction of the manticore when they exited their tents. The two mages and archer remained where they were, observing the surroundings with alert eyes and guarding the area to provide backup for the others.

Just as Han Shuo and Odysseus had arrived at where the stones had created the noise and Gordon had also left with the other swordsman, Trunks suddenly made use of a pliable branch to swing over towards Gordon and the two others. It looked like he planned on taking care of Gordon and the two others first.

“Let’s go.” Han Shuo said lowly and circled around with Odysseus, approaching Trunks from another direction.

Gordon and the two others proceeded with slow footsteps, their gazes full of caution as they continuously patrolled and searched the bushes around them. The manticore was lying in wait in the shrubs ten meters away from them, and would immediately attack without warning as soon as the two drew closer.

Making use of the branches to swing back and forth, Trunks magically didn’t emit any sound and didn’t reveal any part of himself. He slowly drew closer to Gordon and the other, appearing swiftly above the two people’s heads.

A crossbow suddenly rang out at this moment. It appeared all the more ear piercing in the dead of the night. As he was swinging between the branches, Trunks suddenly discovered that this crossbolt was aimed at him and was incredibly astonished and shocked.

He didn't have any purchase for his feet as he was swinging back and forth, and could only twist his body to land on the ground in resignation. At the same time, the two mages and the archer, who should've been standing guard near the tents, abruptly miraculously appeared, with a water dragon, a bolt of lightning, and three arrows suddenly flying in his direction.

Halfway through the air, Trunks had no way to stop his body from falling. He defended himself with great difficulty as snow white fighting aura flared out from his broadsword, but in his haste, it was apparent that Trunks had taken some hits. Although he could chop Nia's three arrows in half, he was hit by the lightning blow and took the water dragon to the chest. He fell into the thick growth of shrubs after emitting a low grunt.

"Third tree on the left and five paces in front of you, attack!" Han Shuo suddenly called out calmly.

Several rounds of attacks were fired, their target was the newly landed Trunks. Several rounds of attacks abruptly landed after Han Shuo's soft exclamation. This time, Trunks evaded the attacks from the two mages, but a random shot from the completely invisible Nia just so happened to stab right into Trunks' butt.

A painful wail suddenly sounded as Trunks obviously hadn't found his bearings yet. He changed directions after crying out and attempted to attack them from another side, but Han Shuo continued to call out his location and the others sent their attacks crashing down, miraculously always where Trunks was.

"What's going on?" Suffering from the barrage of attacks, Trunks had never been more depressed in his life than he was today and finally could help but start cursing.

Trunks had always been supremely confident in his ability to conceal his

movements and ambush others. He'd never felt that anyone could see through his movement within the Dark Forest. However, he was coming off worse for the wear for the first time in facing an adventurer group with mediocre ability. He was always drowned by attacks no matter how he shifted and dodged, and he'd suffered from not so light injuries after a while.

The manticore, that'd been lying in ambush, finally couldn't restrain its impatience when it saw that its master's method didn't seem to be working. The manticore sent shrubbery and grass flying as it ran, and a tree as thick as a man's waist fell with a thud when its sharp claws slashed downwards. Its presence and momentum was astonishing to the extreme.

"The manticore is coming, attack!" Odysseus called out loudly as the three swordsmen suddenly spread out and blocked the manticore's path forward.

A portion of the attacks that had been targeting Trunks all along now split up and changed their target to the manticore charging over with utmost speed. Except, the manticore was tough and its speed was as fast as lightning. All of the group's attacks actually landed on thin air, with only the arrows shot out from Nia connecting with the manticore, but not causing much damage.

At this moment, a cold-faced Han Shuo started manipulating the Demonslayer Edge according to the Law of Refining Magical Treasure. A beam of purple light suddenly shot out, drawing a beautiful arc through the empty air of the night sky. It suddenly stabbed towards the manticore's back. As a level one magical creature, the manticore noticeably felt the approach of danger and then very agilely evaded the Demonslayer Edge's first attack.

At the same time, Trunks revealed himself as he limped and staggered out from the distance. He raised his broadsword with fury and approached the two mages and Nia, attempting to combine efforts with the manticore's strength and kill everyone present with no reservations whatsoever.

“Ignore the manticore, concentrate your attacks on Trunks.” Han Shuo suddenly called out, causing the two mages and Nia to abruptly change direction and continue attacking the swiftly approaching Trunks.

Of Odysseus and the two swordsmen, Gordon was sent to Nia’s side as the remaining two rushed towards the manticore and started using fighting aura to attack it. When Odysseus approached the manticore, the fighting aura that he’d gathered to its peak was destroyed with a slash of its claws. Odysseus himself was sent flying far into the distance. The other swordsman took advantage of the opportunity to stab the manticore, but he only left a small cut on the manticore and rather further enraged it instead.

The furious manticore raised his claws and attempted to smash the swordsman near him to death. At this moment, the purple light that’d disappeared briefly abruptly reappeared to suddenly stabbed at the tail of the manticore.

The manticore sensed the danger and dashed forward with a leap. The swordsman closest to it barely managed to hold onto his life, but although the manticore had dodged in time, the Demonslayer Edge had already sliced down its back and the frigid Mystical Spellfire surged into the manticore’s body.

Madly furious roars suddenly emitted from the manticore’s mouth. Since Han Shuo was manipulating the Demonslayer Edge, he could feel its wrath. He immediately focused all his attentions on manipulating the Demonslayer Edge, attempting to kill it where it stood.

“Damn it, you dare hurt my companion!” The limping Trunks had an arrow sticking out his butt. He was dripping wet due to the water dragon attack on his chest. Because he’d also been electrocuted, part of his hair was burnt and his original bearings had completely vanished. Blood also trickled unendingly out his mouth. He appeared completely bedraggled.

“I’m even going to harm you, much less than your pet.” Han Shuo said after snickering coldly, the Demonslayer Edge still doggedly hanging out the back of the manticore.

A shrill whistle suddenly sounded from Trunks' mouth. When the extremely maddened manticore heard the whistle, it immediately retreated and ran off into the distance. Trunks looked hatefully at those assembled after his sharp whistle and also fled swiftly in a direction opposite to the manticore.

"You stay where you are, I'll go after him." One had to take someone's life when they were down. Trunks was obviously heavily injured and Han Shuo naturally knew how to take advantage of an opportunity. When he saw Odysseus, who had been sent flying by the manticore, crawl up from the ground spitting blood with no danger to his life, he immediately chased in the direction that Trunks had fled.

# Chapter 108: Constraining a strong foe

Despite being injured, Trunks still fled at a quick pace. Some old, broken tree roots and thick overgrowth of shrubbery seemed to have no effect on him.

Except, the injured Trunks was unable to deploy his maximum speed, whereas Han Shuo was in peak condition and was leveraging the surveillance of the original demons, following Trunks like a tight burr on his back. The distance between the two grew continuously closer.

The arrow in his butt had long since been yanked out as Trunks started running. He'd planned on dressing his wounds first, but when he discovered Han Shuo's pursuit, he had to give up cleaning his wounds first out of resignation and flee heedlessly, whether or not his injury was still bleeding.

And so they continued this chase for more than ten minutes. Trunks' endurance was astonishing as he grit his teeth and continued to run. Every time Han Shuo appeared in his vision, he would tap deep into his potential and bring forth another burst of speed, attempting to shake off Han Shuo.

It was a pity that having trained his magical yuan, Han Shuo's originally weak personality had long since been trained to the peak of fortitude after repeated baptism via pain. Apart from the stubbornness of Han Shuo's will exceeding Trunk's imagination, his speed never decreased throughout the entire pursuit and in fact he seemed to be growing addicted to the chase and relished the chase more and more.

Although Trunks was exceedingly familiar with the surrounding terrain, with one of Han Shuo's original demons hanging around him, it was as if a pair of hawk eyes were circling him, observing everything. No matter what Trunks did, he was still unable to shake off Han Shuo by virtue of him being familiar with the terrain alone.

Finally, after half a day of pursuing and running, Trunks gradually realized that this couldn't continue in the face of his continued blood loss. He was unable to shake off Han Shuo, and with the increasing speed of



circulation of his blood combined with the inability of being able to treat his body's injuries in time, Trunks had a short spell of dizziness.

He leaned against a tree trunk and stopped, wiping away blood from the corner of his mouth and panted as he watched Han Shuo approach with decreased speed. He huffed as he said, "So it's only been you who's been following me. I think you're looking for death."

Panting twice, Han Shuo's fiercely beating heart, due to sprinting during the pursuit, slowly recovered its calm. He was already grasping the Demonslayer Edge in his hand and the expression on his face was neither joyful or tragic. He stared coldly at Trunks and was in no hurry to approach Trunks. He slowed down the rate of his footsteps considerably.

Although Han Shuo knew that Trunks was heavily injured, but as injured as a swordmaster was, he was still an exceedingly dangerous existence. A lethal attack could come if he let his guard slip. It was precisely because Han Shuo couldn't be certain how severe Trunks' injuries were. Therefore, he didn't actually dare make a move now that his prey had stopped.

"If you weren't injured, I'd have no chance of facing you alone, but with the current situation, we'll have to see if you still have any ability to do anything to me." Han Shuo suddenly stopped roughly fifteen meters from Trunks and roved his eyes over Trunks' body, opening his mouth to speak faintly.

Han Shuo once again took out the crossbow after speaking, loaded it with a crossbow bolt, and then took accurate aim at Trunks, using this to test Trunks' current body condition.

"Do you dare only test me from far away? If you have the same amount of guts that you displayed last time, you would be rushing at me with no hesitation whatsoever." Trunks planted his back against the tree and watch Han Shuo's movements with cold eyes, speaking disdainfully.

"Do you take me for a fool or are you the fool? You should know that our identities have been reversed. You're now the prey and I'm the hunter. I control how the game is played." Han Shuo was completely unconcerned by Trunks' mockery as he decisively shot out the bolt after taking aim with

the crossbow.

The tip of the bolt gleamed with a bit of a cold light in the duskiness of the evening sky. A sharp sound abruptly whistled through the air as the bolt shot towards Trunk's chest like electricity.

Trunks' expression didn't show anything out of the ordinary as his body flew out at almost the same time that sound whistled through the air. The crossbow bolt nailed firmly onto the big tree that Trunks had been leaning against just now. Having dodged the blow, Trunks' body soared through the air for a few meters as he adroitly crossed a distance of fifteen meters and landed in front of Han Shuo, his speed greatly outside of Han Shuo's imagination.

Milky-white fighting aura filled Han Shuo's vision in the span of an instant, like he was residing in the center of a tornado. Han Shuo's body was enclosed in milky-white fighting aura as his muscles instantly became taut. It seemed incredibly difficult to even make the slightest move and he could only watch as he drowned in fighting aura.

His body was unable to move, but the magical yuan within his body was flowing freely without obstruction. Han Shuo's mind and heart were of one thought as the Demonslayer Edge flew out of his palm, suddenly dancing in the air around Han Shuo's body. The air around Han Shuo's body was suffused with the light blossoming from the Demonslayer Edge in the blink of an eye.

A violent sound of metal clashing rang out around Han Shuo, accompanied with Trunks' furious yells of incredulity. Just as Han Shuo's ear drums were about to go deaf, all the ear grating metallic sounds vanished utterly and the previously immobile Han Shuo finally returned to normal.

"Impossible, this is impossible! How can your weapon still defend against my Restrained Dragon Slash? Just who are you?" Han Shuo immediately heard Trunks' shocked yells as soon as his body had returned to normal.

Concentrating his gaze, Han Shuo suddenly discovered that the

broadsword Trunks had been wielding all along had suddenly shattered with many cracks. Trunks' gaze kept darting back and forth between the broadsword and Han Shuo, a look of disbelief and incredulity on his face as he kept repeating, "This is impossible!"

Han Shuo's shirt had been ripped to shreds all over and now hung on him like a rag. Many long superficial cuts had appeared on his muscles, revealing the red blood and flesh inside. The Demonslayer Edge seemed to have been flung away as it laid motionless in the distance, but there weren't any dings or marks on it.

"Nothing is impossible!" Han Shuo suddenly bellowed and rushed forward with a sudden punch, taking advantage of Trunks' abnormal mental state.

It wasn't until this punch had made its way to Trunks' face before he was able to react, lifting the now rigid broadsword to block Han Shuo's punch.

Dong rang out crisply as Han Shuo's right hand went numb, but Trunks' body staggered backwards. Joy flashed through Han Shuo inwardly as he knew that Restrained Dragon Slash just now had taken most of Trunks' fighting aura. Therefore, he immediately drew close to Trunks and started raining down a crazy barrage of kicks and punches.

Renowned in the Dark Forest for being a character not to get on the bad side of, Trunks had now become the weaker side after being heavily injured. He retreated continuously under Han Shuo's string of attacks, until he finally fell backwards, as stiff as a board.

"Wait!" Just as Han Shuo had grasped the Demonslayer Edge again and was about to end Trunks' life, he suddenly opened his mouth to stop Han Shuo and looked at him, "No matter what you've come to the Dark Forest for, I can help you! We don't actually have any irreconcilable differences between us, just the matter of the twin headed dragon. That actually wasn't that valuable."

Han Shuo thought carefully after Trunks had spoken and discerned that this was the case. Han Shuo had made his moves earlier because he didn't

want to be threatened by others. Now that he wanted to kill Trunks, that was because he wanted to head off Trunks' possible revenge. To be honest, he didn't really have a deep hatred for Trunks.

He walked in front of Trunks and suddenly stabbed swiftly downwards with the Demonslayer Edge four times. He then coolly put the Demonslayer Edge away after a round of Trunks screaming like a pig being slaughtered.

The Demonslayer Edge stabbed downwards four times, piercing through the vitals in Trunks' two hands and feet. Although it wasn't enough to cause fatal damage, it also wouldn't affect Trunks' future training and strength, but he would absolutely not pose a threat to Han Shuo in the short run.

"My apologies, I feel that this is better insurance because you're a more than dangerous person." Han Shuo shrugged and said naturally, then smiled slightly at the grimacing Trunks after a pause, "I think we can have a good discussion now, will you be able to help me if I don't kill you?"

"Oh... it seems like another cruel hunter has appeared within the Dark Forest. Haha!" He first moaned in pain and then burst out loudly in nervous laughter, with absolutely no strength in his body. Except, his current bedraggled condition was offset by his burnt hair, and his expression was an indescribable sort of ugly.

"Behave if you want to live. Tell me what you can help me with." Han Shuo asked with a slight smile as he looked at Trunks.

"Then the first thing I need to ask is your purpose in coming to the Dark Forest. Why have you come?" Trunks' expression didn't have any traces of panic. Although he still emitted cries of pain, his expression was quite calm.

Starting, Han Shuo felt that there was no need to conceal anything and spoke directly, "I'm here for the Fruit of Dagmar. Can you help me obtain it?"

"I've been in the Dark Forest for many years and have heard of all sorts of legends. I know a bit about where the Fruit of Dagmar is and can bring

you there, but I'm not certain if I can obtain the Fruit of Dagmar either. If you let me go this time, I can promise to help you with all my strength and won't pursue this matter in the future. If you've heard of my reputation, then you should know that I never go back on my promises!" Trunks looked at Han Shuo as he promised solemnly.

"Deal!" Han Shuo nodded and responded quite decisively.

# Chapter 109: Reaching an agreement

Although Trunks was renowned for being a difficult character to shake off, his reputation was indeed quite good. After receiving his promise and having him swear a blood oath, Han Shuo didn't make further trouble for him.

Having been seriously injured, Trunks didn't pay further attention to Han Shuo as he struggled to take out some gauze and medicinal water from his space ring. He shook and trembled as he smeared the medicine over his injuries, and then grimaced with pain as he finished dressing his wounds.

"Your injuries look quite severe, how long will you need before you can fully recover?" Han Shuo frowned and asked when he saw Trunks like this.

Snorting bad temperedly, Trunks said, "Weren't you the one who caused my injuries? And you still dare to ask, but don't you worry, my injuries look severe, but they'll be easy to recover from as long as my tendons and bones haven't been hurt. Not to mention that the medicinal water I treated it with just now was developed from magical herbs that I picked in the Dark Forest. It's especially useful for scabbing over wounds. As long as we wait for my fighting aura to recover, I won't become a burden to you."

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "Alright then, let's return now then."

"Wait!" Trunks called out, and then concentrated he looked at Han Shuo's face, finally asking in confusion, "Can you tell me how you discovered me as soon as I entered your tent area, and why I was located no matter where I hid? Why is it that although I can first use fighting aura to lock onto an enemy before deploying Restrained Dragon Slash, so that they'll be at my mercy as long as their strength isn't greater than mine, your weapon still automatically flies up to protect you?"

"Sorry, I can't answer your two questions. The only thing I can say is never try to ambush me in the future. That will only be creating trouble for yourself." Han Shuo shrugged as he said to Trunks.

Nodding his head in understanding, Trunks said, "If no one can ambush

you, then your strength is several times higher within the Dark Forest. It looks like we may actually have a chance of succeeding on our trip to search for the Fruit of Dagmar this time.”

The way back expended more than five times the amount of time it'd taken for them to get here. Trunks' speed was greatly decreased because of his injuries, but he resolutely turned down Han Shuo's offer to support him, stubbornly insisting on walking by himself.

In this manner, Han Shuo understood many things about the Dark Forest as the two proceeded, finally making it back to camp late in the afternoon.

The tents of Odysseus and the others were all still here as they hadn't left. When Han Shuo and Trunks appeared, it was as if the entire group was faced with a great enemy as they all grasped their weapons tightly and leveled them at Trunks.

“Everyone put down your weapons, he will pose no further threat to us.” Han Shuo walked over and tried to convince the others with a grave face that there was no need to brandish their weapons.

When everyone heard Han Shuo's words and saw Trunks' bedraggled condition, they hesitated for a moment and then withdrew the weapons in their hands. Water adept mage Aphrodite asked askance, “Han, what's going on?”

“I'll tell you later, how's Odysseus' wounds?” Han Shuo asked Aphrodite with a creased brow.

Casting an unfriendly glance at Trunks, Aphrodite opened her mouth to say, “There's no threat to his life, but there's a bloody imprint on his chest after the manticore struck him. His entire body is very stiff now and very odd. I feel that even if he recovers in the future, I'm afraid that the injury to his chest will affect his strength. He's just gone to lay down and rest.”

Everyone's eyes were filled with hate and bitterness when Aphrodite spoke her piece and swept gazes over Trunks' body, seeming to want to draw their weapons at any time to give Trunks a thorough, painful beating.

“Han, can you tell us why you’ve brought this person? Oh, I know, you captured him alive in order to execute him in front of Odysseus?” Gordon stared tightly at Han Shuo as he asked with a darkened face.

Because of captain Odysseus’ injuries, these people now had a hard time to conceal hatred towards Trunks. Han Shuo could feel the anger within their hearts from their tones and expressions. If it hadn’t been for Han Shuo restraining them just now, it was likely that Trunks would’ve suffered an immediate, furious revenge as soon as he’d appeared.

But Han Shuo now needed Trunks to lead him to search for the Fruit of Dagmar, therefore Han Shuo couldn’t let these people hurt Trunks yet. Han Shuo hesitated upon seeing Gordon’s vicious expression, and then explained what had happened.

When Han Shuo finished, Gordon laughed coldly and said loudly, “Screw that Fruit of Dagmar! Odysseus was heavily injured. What we need is no longer the Fruit of Dagmar, but this damned killer’s life!”

“Han, do you want the Fruit of Dagmar, or revenge for Odysseus?” Elven archer Nia suddenly looked coldly at Han Shuo at this moment and asked him faintly.

The other adventurers all focused their gazes on Han Shuo in a moment, as if waiting for his answer. At this moment, Han Shuo suddenly felt a huge headache. He hadn’t anticipated that Odysseus’ injuries would be so severe, and definitely hadn’t reckoned on these people’s concern for Odysseus being far in excess of their care of the Fruit of Dagmar.

Han Shuo hadn’t originally viewed these people as trustworthy companions originally. He’d come with them purely for the Fruit of Dagmar. He was a bit surprised by what was happening now, and was a bit touched by these people’s friendship with Odysseus, but because he had already promised Trunks his safety, he was at a loss for how to handle the situation in the span of a moment.

As the person in question, Trunks hadn’t said anything since arriving here. There was no trace of panic in his eyes, but he rather calmly took his measure of everyone’s expressions. He suddenly opened his mouth now



and said, "It looks like no one welcomes me, but I have a way to deal with Odysseus' injury. Are any of you willing to trust me?"

Han Shuo didn't wait for the others to speak after Trunks said these words and immediately asked, "You can help Odysseus?"

Nodding, Trunks said affirmatively, "Odysseus' injuries were a result of being clawed by the manticore. The manticore is my companion, I naturally know how to cure an injury at its hands."

"Follow me!" Having long since sensed Odysseus' breathing, Han Shuo didn't waste time in further chitchat and brought Trunks to one of the tents. He lifted open the flap to reveal a pale-faced, somewhat weak Odysseus.

A large hole had opened in the chest of the soft armor that Odysseus wore. It was now wrapped up in gauze, making it impossible to see the status of the wound inside. When Trunks and Han Shuo entered, so did Aphrodite and Gordon. The others surrounded the tent on the outside, on their guard against Trunks' lightest moves.

"Undo the gauze on the wound." Trunks instructed after walking in.

Ever since Trunks said he had a way to help Odysseus, the group of people hadn't said anything, as if waiting to see how Trunks would act before deciding their next action.

Gordon remained silent without a word, but walked towards Odysseus. He first woke Odysseus up, then undid the gauze on his wound beneath Odysseus' astonished gaze. A frightening injury to the point of seeing bone in his chest was revealed.

"Han, what's going on? Odysseus looked at Han Shou weakly and asked in confusion.

"Don't move and don't say a word. I'll explain to you when your injury stabilizes!" Han Shuo said softly as he drew nearer to Odysseus.

At this moment, Trunks took a flask of medicine from his space ring and poured out some red powder from it, slowly applying it to Odysseus' wound on his chest. He explained faintly, "The tail of the manticore has an

extreme poison that paralyzes the entire body. The claws have it too, but it's not as strong as the amount on the tail. The powder I'm applying can remove the poisonous effects of the manticore's claws and increase the rate in which his injuries scab over."

"If you still want to obtain the Fruit of Dagmar, you'll meet the Medusa monster within that swamp. The fresh blood of a Medusa monster has miraculous properties for wounds. As long as we can kill the Medusa monster and obtain its blood, I promise that he'll have no aftereffects once we wipe it down on him. The speed in which the injuries of his chest will heal at will be even faster in the future." Trunks explained faintly as he flicked a glance at Grodon.

Looking at Gordon and then at Aphrodite, Han Shuo said calmly. "I think we need him to help us find the Medusa monster for us. What do you think?"

Aphrodite and Gordon looked at each other, nodding at the same time.

# Chapter 110: The mysterious druid

One of the swordsmen made a simplified stretcher to carry Odysseus, who tried to defuse everyone's hostility towards Trunks upon understanding the situation. It was a shame that although people didn't continue to call for Trunks' death, they kept throwing dark looks at him.

Trunks himself was rather light hearted about everyone's enmity. Han Shuo even felt that he didn't care in the slightest. To his surprise, when Han Shuo asked him, Trunks merely responded coolly, "If it hadn't been for you miraculously discovering my movement, none of them would've left alive. I never pay attention to those who are of no threat to me."

In the days he spent with Trunks, Han Shuo learned a few things about the Dark Forest through him. Within the depths of the Dark Forest, everything was dependent on personal strength. Everything else was of secondary importance, of that, being indecisive or kind signified the weak. It would often cause one to lose their lives.

Everyone followed Trunks' instructions as they continued to venture further into the Dark Forest over the next three days. Odysseus' injuries came under control over the three days and they slowly started to scab over, but his movement was still restricted.

Trunks' injuries also recovered swiftly after having been taken care of, but because of the spikes at the tip of Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge, Trunks' hands and feet still weren't quite that agile. However, traces of color slowly began to once again blossom on his originally pale face.

When it was noon, everyone arrived at the edge of a pond. They found a big tree to place Odysseus down first, then decided to haul some water from the pond to drink.

Before the others had moved however, Trunks had been standing with Han Shuo and suddenly frowned, opening his mouth to tell Han Shuo, "Tell them to be careful. Do you see the seaweed within the pond? These seaweeds have sharp thorns in their roots and will pull you into the water as soon as they sense humans or beasts come close. They'll easily lose

their lives this way.”

Han Shuo hurriedly cried out when he heard these words. “Gordon, you guys stand there and don’t move.”

“If you hold torches, the heat from the flames will scare off the seaweed so that they won’t easily making a move.” Trunks said faintly when he saw Han Shuo stare at him.

“Thanks!” Han Shuo said lightly and walked towards Gordon and the others. He explained the dangers of the seaweed to them and reminded them to light the torches.

When they started moving according to Han Shuo’s instructions, one of the original demons standing guard in the distance suddenly discovered traces of the manticore’s movement. Han Shuo was startled and swiftly walked up to Trunks, “Your manticore is nearby.”

Nodding, Trunks looked askance at Han Shuo, saying, “You really can discover the movement in your surroundings. That’s right, I chose to walk down this path because this is where I instructed the manticore to wait. There’s a scent on me that only it can sense. I think it will find me very quickly.”

“So that’s the case, I hope you can tell the manticore to behave.” Han Shuo understood that Trunks kept his word as his reputation had always been good. He wasn’t actually afraid of Trunks doing anything, just that the manticore was a level one magical creature with boundless strength and could tell enemy from foe. If it started attacking him, Odysseus, and the others as soon as it appeared, then things would be a bit dicey.

“I know what to do, I don’t need your reminder.” Trunks stretched out lazily against a big tree and suddenly whistled violently.

The manticore, that had been circling in the distance, immediately closed the distance swiftly when it heard Trunks’ whistle. It was standing docilely in front of Trunks after ten seconds. When Gordon and the others, fetching water from the pond in the distance, saw the manticore, it was as if they’d all seen a great enemy. However, Han Shuo was able to calm them down with his voice.

It was at this moment that the original demon, who had caught sight of the manticore, suddenly saw a strange phenomenon. The branches of a lush, green tree suddenly twisted bizarrely, with the twisty branches turning in a circle a few times and suddenly strangely transforming into human hands and feet.

Han Shuo had also detected the disturbance there through the original demon, and he immediately focused his concentration on observing it. The twisting branches continued to twine around themselves and finally formed into a strange person covered with tree bark clothing. This strange person had dark green hair and looked slightly similar to the forest trolls, but had sharp ears and thus looked a bit like an elf.

Just as Han Shuo was perplexed, the strange person got his bearings and walked towards where the manticore had passed through. He muttered, "If the manticore is here, then Trunks must also be nearby."

Han Shuo was startled as he suddenly stared at Trunks, "A strange person is trailing the manticore. He just transformed from a tree and is now approaching this direction along the path that the manticore took. He seems to know you."

Trunks' lazy expression immediately vanished when Han Shuo's words sounded and he suddenly stood up, leaping directly onto the manticore's back afterwards, saying, "If I'm guessing correctly, that person should be the druid Caspian. As a druid, Caspian has the ability to turn his body into a tree and a large bear. He can also communicate with trees. I can't meet him with my current level of strength, we need to leave here immediately."

"Too late, he's already here." Han Shuo creased his brow and said suddenly.

Han Shuo had originally intended on deciding whether to leave or stay after asking Trunks, but who would've thought the movement speed of the druid Caspian would be so fast. Caspian had leapt towards a tree when Trunks was talking, and the supple tree branch was as if it had a psychic connection to Caspian, abruptly swinging back and forth and throwing Caspian in this direction.

Caspian had already landed with a thud in front of Trunks when Han Shuo had finished speaking. He looked at Trunks and smiled faintly. "Long time no see good friend. Shouldn't you return what is mine now?"

Trunks didn't respond to Caspian from the back of the manticore. The manticore leapt up and attempted to get far away from here.

The smile on his face remained unchanged, Caspian suddenly recited an old and ancient incantation. All the shrubs, trees, and flowers suddenly seemed to come alive in the direction that the manticore had taken and seemed to turn into countless numbers of large and small hands, surging towards the manticore and Trunks to entangle them.

The branches of a large tree in front of the fleeing Trunks wove into a net, blocking off his escape. The shrubs roiled like the waves and surrounded the manticore and Trunks. The manticore tried to destroy everything around it, but Trunks restrained it.

"Old friend, I can sense that you're hurt. The fact that you haven't fought back this time means you don't have complete surety of leaving me behind. It looks like your injuries are not light. Give me the divine wood scepter and I can heal your injuries. Isn't that good?" Caspian smiled at Trunks who had stopped in the distance.

Han Shuo and the others watched the conflict between Trunks and Caspian from afar and didn't interfere. It looked like Trunks had taken something of Caspian's and Caspian was merely asking for it back. From the current situation, Trunks was in the wrong and thus Han Shuo didn't intervene, and merely watched coldly from the sidelines.

"I'm injured, you wouldn't take it from me at a time like this, would you?" Trunks spread out his hands and spoke to Caspian after he'd been surrounded.

Caspian went silent for a moment and then stared at Trunks, "If I remember correctly, you stole the divine wood scepter from me when I was injured. I wouldn't mind learning from you if there's a need to!"

"Alright, this is your divine wood scepter. I've studied it for three months and didn't discover anything special about it. You can have it back."

Thinning his lips and smiling ruefully, Trunks took out an exquisitely crafted scepter that looked like it'd been made from old tree roots from a space ring, throwing it to Caspian from afar.

The branch from a large tree suddenly extended and magically wrapped itself around the divine wood scepter, bringing it to the hands of the druid Caspian. When Caspian grasped the divine wood scepter, a lively and strong presence of life immediately emanated from the scepter. The shrubs around him rustled, as if celebrating softly.

Caspian tossed over a small bottle the size of a thumb. When Trunks caught it, Caspian said faintly, "The Hundred Flowers Essence within it will be greatly beneficial to your injuries. Don't think of doing anything against me in the future."

Trunks accepted the Hundred Flowers Essence and shrugged his shoulders, not promising Caspian anything. Judging from his appearance, he seemed to be greatly interested in something that was on Caspian.

"Honorable noble druid, may I trouble you to heal my friend?" At this moment, the elven archer Nia suddenly walked in front of Caspian and asked very sincerely.

Caspian smiled faintly as he looked at Nia and nodded, saying benevolently, "Cute child, I am unable to deny your request."

Druids and elves were both followers of great Mother Nature, with only the most pious of her followers gaining the right to become a druid. This druid's ears are pointy, making it obvious that he had been an elf that had become a druid. No wonder he'd immediately agreed to Nia's request without further protest.

The druid Caspian walked to Odysseus on his stretcher, frowning after he cast a glance at Odysseus' injuries. Caspian then recited an incantation and dropped three drops of green liquid onto the wounds on Odysseus' chest, saying apologetically to Nia afterwards, "Your friend is heavily injured. My blessing of nature and three drops of lifewater will help him heal rapidly with no worry of infection. But when his injuries are healed, he'll be unable to engage in fierce activity. Otherwise, he might experience

vertigo or even faint directly. I'm unable to do anything about this, I'm truly sorry!"

"Many thanks to you, kind Caspian." Nia thanked and then said, "Trunks said that the blood of Medusa can help Odysseus recover fully. We'll find Medusa."

Throwing a surprised look at Trunks, Caspian said to Nia, "He's right. There is a magical blue blood in the brain of Medusa where the magical core is held. This blood can indeed help him fully recover. But my old friend isn't someone who likes helping others, why would he tell you this?"

"You've taken the divine wood scepter and healed the person. Isn't it time for you to return to the Druidic Order after chasing me for several months!" Trunks glared at Caspian from his side and said a bit irritably.

Nodding his head and smiling, Caspian explained to Nia, "It looks like my old friend is angry. Heh heh. He's actually not as bad as you think. If he's willing to help you, then you have an extremely high chance of obtaining Medusa's blood. My apologies, I still have things to attend to and can't keep you company."

"You're too kind." Nia was a bit startled and flattered as she hastily responded sincerely.

Caspian looked at Trunks and left with a slight smile, disappearing from everyone's view after a while.

"Let's go, we'll continue to be on our way and can reach that place after two days." Trunks snorted slightly with a cold expression after Caspian had left and urged the others to continue on their way.

Under Trunks' guidance, the group didn't run into any danger and arrived at a marsh that had a heavy stench after two days. Several enormous man-eater flowers repeatedly attacked Han Shuo and the others around the marsh. It was a good thing that Trunks had warned them before and the group was able to defend against the man-eater flowers together.



“The Fruit of Dagmar grows on a patch of sludge in the middle of this enormous marsh, along with a Medusa lying in wait. We’ve reached our destination.” Trunks pointed at the vast expanse of marsh in front of him and spoke.

# Chapter 111: The voice of temptation

The swamp's surface was extensive, with bones from humans and creatures subtly poking out of the grey sludge. It looked like quite a number of humans and beasts had died within. There were also various ugly and bizarre plants growing within the sludge. Sharp spikes grew on the plants' branches as they swayed aimlessly through the air. It all appeared quite eerie and horrifying.

The large trees around the perimeter were located on the edges of the sludge. When some leaves landed within the sludge, they would disappear without a trace in the blink of an eye, as if there was a demon hidden at the bottom of the sludge that swallowed everything. Waves of disgusting stench were emitted from the sludge and attacked the senses, causing the water mage Aphrodite and female elf Nia to crease their brows and cover their mouths, appearing quite ill at ease.

When everyone's gazes landed into the swamp, Trunks continued explaining, "The plants that live within are all exceedingly dangerous. The swamp will swallow all humans and beasts that venture in, and the stench in the deep regions also contain a slow toxin that drains one's energy. The Medusa that hides within this swamp appears according to its will and is very difficult to handle."

Han Shuo's gaze focused gravely on the large patch of swamp. His forehead creased after hearing Trunks' explanation as he privately weighed his options on how to proceed.

"We don't have the ability to fly and will sink into the ground as soon as we set foot into the swamp. According to what you've told us, the Medusa lives within the swamp and can completely conceal itself beneath the swamp. It can attack or retreat and holds all the advantages. The level of difficulty for us to fight it within the swamp is simply too great." Han Shuo said lowly after he'd put some thought into it for a moment.

Flicking a glance at Han Shuo, Trunks said, "The Medusa's strength greatly increases within the swamp. Even the manticore, a magical

creature also of the first rank would be helpless. We don't have the ability to fly and won't be able to injure it much at all, but if the Medusa walks out of the swamp, I think all of us combined will be able to solidly triumph over the Medusa. but according to my knowledge of the Medusa, it won't leave the swamp easily."

"Is there anything that has an increased chance of attracting the Medusa?" Han Shuo asked.

Shaking his head, Trunks said, "I don't know. The Medusa can emit a marvelous sound, and this sound has the power of attracting humans and beasts. It will suddenly attack as soon as humans or beasts get close to the swamp and pull its prey in. Thus, the Medusa has no fear of not having enough food. I don't know what else it needs apart from this."

After remaining silent for a moment, Han Shuo suddenly smiled, "Since this is the case, we can only use the dumbest method. We'll stand guard here and kill its prey as soon as the Medusa makes sound to lure in its prey. I think it'll be unable to resist its hunger after a few discoveries that no prey has approached it and will exit the swamp then. We'll make our move together and kill it then."

"Yes, although this method is dumb, there's no other way. My manticore and I aren't afraid of the Medusa as long as it leaves the swamp. If we add all of you into the mix, I think it'll be impossible for it to escape death."

"Alright, then let's make our preparations."

Several traps and simple fences were set up around the swamp, with everyone finally realizing how all encompassing this task was when they started to undertake it. The swamp was quite vast and it was quite difficult and exhaustive to completely defend it on all sides. The group spent quite a large amount of time before wearily finishing their preparations.

After resting for a night, everyone's ears were plugged the next morning as they took up watch around the perimeter in previously discussed positions. The territory of the swamp was too vast. Even with eight people and one manticore split up, they were still spread a bit thin. Han Shuo also released his three original demons and used them to patrol the

surroundings of the swamp, continuously paying attention to the situation.

The group waited with full attention for quite a while on the first day, but didn't discover the Medusa hunting prey. Just as Trunks had mentioned, the Medusa hunting was enough for it to be fed for more than ten days. The group had no way of estimating when it'd last hunted and so could only continue waiting with this brute force method.

The Medusa didn't hunt again on the second day, with Han Shuo's original demons discovering that a portion of the sludge within the swamp had suddenly surged upwards on dusk of the third day, revealing the Medusa's form within.

Just as its name stated, the Medusa's numerous strands of hair were made of live snakes. These snakes were incomparably elongated and extended in all directions of the swamp like tentacles. The Medusa's features were actually that of a beautiful woman. Her slender eyebrows and cherry lips were quite beautiful, but her mouth opened to reveal rows of sinister fangs. Its slightly revealed lower body was the body of a serpent. An ugly brown suffused its durable and thick skin, forming an indefinable, bizarre contrast with its striking face.

Although it displayed rows of sinister fangs from its open mouth, the Medusa was emitting an elegant and desolate sound of temptation. Han Shuo and the others had long since plugged their ears, but could still faintly hear the sounds. They all felt their hearts tremble, as if they'd experienced a baffling sense of attraction and had the desire to investigate the source.

It was a good thing that they could only hear a little and had the benefit of Trunks' repeated reminders earlier that morning. This was how they kept their heads and didn't walk towards the swamp, firmly standing guard where they were, their gazes continuously roving around in all directions and always paying attention to movements around them.

Slowly, the sounds of small magical creatures being attracted to the previously quiet swamp traveled to them. They were trotting along happily

as they involuntarily traveled in the direction of the swamp. A few larger magical creatures were also approaching from a distance.

Han Shuo and Trunks looked at each other, temporarily not activating the traps they had prepared earlier. The magical creatures that were appearing didn't possess much destructive power, so there was no need to use the traps. Everyone split up and carefully avoided the obstacles of the traps, making their moves mercilessly and started hunting down the smaller magical creatures that were slowly approaching.

It would appear that Trunks' injuries had recovered well. His efficiency was the highest amongst them all, and it was as if his body was another dangerous magical creature as he treaded through the trees and shrubbery, bringing with him waves of blood. He'd thoroughly cleaned up the magical creatures, that had been first to approach, in short order.

With the aid of the Demonslayer Edge, although Han Shuo's speed was slower than Trunks, he was still much faster than the others. The Demonslayer Edge was like a magical machine reaping lives as it twirled and easily slaughtered level five and six magical creatures.

After taking care of the low level magical creatures in their areas, Han Shuo and Trunks walked to another area and helped the others handle the swiftly approaching magical creatures. After a short while, the twenty or so small magical creatures that had approached had all been wiped out by the group. The value of these small, low level magical creatures was too low and thus Han Shuo didn't even make a move to collect the spoils of battle.

In this short lull, Han Shuo yanked out of the soft cloth plugging his ears and stood where he was with a grave expression. This greatly startled Trunks, who was beside him, as the latter made several hand gestures to Han Shuo.

The elegant and desolate cries seemed to be a lover murmuring lowly by his ears, giving one the uncontrollable urge to want to go to her gentle embrace and entwine themselves with her, voicing the agonies of yearning. This strange temptation instantly permeated Han Shuo's mind,

creating illusions for him immediately, as if it was Fanny who was calling out to him again and again in the swamp behind him. This caused him to uncontrollably lift up his feet and stride towards the swamp behind him.

However, he'd only taken a few steps after raising his feet when the thoughts in Han Shuo's mind churned slightly. Following that, indomitable will immediately halted Han Shuo where he stood. His body remained unmoving where he was as he defended against the onslaught of temptation with stubborn will.

After training his magical yuan for such a long period of time, Han Shuo had full confidence in his willpower. Magic and fighting aura were of no use in fighting the temptation emitted by the Medusa's voice, the only thing that could counter it was stubborn and tenacious willpower. It was precisely that Han Shuo felt his current self would be able to withstand her that he'd decisively given up the cover of the soft cloth. He was attempting to see if the Medusa's allure could shake his indomitable will.

The final result demonstrated that after training his magical yuan for such a long period of time, he had indeed developed an inhumane strong will. The cries filled with temptation proved to be full of temptation at first, but slowly started losing their effect, until Han Shuo was no longer affected.

The footsteps he'd started taking backwards once again moved forward with determination, the expression on his face carefree and natural. He was obviously not suffering under the temptation of the mesmerizing voice anymore. Trunks had been watching in astonishment from afar as he saw Han Shuo struggle with some difficulty in the beginning and then easily handle things in the end. He raised his thumb from afar, acknowledging Han Shuo's stubborn willpower.

Five to six level three and four magical creatures once again appeared in everyone's line of sight. There were also two frost eagles circling overhead. Han Shuo, Trunks, and the others cast looks of surprise and wariness at each other, focusing all their concentration on the lowly circling frost eagles.

The frost eagles were obviously affected by the Medusa and looked like they intended on roosting in the swamp. They wouldn't be flying so low otherwise. Grasping the crossbow in his hands, Han Shuo took aim at the outstretched throat of one of the frost eagles and an accurate bolt broke through the air.

At the same time, Nia and the other two mages made their moves, aiming for the other frost eagle. The frost eagles were quite large, and the Medusa wouldn't need to come out for at least five or six days if they fell into the swamp. This would waste all their previous efforts, and thus the group could absolutely not let the frost eagle land in the swamp.

The alertness of the entranced frost eagle was obviously not as it usually was. Han Shuo's bolt pierced through its neck and shot it down from the sky. On the other side, Nia and the other two mages' attacks were a bit feeble due to the distance. Several of Nia's arrows were stuck on the frost eagle's body, but didn't seem to do much damage.

Upon seeing the injured frost eagle fly over their heads and head for the swamp, Han Shuo became a bit anxious. The already fired crossbow needed a bit of time before a bolt could be loaded and the crossbow become operational again. He would never make it in time. Just as he was planning on taking out the Demonslayer Edge, Trunks suddenly flung out a short sword that was imbued with Trunks' fighting aura, sinking into the lower spine of the frost eagle.

Suffering from the severe damage from the short sword, the speed of the frost eagle's flapping wings decreased noticeably. It started to slowly descend as the manticore flashed out like lightning from a distance, suddenly appearing in front of the frost eagle and slashed with its incomparably strong claws, tearing the frost eagle's neck apart.

The magical creatures on the ground were all cleaned out with the efforts of the traps and three swordsmen. Just as everyone had heaved a sigh of relief, an elven maiden suddenly appeared in the distance. The elven maid's beauty was pure and unadorned. She was dressed in luxurious clothes as she swiftly approached Han Shuo's direction with a blank look on her face.

Horror gripping him, Han Shuo immediately shot out and blocked the female elf's advancing footsteps. He opened his mouth to say, "Stop, hurry up and stop!"

It was a pity that the mesmerized maid let had obviously temporarily lost her senses and completely ignored Han Shuo's words as she continued to walk towards the swamp.

"Not everyone has the same willpower as you. Stop trying to persuade her and just grab her!" Trunks couldn't help but roar out when he saw that the female elf approaching the swamp step by step and Han Shuo was still trying to persuade her.

Han Shuo blanked and finally reached out with the speed of lightning upon seeing the female elf make her way closer to the swamp, wrapping her in his arms and hauling her away from the perimeter, ignoring her struggles.

"Brother... brother!" The female elf cried out continuously and struggled continuously in Han Shuo's arms. When she discovered that she couldn't break free, her small fists beat fiercely on Han Shuo's chest as she desolately wailed, "Brother."

This level of attack was neither painful nor ticklish on Han Shuo's chest. He held the female elf tightly as he walked further away from the swamp. The Medusa's elegant voice became more and more hurried, but no more humans or beasts appeared in the surroundings.

After a short while, the Medusa finally listlessly stopped its calls of temptation and its body, concealed within the swamp, slowly revealed itself.



# Chapter 112: Slaying the snake together

When the Medusa slowly emerged from the swamp, Han Shuo discovered that it was even bigger than he'd imagined. Its hair full of small snakes was waving wildly as they extended in dance. Its serpentine lower body was as thick as a bucket, and its body was five or six meters long.

"Everyone be careful, I think the Medusa is ready to leave the swamp to hunt." Han Shuo could clearly see the Medusa's movements through the observations of his original demons and he immediately warned everyone.

"Bad guy, bad guy, big bad guy!" A scream rang out from his arms after Han Shuo's alarmed words and the beautiful and pure elven maiden in his arms started erupting in violent action, railing her small fists into Han Shuo's chest, accompanied by a look of panic.

Seeing that the female elf had regained her senses, Han Shuo immediately stopped holding her as the Demonslayer Edge abruptly appeared in his hand. His eyes calmly patrolled the four corners as he planned on finding an appropriate location to fight the Medusa.

"What, what do you want to do?" The elven maiden was greatly startled as she thought Han Shuo wanted to kill her. She took two steps back in a panic, a magic staff suddenly appearing in her hand and sent a sharp blade of wind hurtling towards Han Shuo's head with a magical incantation.

"Damn it, what are you attacking me for?" Han Shuo immediately roared furiously at this elf after he dodged it.

However, it looked like the elven maiden was even more irate than Han Shuo. She was staring at Han Shuo with extreme enmity and also said huffily, "What did you do to me just now?"

The hungry Medusa had obviously lost its patience when it saw that no prey had entered the swamp. Its colossal body moved swiftly within the swamp and drew close to Han Shuo's group.

Han Shuo didn't have the time to waste with the female elf at this

moment and beckoned quickly with his hand when he saw the female elven archer Nia walk over from the distance. He pointed at the clueless elven maiden and said, "Explain everything to her."

Han Shuo immediately left quickly after saying these words and arrived where Trunks, Aphrodite, and the others were. He spoke urgently, "It looks like the Medusa couldn't hold out against its anger and is attempting to leave the swamp to find prey. It's heading in this direction, everyone be on guard."

"The two mages hurry and leave, take up positions in the big tree behind the traps. The two swordsmen should split up and don't let the Medusa discover your tracks. Han, you and I leave temporarily. When the Medusa appears in a moment, we'll block off its path of retreat. It's extremely difficult to handle a Medusa creature within the swamp, but it may not even be up to the task of fighting my mantichore when it leaves the swamps. Therefore, we have a high probability of killing it, but the only thing is to not let it discover our tracks. We'll find it dreadfully hard to fight it if it returns to the swamp." Trunks suddenly spoke up loudly at this time and quickly instructed everyone to return to their posts.

At such a pivotal moment, even the other adventurers, who previously bore enmity towards Trunks, didn't say anything else. They all nodded and started moving according to their positions in accordance with Trunks' instructions.

Han Shuo nodded at Trunks and suddenly left, avoiding the path that the Medusa would definitely take. Han Shuo's grasp of the greater picture far exceeded everyone else's, due to the information he received from the original demons. The Medusa looked quite cautious as it warily crawled onto the shore, and wasn't in a hurry to immediately leave the marsh. It dithered by the side of the marsh, as if contemplating something.

The magical creatures that had appeared just now had been stripped of all their valuables and their corpses abandoned in the enormous trap that'd been previously prepared. The Medusa's beautiful head turned around a few times, her watery eyes appearing a bit confused as to why not a single human or beast had approached after hearing her alluring

voice.

After a while, the Medusa still hadn't seemed to think it through and finally left the marsh, walking towards the place where Aphrodite and the others lay in wait. Through the observations of the original demon, Han Shuo discovered that the previously angry elf had finally calmed down after Nia's persuading and was looking with interest in his direction. She finally backed up unwillingly towards the back under Nia's repeated encouragement, but she wasn't willing to move too far.

After leaving the marsh, the Medusa cautiously proceeded forward. Han Shuo and Trunks circled around and appeared from another direction the marsh, completely blocking off the Medusa's path of retreat. Han Shuo and Trunks traded a meaningful glance and approached the Medusa from behind at the same time, soundlessly, prepared to make a move against it at any time.

Finally, when the Medusa was ten or so meters away from the marsh, its undulating body suddenly drew near to the trap. Its bizarre body was elongated, when its upper body perceived the existence of the trap, it leveraged the strength of its lower body and slowly eased its slanted body out of the trap and moved away with the undulations of its body.

At this moment, a water dragon and lightning suddenly flashed through the sky, crashing down onto the Medusa with a thunderous roar. Up ahead, not too far away, Nia also pulled back her bow and fired. Several sharp arrows broke through the air and headed straight for the Medusa.

On the side, Gordon and the two other swordsmen swung out together and chopped down a branch that had been hoisted up high. A tremendous crack rang out as the sharp end of the thick tree branch came shooting straight down to the Medusa.

The Medusa immediately realized that it had fallen into an ambush, and its lower body magically curled around a big tree next to it. Its body had been about to fall into the trap, but flew high through the air and crashed back down onto the ground with a thud.

The branch that had been shooting towards the Medusa shot past where

its neck had been before the Medusa dodged, thudding into the bottom of the trap and ringing out loudly.

Aphrodite's water dragon crashed into the Medusa's body, but obviously didn't reach the amount of destructive power it should have. When the Medusa shook its head, the water dragon dispersed into countless water droplets. It was rather the bolt of thunder and lightning that caused the Medusa to cry out in pain.

Only one of the Nia's arrows pierced into the soft, tender nape of the Medusa's neck, but it didn't sink in that far and didn't cause a fatal injury. The Medusa's frantic, violent writhing proved that it hadn't suffered grievous wounds.

After the first wave of attacks had landed, the Medusa swiftly turned around and retreated. It didn't attempt to seek revenge on the people who had attacked it and crawled directly towards the marsh. It seemed that it wanted to retreat and fight back after entering the marsh.

It was a pity at this time that Han Shuo and Trunks had long since been ready. Brutal, milky-white fighting aura and the ear rattling whistle from the Demonslayer Edge rang out as they both made for the Medusa, suddenly appearing on the Medusa's neck and cheek.

The Medusa had been able to easily handle the previous attacks, but Han Shuo and Trunks' combined attacks finally let it sense the threat of death. These two waves of attacks were swift and fierce. The domineering killing intent encompassed within caused the highly ranked Medusa to deploy all of its energy.

Its enormous body suddenly became incredibly agile as its numerous snakes for hair suddenly danced. The hundreds and thousands of small snakes danced wildly in the air, transforming into a sky of tentacles to obstruct Trunks and Han Shuo's attacks.

Trunks' milky-white fighting aura and Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge attacks hurtled into the midst of the numerous dancing snakes and instantly filled the air with a bloody mist. The small snakes were pulverized into bloody chunks that were sent flying and plopped onto the

ground.

Both of their attacks were greatly weakened at the same time and couldn't approach the Medusa's vital parts at all. The small snakes that had been chopped off wriggled on the ground and struggled in Han Shuo's and Trunks' direction, attempting to swallow the two.

"Huh. Go to hell." Trunks snorted coldly as a longsword once again appeared in his hand. However, it wasn't the broadsword that had been chipped by the Demonslayer Edge.

Trunks' body was surrounded by milky-white aura and a gust of flying sand and small rocks exploded towards the small snakes approaching him, swiftly making for the Medusa. On the other side, a figure dashed out like lightning. It was the manticore who had long been lying in wait. It maintained the same speed as Trunks and shot towards the Medusa.

Han Shuo remained unmoving where he stood, closing his eyes instead and manipulating the Demonslayer Edge with all his concentration. The small snakes that covered the Medusa's head all screamed as they one by one, turned into a bloody rain that filled the sky. The indestructible Demonslayer Edge reaped the life of one small snake after another and chopped off half of the Medusa's small snakes in the span of an instant.

The other adventurers in the distance all surged out from the back when they saw that the Medusa had no avenue of retreat and was heavily injured. Even more attacks appeared with their combined efforts. Trunks and the manticore were even more fierce as they directly challenged the Medusa. Trunks had turned into a cloud of milky-white aura and his every move caused the Medusa's blood and flesh to fly everywhere.

Ranked on the same level as the Medusa, the manticore circled the Medusa on the ground and dashed to and fro. Its claws, that were as sharp as blades, left injuries on the Medusa so deep that bone could be seen. When all of the small snakes on the Medusa's head had been executed by Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge, the Medusa's struggles suddenly became quite listless and its writhing body suddenly became quiet.

# Chapter 113: This is called a hang glider

By the time that everyone had surrounded the Medusa, it had already fallen and lay without moving. Trunks leapt onto the body with sword in hand, slicing open its head and taking out the most valuable item from the Medusa with a look of joy.

Trunks dug out the core of the level one magic beast and the blue blood near its core. When Han Shuo had dashed over from the distance, the matters on this side had been completed, and even the corpse of the Medusa had been pushed into the depths of the trap.

The, elf off in the distance, followed closely behind Nia, poking her head out to gaze at the Medusa within the trap, saying softly, “How does this ugly fellow have such a lovely voice?”

“Angelica, you should hurry and go back. We have other things to do!” Nia frowned involuntarily when she saw the young female elf look on with a face full of curiosity.

“No, sister Nia let me stay with you. This is much more fun than being at grandpa’s.” Angelica smiled sweetly at Nia and shook her head, speaking shyly.

After Han Shuo made his way over, Trunks took out the magical core and the precious blood that he’d retrieved and handed it over to Han Shuo. “I’ll keep ten drops of the Medusa’s blue blood. You can split the rest with the others.”

A small bottle filled with the Medusa’s blue blood was stored within a crystalline, white vase. That and the Medusa’s magical core were all shoved into Han Shuo’s hands. Grasping the items that Trunks had handed over, Han Shuo asked, “How much blood does Odysseus need to fully recover?”

“I think five drops of the Medusa’s essence blood should be enough to help Odysseus fully recover. The essence blood has a miraculous effect. Not only can it increase the recovery speed of injuries, but it can reconnect separated limbs. If one’s arms or legs are broken, the essence blood of the

Medusa will allow the limbs to reconnect and grow without affecting movement in the future. Therefore, the Medusa's essence blood is very precious." Trunks looked at Han Shuo and solemnly explained the preciousness of the Medusa's essence blood.

Nodding, Han Shuo also took out a medicine flask and poured out half of the Medusa's essence blood and gave the rest of the bottle along with the level one magical creature core to Aphrodite. He said, "These items belong to you guys. Split it up with them after this is all over."

Aphrodite looked askance at Han Shuo and opened her mouth to say, "Isn't it a bit too much to give us all this? I think we should only receive either the Medusa's essence blood or the magical core. After all, the two of you put forth the most effort in this plan to kill the Medusa, we only served as a sort of distraction and hindrance."

"Take it for now, we have other things to do. If you've further considerations, why not wait until you've taken care of Odysseus? Odysseus told you before to temporarily listen to my words, I think you remember that."

The magical core of the Medusa could be used to create some mysterious instruments that would also have the same mesmerizing effect. If sold, it would absolutely be sold for a premium price. However, the Medusa wasn't Han Shuo's goal this time, but rather the Fruit of Dagmar that would be incredibly useful to Han Shuo's cultivation.

As useful as the things on the Medusa were, they had no direct usefulness for Han Shuo. Therefore, he was extremely generous in portioning out the spoils of battle from the Medusa. Han Shuo did so also because he hoped that when he obtained the Fruit of Dagmar later, he would have a higher chance of taking more of the Fruits. This was what he needed the most at the moment.

"Now that the Medusa had been cleared from the swamp, the only things left within the swamp are the man-eating plants and permeating toxins. It was said that the Fruit of Dagmar grew within the man-eating plants. We can come up with a plan to find the Fruit." Trunks looked at

Han Shuo and opened his mouth to make the suggestion.

Nodding, Han Shuo didn't say much and walked towards the swamp, deep in thought. When he came to the edge of the swamp, he randomly picked up one of the small stones on the shore and threw it into the distance. When the stone landed, it sank into the swamp within the blink of an eye and vanished without a trace.

Of those present, no one could fly through the air and only Han Shuo's three original demons could patrol around the swamp. When he arrived, Han Shuo sat down cross legged with a darkened face and focused his complete attention on manipulating the three original demons. They danced through the vast swamp and attempted to locate the Fruit of Dagmar.

When Trunks and the others arrived, they saw Han Shuo sitting cross legged without a sound, with even his eyes closed. Everyone was rather baffled.

"Sister Nia, what's wrong with that bad man?" The pure elven maiden Angelica looked at Han Shuo in surprise and asked Nia in a sweet voice.

Nia also didn't know what Han Shuo was doing and shook her head when she heard Angelica ask. She said oddly, "I don't know either, but Han Shuo is a marvelous person. I think he's doing some magical things again."

Trunks understood that some obscure secrets were concealed within Han Shuo's body. These secrets could cause even him, a fierce and domineering swordsmaster to have extreme misgivings towards Han Shuo. When he saw Han Shuo's bizarre appearance this time, he immediately thought that Han Shuo was doing something mysterious again. He immediately focused his attentions on observing Han Shuo's body and any abnormalities around him, attempting to find out the mysteries that shrouded Han Shuo.

Unfortunately, even with Trunks' extraordinary abilities and uncanny eye for fighting aura and magical power, the original demons had no fighting aura within them and weren't supported by magic. This made



Trunks' observation come up empty handed as he had absolutely no idea why Han Shuo did what he did.

One of the original demons made its way into the midst of the thickest patch of man-eating plants and suddenly discovered plants that looked humanesque within a claret red mound of sludge.

This plant looked like an ordinary person, replete with hands, feet, waist, and cheeks. It was hidden in the sludge beneath the waist with a thick stalk that was similar to a root, and there were three brains that looked like they had lost their fleshy coverings on the neck that were exposed to the air. The appearance of these three brains were the same as the Fruit of Dagmar that everyone had described.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo opened his eyes as an excited light sparkled and danced within his eyes. He said, "The Fruit of Dagmar is within that patch of man-eating plants. It has a humanesque stalk, but three fruit shaped like a human brain have blossomed on it."

"The Fruit of Dagmar is indeed within the swamp, but how should we reach it?" Aphrodite was first overjoyed at hearing this news, but then immediately reacted with a woebegone expression.

"Yes, none amongst us are at the archmage level and have no way of flying above the swamp." Gordon frowned and said equally weakly.

Trunks looked at Han Shuo who was deep in thought, thought for a moment himself, and said, "Han, all sorts of poisonous insects fill the swamp and there are slow acting toxins within the air. If you fall into the swamp accidentally, it would be very unrealistic to want to leave alive. I've thought for a moment and the only way is to make use of a few of the towering trees on the side of the swamp. If we make use of the trees' slender branches and swing out fiercely, we'll be able to briefly fly over the center of the swamp."

"However, I can't promise that the oscillation force of the branches will be able to send someone directly to the other side. In addition, you'd only swing through the center of the swamp for a brief moment. I think it's impossible to just so happen to swing by the Fruit of Dagmar and obtain it

whilst under attack from the man-eating plants in such a short amount of time.”

Han Shuo's brow remained creased in thought after Trunks said his piece, with a smile breaking out on his face all of a sudden. He stared at the female elf Angelica, all smiles, and spoke to her as gently as a big grey wolf talking to a white rabbit, “Beautiful, cute elf, did you cast wind blades on me just now, a magic that belongs to the wind family of magic?”

Pulling the slightly panicked Angelica behind her, Nia looked a bit oddly at Han Shuo, like she was a mother hen protecting a small chick. “Han, are you still begrudging what's just happened and planning on taking revenge against Angelica? Angelica has a noble status amongst us elves so I suggest that you don't make trouble for her. In addition, I won't allow you to do anything to her.”

“Anyone with smiles on his face is no one good, that's what grandpa told me. I feel very perturbed by his smile, he must not be anything good.” Angelica, behind Nia, glared at Han Shuo and proclaimed.

Shaking his head with a rueful smile, Han Shuo said to Nia, “Just what are you thinking about? I need Angelica to help me with a small favor, if she's a wind mage.”

Nia let out a sigh of relief after hearing Han Shuo's words, turned around to look at Angelica peacefully and said with a smile, “He's not a bad guy. You were casting wind magic just now, what level wind mage are you?”

“I'm only a journeyman mage, so I can't fly. Don't tell me to get that fruit, I'll fall!” Angelica squealed as her slender calves wobbled, her body floating into the air.

She was holding her breath and her tender, small face turned red from effort. She seemed to gather all her strength and took two ferocious steps upwards into the air, then fell down to the ground with a clatter. She spread her hands at those assembled and displayed a powerless expression. Her performance just now had been to tell everyone that she truly couldn't, and that she would fall down like this.

“Eh, I just need you to cast the journeyman magic ‘Grim Wind’ in a moment. Was there really a need for you to prove your ineptness?” Han Shuo didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as he looked at this bizarre little elf.

Sitting up abruptly from the ground, Angelica dusted off herself and stuck out her small chest, saying proudly, “So it’s just the Grim Wind spell? I, Angelica, promise to help you. What do you need me to do?”

Trunks and everyone else gathered around Han Shuo at this moment with looks of curiosity, waiting for Han Shuo to respond.

Han Shuo’s face was solemn as he stared deeply at Angelica, saying lowly, “In a moment, as soon as I leap off from a branch, you must cast the Grim Wind spell at me immediately. Remember that you must cast it when I push off, and be sure to grasp the best timing.”

“Han, are you really planning on doing this? The force from the branch’s velocity won’t be enough to support you to the other side of the swamp. Even with the aid of the Grim Wind spell, it’s still quite unrealistic. In addition, the Grim Wind Spell will only increase your speed in flying away, further decreasing your chances of grabbing the Fruit of Dagmar. I highly recommend finding another way!” Trunks frowned as he looked at Han Shuo, attempting to convince him.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo’s expression was resolute as he said to Trunks, “No need, I wouldn’t do so if I wasn’t fully assured of success. All of you be at ease, I have other methods as well.”

After saying these words, Han Shuo took out a tent amidst everyone’s surprise and slashed several times with the Demonslayer Edge in his hand. The tent ripped apart, Han Shuo then moved steadily and took out some durable rope to wrap around the tent.

After a while, Han Shuo stopped his movements and said with a smile, “I’ve created a simple tool. With the aid of this tool and the help of the Grim Wind spell, I am confident that I can pass through this patch of swamp, and under the conditions of slow speed!”

“Han, what kind of strange device is this? You say it can help you cross

through the swamp? I really don't believe it!" Aphrodite looked in confusion at the item within Han Shuo's hand and said in disbelief.

"This is called a hang glider and it can do it." Han Shuo picked up the simplistic hang glider that he'd modified from a tent and slowly crawled up to the tallest and most thickly grown tree on the side of the swamp beneath everyone's disbelieving eyes

"Have you really decided?" Although Trunks still didn't quite believe it, he was unable to penetrate all of the miraculousness of Han Shuo, and thus he didn't continue to try to convince him. He only asked for one last time after seeing Han Shuo crawl up the highest part of the tree and grasp the tensile, pliable branch.

"I'm ready, are you ready Angelica?" Han Shuo nodded and asked the beautiful elven maiden, Angelica, in the distance.

Angelica nodded proudly and said with great confidence, "No problem, you can start!"

# Chapter 114: Changes in the swamp

Han Shuo pushed off with all his strength and flew out using the pliable branch, his body drawing an arc through the air. When he returned to his starting point, he stomped down on the branch fiercely with both feet and his body once again flew out like lightning.

After swinging back and forth like this a few times, the degree to which Han Shuo's body was swinging out became larger and larger, and his speed increased further and further as well. The group watched him with astonishment as their hearts fluttered up and down in accordance with Han Shuo's swinging.

Just as Han Shuo felt that the speed of his swinging had reached its maximum, he called out loudly, "Angelica, prepare the Grim Wind spell!"

Han Shuo suddenly let go and flew out towards the other side of the swamp under the enormous momentum behind his motions. At the same time that he left the branch, the simple hang glider that he'd stored back in his space ring reappeared. It was as if a pair of wings had suddenly appeared beneath Han Shuo as he held them beneath his body.

At the same time, Angelica confidently chanted the Grim Wind spell, and a violent gust started blowing where Han Shuo was, propelling him forward as he hovered over the swamp.

If it hadn't been for the hang glider, Han Shuo would've surely flown out like lightning, and possibly fallen into the swamp like lightning as well, but with the aid of the hang glider and the movement afforded by the Grim Wind spell, it allowed Han Shuo to magically, but slowly float towards the center of the swamp with an unhurried, unrushed pace.

"Oh, my gosh, he's really doing it!" Nia exclaimed in surprise with a look of incredulity on her face.

The other observers were equally astonished, with only Trunks maintaining his calm as he said lowly with a look of gravity, "The toxic gas within the center of the swamp is the heaviest, and the man-eating plants there are equally difficult to manage. It won't be that easy to grab the Fruit

within a short period of time. I hope he succeeds as he wishes.”

Everyone finally remembered Han Shuo’s goal when they heard Trunks’ words. He wasn’t simply traveling across the swamp, but the most important thing was that he needed to gain the Fruit of Dagmar. After Trunks’ splash of cold water, everyone’s expression grew heavy once again.

As he slowly approached the center of the swamp, Han Shuo focused his concentration and tightly gripped the Demonslayer Edge within his hand. His eyes however, were tightly closed as he observed all abnormalities within the center through the original demons.

Finally, the Demonslayer flew out Han Shuo’s hand with an ear piercing whistle. The man-eating plants all extended their life reaping branches and twigs as soon as the Demonslayer Edge entered the swamp, attempting to entangle it within the swamp. However, the Demonslayer Edge’s keenness didn’t let Han Shuo down. Large patches of the branches and leaves were sent falling into the swamp under the Demonslayer Edge’s dance.

A patch of man-eating plants had already been cleared away in the span of an instant. As Han Shuo approached with his hang glider, the Demonslayer Edge hewed through everything according to Han Shuo’s will as expressed through the Demonslayer Edge. In this moment, Han Shuo, with his eyes closed, seemed to have reached some accord with the Demonslayer Edge, as if he had suddenly become that indestructible blade.

The three original demons appeared in that area at the same time, observing all changes around the Fruit of Dagmar from three different directions. As Han Shuo slowly approached, the patch of man-eating plants broke apart beneath the Demonslayer Edge’s slashing.

When Han Shuo was a few meters away from the center, Han Shuo suddenly opened his previously firmly closed eyes. His body slanted at the same time as his hand grabbed one of the ropes, fully focusing his eyes on the Fruit of Dagmar. He paid no heed to the man-eating plants around him, including the slowly spreading but faint, poisonous gas, as if none of

these dangers existed.

The people observing around the outside were also quite nervous right now. Angelica's breathing was increasingly heavy and her face was red with excitement, as if thinking that this situation was quite thrilling.

Whoosh the rope suddenly flew out, with the Demonslayer Edge that had been ripping through the man-eating plants suddenly flying upside down towards Han Shuo. Under Han Shuo's will, the end of the Demonslayer Edge brought the rope with it as it flew to loop around the Fruit of Dagmar.

A disgusting stench suddenly permeated Han Shuo's surroundings, making his chest suddenly feel tight in that moment. His mind was briefly disoriented, and the Demonslayer Edge, that had been making for the Fruit of Dagmar, suddenly descended, directionless, as Han Shuo lost his bearings.

"Be careful, hang on!" Aphrodite suddenly called out loudly from the shore as she reminded Han Shuo to keep his concentration focused.

His magical yuan automatically flowing to his chest, slowly removing the heaviness in his chest wherever the miraculous magical yuan passed through. His slightly dizzy mind finally stabilized. As his thoughts moved, the Demonslayer Edge, that had been about to sink into the swamp, suddenly emitted a shrill scream, its sharp edge trembled a few times as it flew like lightning towards the Fruit of Dagmar, bringing the rope with it and landing around the neck shaped part of the Fruit of Dagmar.

Han Shuo took a deep breath in and tugged sharply with his hand, the rope pulled tight on the man-eating plant. Having completed its mission, the Demonslayer Edge churned as branches and leaves were cut off, with multicolored liquid flowing out of some of the leaves.

Just as everyone's hearts were in their throats, the Fruit of Dagmar slowly left the swamp, little by little. Han Shuo increased his strength and then, with the aid of the Demonslayer Edge, cut off the Fruit of Dagmar from the waist. Han Shuo then abruptly lifted up and the Fruit of Dagmar came flying out of the swamp, along with the neck and arm-shaped

portion of the plant.

Slowly exerting force and withdrawing the Fruit of Dagmar, the hang glider enabled Han Shuo to fly through the center of the swamp and slowly travel to the other side.

“Rob them!” A shrill yell suddenly rang out at this moment, following shortly thereafter by four arrows, blazing with fire, flying directly at Han Shuo’s body. At the same time, the sludge on the ground suddenly formed into an enormous hand and grabbed at Han Shuo’s legs.

“Oh, damnit, enemies!” On the shore, Trunks suddenly cursed and yelled loudly.

Up in the hang glider, Han Shuo was only ten or so meters from shore. The threat from the sludge formed hand proved to be of greatest threat, forcing Han Shuo to call back the Demonslayer Edge to handle the great hand.

The four burning arrows would obviously not be that easily handled. Han Shuo had no place to exert force from in the hang glider and thus appeared a bit bedraggled. He blocked two arrows with some difficulty, with one of them still connecting with Han Shuo’s calf, bringing him a fiery pain.

Han Shuo could only slightly divert the other arrow’s direction, but it still landed on the bottom part of the hand glider and caused it to start burning.

“Be careful, he’s making it to shore!” More than ten people stood on the other side of the swamp, all of them waiting in readiness for Han Shuo to make it over. Their outfits seemed to indicate that they were mercenaries or some sort of private troops. All sorts of professions were mixed in.

Boundless fury suffusing his heart, Han Shuo itched to kill every single person standing on the other shore at this moment. These people looked like they had arrived on the other side of shore by coincidence. Because Trunks and the others were separated by the entire swamp, and they’d been too focused on Han Shuo, their alertness had greatly decreased and thus hadn’t discovered this group which resulted in them successfully



ambushing Han Shuo.

The Fruit of Dagmar was finally stored within Han Shuo's space ring during this entire process. He was in great pain now that a flaming arrow was stuck to his calf. The hang glider was also slowly burning and was crisping the sleeves of Han Shuo's shirt, forcing Han Shuo to endure the agony of being burned.

These people were ruthless alright. As the burning Han Shuo and hang glider drifted inexorably towards the ground, some of them fitted another round of crossbow bolts into their crossbows and attempted to shoot Han Shuo dead in mid air.

The manticore's roars suddenly rang out at this time. Han Shuo then saw a furious Trunks with killing intent shooting out of him dash towards this group of people with an upraised sword. Not too far away, Aphrodite and the others were also extremely enraged and quickly approached the other shore.

At this time, thanks to the efforts of the Demonslayer Edge, the sludge hand, that was likely to have been formed by an earth mage had returned to a peaceful state. When the whistling sounds from arrows rang out, the Demonslayer Edge had returned to Han Shuo's side and helped pulverize the crossbow bolts.

Bearing the agonizing pain, vast swathes of his arms being burned, and crisp hair, Han Shuo finally landed onto the other shore with the hotly flaming hang glider with soul searing hatred.

When Han Shuo yanked out the arrow stuck in his calf, he stood up resolutely with a scarily grimacing expression. A pair of proud, cold, and incredibly dangerous eyes shot towards these ambushers.

# Chapter 115: Demon Han Shuo

“Who are you?” Trunks first heaved a sigh of relief when he saw that Han Shuo had arrived safely, then fixed these strangers with a cold eye.

“Don’t bother with who we are. Leave behind the Medusa’s core and blood as well as the Fruit of Dagmar. You can keep your lives and leave.” One of the adept mages held a magic staff in his hands and said with a sinister face.

“Leon, we can’t let them off that easily. Heh heh, look, three beautiful girls have come running. We haven’t had girls in so long. Those three girls have to stay behind for our enjoyment as well.” Another senior swordsman, ferociously built like a gorilla, shouldered a broadsword as large as his body on his shoulder, as he leered with a lascivious grin.

“Angelo, your words make some of sense. I didn’t see the three chits just now. Haha, leave the three beautiful ladies behind and all your belongings. Strength is above all within the Dark Forest, you can get the hell out now if you want to live.” The adept mage Leon also looked at Nia, Aphrodite, and Angelica running in from the distance with great interest and spoke with a merry twinkle.

There were more than ten people in this group, with not only mages and swordsmen, but also archers, priests, and thieves. They were all well experienced and possessed uncommon strength.

“What, to the likes of you?” Han Shuo had walked over from the distance by now. He was suffused with a dangerous presence that he wasn’t bothering to suppress. Having been burnt, Han Shuo appeared quite grim and horrifying. Everyone felt a bit shocked and fearful as he drew closer, step by step.

“Han, are you alright?” Trunks couldn’t help but immediately ask when he saw Han Shuo’s outrageous appearance.

“This ugly thing is an eyesore. He clings rather stubbornly to life and hasn’t died yet. Brothers, take him out first!” Angelo called out with a cold face and spoke directly.

Gordon, Aphrodite, and the others had finally made it over. Han Shuo didn't say another word as his body flew out quickly and made directly for Angelo.

A faint, black demonic mist slowly exuded from Han Shuo's body. His desire to kill and anger reaching unheralded heights, it caused abnormalities in Han Shuo's unstable molded spirit realm mentality. The black demonic qi leaked out due to the effects of the magical yuan as Han Shuo sank into a stupor. There were only the violent emotions of bloodlust and destruction left within his heart as his eyes turned a frightening ghastly white, with no black pupils left.

"This, this kid is a bit strange. Everyone be careful." Han Shuo's current demonic appearance gave Angelo a fright and the latter immediately called out.

Although Trunks and the others couldn't see Han Shuo's expression from where they stood, they could also feel that something wasn't quite right with Han Shuo at the moment. Tendrils of black demonic qi interspersed with frightening, evil presence arose from Han Shuo's body. This kind of presence made one feel terror arise from the depths of their hearts.

"Let's go and help Han kill these people who wanted to take advantage of him when he was in trouble!" Gordon roared out and took the lead in dashing out. When everyone behind him saw Gordon make his move, they also started mobilizing without a bit of doubt.

Only Angelica stood there, a bit at a loss of what to do with herself. She spoke to Nia, who was seeking a large tree for cover, "Hey, sister Nia, should I help?"

"Just protect yourself! It's too dangerous right now." Nia called back impatiently as she'd already notched an arrow into her bowstring and taken aim at a human archer in the distance.

A forlorn and desolate wail permeated the entire surroundings in the span of an instant, as if it was the desperate wail of a demon residing in the depths of hell. Everyone's hearts trembled and their skin was clammy,

utterly shocked by this bizarre, soul-wrenching, shrill scream. They looked around frantically to try to identify the source of the sound.

“The sound’s coming from that kid!” Angelo was horrified as the veins on his forehead jumped, shouting as he looked at the swiftly approaching Han Shuo.

Everyone finally noticed that the source of the sound, as he shouted out this warning, was the Demonslayer Edge that was flying close to Han Shuo. A thick, demonic qi was bubbling up from the blade of the Demonslayer Edge and encircled Han Shuo’s body. The black demonic qi that circled around it danced like a demon that swallowed everything, causing others to feel an exceedingly evil visual impact.

“Kill him, kill him first!” Angelo was truly panicking internally now. An exceeding sense of discomfort rose in his heart as he suddenly started hollering.

Everyone could see Han Shuo’s peculiarities now, even Trunks, baptized by countless battles, felt an internal chill when he saw Han Shuo’s current condition. He couldn’t understand just what had happened to Han Shuo. The enemies were even more frightened and could only think of destroying this unknown danger.

Suddenly, several violent magical attacks and bolts from crossbows flew through the air, shooting towards Han Shuo. Even Trunks would’ve found it difficult to deal with such ferocious attacks.

However, the currently berserking Han Shuo emitted a low roar, like that of a wild beast, and pushed off with both feet, his body seeming to actually fly a few feet through the air and completely sidestepped the attacks, shooting directly towards Angelo. In the area where Han Shuo had just pushed off, several crossbow bolts and magical attacks from the enemy landed around a pair of sunken footprints.

“Damn it!” Angelo frowned and suddenly discovered that the frightfully grimacing Han Shuo was heading directly towards him. There was only the adept mage Leon next to him and the latter would be of no use at all. He could only raise his broadsword and strike a good stance, ready to give

Han Shuo a painful blow.

The Demonslayer Edge, that had been orbiting Han Shuo, magically flew out with a soul entrancing whistle, making directly for Angelo, like a demon to its food. His heart chilling, Angelo suddenly exerted force as dark green fighting aura surged out of the broadsword in his hand, forming a cross and striking at the Demonslayer Edge that was descending through the air.

A metallic clashing sound abruptly spread from where the Demonslayer Edge and Angelo's weapon made contact. After a round of howling, a crack actually appeared in the Demonslayer Edge as it swung to the side. Whilst Angelo was stricken in shock, Han Shuo's body descended from the air and crashed into Angelo with a loud bang.

A biting scream emitted from Angelo's mouth as painful keens sounded from a person who had just been arrogantly domineering. Han Shuo descended like a demon had possessed him and straddled Angelo's body, the Demonslayer Edge ripping at Angelo's body.

Angelo fought back, his blows interspersed with fighting aura. However, Han Shuo had no reaction when the attacks struck his body, and only responded with even more ferocious attacks. His palms seemed to have become sharp weapons as he ripped off Angelo's ears and sank his nose into his cheeks. The flesh within Angelo's eyes became a blurry, bloody mess, his eyes having already exploded into plasma and were leaking out in a gooey mess. Large swathes of flesh and skin on Angelo's chest were being ripped out beneath Han Shuo's crazy tearing. The scene made everyone else's scalp go numb.

"Save me, save me!" At this moment, Angelo's features had been obliterated and he looked even more frightening than Han Shuo. Only his mouth was left and able to voice desperate cries for help.

Having sunk into a demonic stupor, only the urges of bloodlust and destruction remained within his heart. There was no more of the usual placidity and restraint that could be normally found. He was a bit irritated by Angelo's calls and swung a fist down at Angelo's mouth. The sound of

teeth breaking rang out as Angelo moaned feebly and spat out bits of teeth.

“Oh, my gosh. How did we enrage such a madman?!” Leon, not too far in the distance, was getting an eyeful of Han Shuo’s brutal torture. A cold fear grew in his heart as his body trembled and he gave an involuntary scream.

Blow after blow from Han Shuo’s fists landed on Angelo’s cheeks and neck. He’d been moaning continuously before, but his chest now faced upwards and his cheek was against the ground. This posture noticeably indicated that his neck had already been broken and Angelo was long without breath.

“What’s happened to Han? Why is he being so brutal?” Aphrodite and the others had been about ready to attack the other side when they were all scared senseless, even forgetting to raise their hands against the enemies and could only stand there dumbly, watching Han Shuo continue his violence.

“Angelica, stay there and don’t come any nearer!” Nia saw that Angelica was curious and wanted to come over to check things out, and so suddenly yelled out loudly to prevent her from drawing close. She wasn’t willing to let Angelica see such a bloody scene.

“Don’t let them get away! Although Han is a bit out of sorts right now, we should still assist him.” Although Trunks had killed his share of people, Han Shuo’s current violence also made his scalp numb. However, Trunks was someone who’d weathered strong winds and big waves as well and understood what should be done at this point.

Trunks rushed over with his manticore, milky-white aura flaring out from his longsword and immediately killed a robber and an archer. His milky-white aura represented his identity as a swordmaster, and the appearance of the manticore indicated Trunks’ identity.

It was only now that these people finally realized that they had gotten entangled with Trunks of the Dark Forest, and that Leon cursed and said in pain, “Damn it, why were we so unlucky? It’s enough that we met one

crazy madman, but now we've run into this notable harbinger of bad luck."

"Damn it, why is it Trunks?! Everyone run!" Another swordsman also cried out with some trepidation.

The group of more than ten, which contained senior swordsmen and adept mages, as well as all sorts of other professions, actually had more than enough strength to defeat them. Even with Trunks on the other side, Han Shuo's group may not have full confidence in defeating them, but the other side was overwhelmed by Trunks' reputation and Han Shuo's outrageous reactions, and thus made the decision to retreat.

"You stay here, I'll chase after them." Seeing that Aphrodite and the others were attempting to follow them, Trunks suddenly called out loudly.

His voice had just sounded and didn't even have the time to taper off when the berserk Han Shuo suddenly leapt up from Angelo's corpse and dashed out with the Demonslayer Edge, making for Leon, fleeing towards safety, at the speed of lightning.

"That demon's catching up to us. Leon, how did you decide on picking on them? You've doomed us all!" One swordsman turned his head back to see Han Shuo appear and complained bitterly to Leon.

"Everyone split up. Although I can't tell how strong that demon is, he absolutely wouldn't be much weaker than Trunks given that he could kill Angelo just like that. You better hope that you don't run into him, or you'll be tortured to death." Leon immediately changed direction after calling out these orders.

Everyone had also witnessed Han Shuo's brutality just now and didn't need to be reminded by Leon. All of them suddenly changed direction and formed groups of two or three, splitting off into several directions to escape from the premises. Although they'd heard of Trunks' might, they also knew that Trunks had never killed someone so brutally. Therefore, they'd rather bump into Trunks and didn't want to run into the equally unknown, but much more brutal demonic Han Shuo.

Whoosh sounded out as Han Shuo appeared and rushed ahead without

stopping. He finally caught up with two journeyman swordsmen and one thunder adept mage in front of a river.

When the three of them saw that the person ahead of them was Han Shuo, they all displayed expressions of fear. Their bodies all trembled uncontrollably, and when they saw that Han Shuo was swiftly approaching, the adept mage finally roared, "Damn it, let's fight him head to head or we'll all be tortured to death."

After the thunder mage had spoken, he recited a string of incantations and five bolts of lightning, like traversing dragons, appeared out of thin air, snaking towards Han Shuo. The two journeyman swordsmen gripped their longswords and were a bit nervous due to fear.

It wasn't until Han Shuo had rushed in front of the two of them and evaded three lightning bolts, but was rendered greatly charred by two more, that the two swordsmen and mage were overjoyed. The swordsmen intended on killing Han Shuo after the mage had done his bit.

It was a pity that they had no way of knowing how strong and durable Han Shuo's body was. Although his body had injuries upon injuries after taking two bolts of lightning, he felt no pain in his enraged mental state. He crashed into the swordsmen and mage, immediately giving rise to a struggle between life and death.

After taking a few breaths in, he took two bolts of light from the swordsmen's swords based purely on an indomitable will. He killed the thunder adept mage, who had miscalculating Han Shuo's bodily strength and used the last bit of his magical yuan to severely injure another swordsman. His body finally thoroughly lost all strength and he sank down listlessly.

"He's done for, help me kill him, hurry!" The heavily injured journeyman swordsman lay in a puddle of blood and called out to the other fellow.



# Chapter 116: I'm actually a necromancer!

"Hurry, kill that madman!" The fallen swordsman screamed out.

"Shut up!" The swordsman, who had been walking towards Han Shuo, suddenly turned his head and stared coldly at the man behind him, saying with a stilted voice, "I'll kill you too if you keep yelling nonsense."

The person on the ground suddenly froze and used a completely foreign look to look at his companion. He asked in confusion, "Fronze, what's wrong with you?"

Fronze, who'd pulled his sword out and was walking towards Han Shuo, had a look of excitement and greed on his face. His gaze was only focused on Han Shuo as he opened his mouth to say with excitement, "I'm going to be rich. You better not get in my way, or I'll let you die along with him."

The person on the ground finally understood what was going on now. Fronze had now been drowned by his greedy heart and had no thoughts for his companions in his mind now. What was left was just his desire to strike it rich.

His brain prickling with pain, Han Shuo was slowly awakening from his demonic state, after experiencing a short period of haziness, Han Shuo remembered everything that had happened just now and immediately understood the urgency of the situation.

"The trophies that were harvested from the Medusa and the Fruit of Dagmar will all belong to me very soon. Go to hell you evil, crazy madman!" Fronze's gaze locked tightly onto the space ring on Han Shuo's hand as he said with a dark look of excitement.

Fronze raised the longsword in his hand as soon as he'd said this and stabbed it towards the completely listless Han Shuo. It looked like Fronze planned on taking Han Shuo's life first, before taking the space ring to analyze the contents inside.

Han Shuo swiftly chanted an incantation, and a bone dagger abruptly blocked the sword in Fronze's hand when it stabbed towards Han Shuo's

chest.

“Actually, I’m a necromancer!” Han Shuo looked bizarrely and muttered coldly at the shocked Fronze.

The bone dagger pushed forward as Fronze backed up involuntarily, startled. A little skeleton, wearing an enormous eye patch over one eye, swiftly approached Fronze with its bone dagger. The heroic little skeleton killed the previously injured combatant amidst a wave of metallic clangs.

The other heavily injured swordsman, who had been calling out for Han Shuo’s death earlier, naturally met the same fate. The little skeleton also killed him when the order was given.

Starting from the moment that this group of people had appeared, they’d used base and despicable actions to deal with Han Shuo. They hadn’t shown any kindness through it all. Han Shuo wasn’t a naive innocent child and naturally understood that an eye for an eye was the most appropriate downfall for them.

The appearance of the little skeleton saved Han Shuo from impending death, and completely upended the original situation. The bone dagger wielding little skeleton adeptly maneuvered the three bodies and collected all the valuables from their corpses, helping Han Shuo store them within his space ring.

Of the three, only the thunder adept mage had some valuable belongings, which included an expensive magic staff. There was also a few hundred gold coins as well as two or three level three and four magical creature cores. Apart from a subpar quality sword and some broken bits of gold coins, the two swordsmen had nothing else on them.

Sprawled listlessly on the ground, Han Shuo’s reasoning had immediately sunk into the midst of violent bloodlust when he entered the demonic trance. It was impossible for him to wake up before the magical yuan in his body and energy had been exhausted. This time, not only had Han Shuo fully expended his magical yuan after entering the trance, but his body had also suffered from various sorts of injuries. This was one of the times he’d been most heavily injured. He was even worse off than

Odysseus, who'd suffered a blow from the manticore.

It was a good thing that Han Shuo's tenacity was something that Odysseus couldn't hope to measure up to. Therefore, although Han Shuo was as hideous as a ghoul right now, and his body was so weak that it couldn't support him standing, Han Shuo still understood the condition of his body within his heart and knew that even without the aid of any medicine, he would be able to recover within a short period of time.

Han Shuo hadn't revealed his identity as a necromancer all along because concealing some of his strengths would be able to save his life in critical moments. If it wasn't for the fact that he'd still had some mental strength he could use when facing his attackers this time, he'd be hard pressed to escape death. If these people had known that Han Shuo was also a necromancer beforehand, then the conclusion of the battle would likely not have reached this current level.

He chanted out another incantation as several zombies and skeletal warriors suddenly appeared around him. They raised their weapons and surrounded Han Shuo, planning on handling any possible changes that might happen.

After waking up, Han Shuo immediately connected with the original demons and confirmed through them that Trunks, Aphrodite, and the others had already regrouped and were searching for him in this area.

Now that Han Shuo was incredibly weak, he couldn't move and couldn't speak loudly, but had large amounts of dark creatures that he could make use of. After giving his order, the little skeleton created a large disturbance and sent shrubbery and grass flying everywhere.

"There's movement over there, let's go check it out!" Trunks' ears were quite sensitive and immediately detected the disturbance. After pointing out its direction to the others, he brought the group to rush towards where Han Shuo was.

Having just summoned those dark creatures, Han Shuo immediately sent them back to the other dimension with his mental strength again. Trunks and the others arrived in front of Han Shuo after a short while, with

Trunks leading the group.

“What happened to you?” Trunks exclaimed and immediately ran towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo looked incredibly bedraggled as he was scorched and charred all over. Many parts of his body had been burnt by huge flames, and his entire face was a blackened mess. It was impressive that Trunks could still recognize Han Shuo.

“I’m fine, just didn’t think I’d meet this group of people halfway through.” Han Shuo’s voice was a bit feeble as he said softly after laughing ruefully.

“It’s my oversight this time. I was surprised by your unconventional tactics and let down my guard for a moment. That’s why this situation developed, but it’s not a big deal, things like this happen everyday in the Dark Forest. I’ve long since grown used to it all.” Trunks breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing that Han Shuo was still alive and shrugged his shoulders.

Gordon and the others all asked after Han Shuo, with Aphrodite saying afterwards, “Looks like things are as Caspian said, Trunks is a good man. At least Trunks only wanted the spoils of battle from the twin headed dragon last time and didn’t attack us from the start. He also didn’t say he wanted to kill us or have ideas to dirty us. I finally understand Caspian’s words after comparing Trunks to these people, I thought he was joking at first.”

Everyone recalled their encounter with Trunks after Aphrodite’s words and then thought of what these people had done. They suddenly felt that Trunks was rather kind.

“I’m actually not as you think and I’ve been constantly changing. When I first arrived in the Dark Forest, I was once as simple as all of you and once trusted the companions by my side, but after continuous operations, I came to the realization that apart from myself, I can trust no one within the Dark Forest. The dangers that exists everywhere mean you must harden your heart to face everything around you. Otherwise, whenever

you possess emotions of kindness or weakness, it may very well lead to your death.” Trunks shrugged and explained dashingly.

“What happened to you just now?” Nia asked Han Shuo with some trepidation after hesitating for a moment.

Everyone’s gazes flicked to focus on Han Shuo after Nia’s question, seemingly waiting for a reasonable explanation from Han Shuo. After all, his methods just now had been a tad ruthless. His expression had been greatly different from usual, giving rise to these questions from those assembled.

“The martial arts technique I’m training causes me to sometimes sink into a frightening stupor when I suffer from a strong shock because it’s not yet fully complete. I’m very sorry that I’ve caused concern for all of you because I was so enraged earlier. I don’t wish to be like this either, but this isn’t something that I can currently control.” Han Shuo was unable to explain anything to them with regards to sinking into a demonic stupor and could only explain it in this fashion.

“So that’s the case. You were very scary just now. If you can’t control this type of martial arts technique, then you should give it up while you still can. If you continue on this way, then that might give rise to unpredictable consequences.” Aphrodite looked sincerely at Han Shuo and spoke a few words of concern.

Han Shuo naturally paid no heed to her persuasion. If sinking into a demonic trance was something that could be controlled, then it wouldn’t be called a trance. A demonic trance like that wouldn’t happen so easily. It would only occur when a practitioner reached a certain realm, and would be triggered because of a particular mental state as well as other reasons. To Han Shuo, he could only remain vigilant against this occurrence, but wouldn’t give up training demonic magic just because of this.

“Alright, we should get Han away from here first and discuss other matters after reconvening with Odysseus.” Trunks first stared a bit strangely at Han Shuo and then spoke to Aphrodite.

Trunks’ suggestion was met with unanimous approval. Gordon and the

other two swordsmen made a simple stretcher, raised Han Shuo up, and walked towards where Odysseus was.

Along the way, Han Shuo learned from Trunks that this group of people seemed to be the personal guards of the McGrady Guild. Trunks had kept chasing them and killed many until he saw that they'd joined up with more guards. He detected that the other side's strength wasn't something that he could withstand alone, and doubled back because he was concerned about Han Shuo's condition.

Han Shuo had once heard of the McGrady Guild as well. It was a merchant guild that had a similar level of power to the Boozt Merchant Guild. Phoebe had fretted a bit over this guild previously. It was said that this guild specialized in the business of smuggling and sold all sorts of contraband between various countries. It had tight relations with the nobles of all countries.

The McGrady Guild didn't belong to the Lancelot Empire, but rather belonged to the Brut Merchant Alliance that had been founded by mercenaries and merchants. The reputation of the Brut Merchant Alliance wasn't much and they had only recently started operations within the Lancelot Empire. They'd caused a slight bit of loss to Phoebe's Boozt Merchant Guild.

The injuries on Han Shuo's body were so severe that they could be deemed too ghastly to look at. If such heavy injuries were on any other person and they were subjected to the hardships of making fast time on the road, they would've surely cried out, but after half an hour of being jolted on the bumpy road, Han Shuo lay on the stretcher with simply dressed wounds and never made a sound. This made everyone greatly admire Han Shuo's astounding ability to endure pain.

Not only was this the case, Han Shuo actually had the strength to continuously talk to Trunks and ask him for more information regarding the McGrady Guild. It was as if the grave injuries on his body, which caused the others' scalp to tingle with numbness whenever they looked at him, weren't something that he was enduring at all.

When everyone jointly dug out a cave and moved aside the boulders blocking the entrance, Gordon walked out with a wide, lopsided grin. Gordon finally couldn't hold it in and looked at Han Shuo with a look of insatiable curiosity and asked the question that was on everyone's minds, "Han, what kind of monster are you?"

Laughing involuntarily, Han Shuo's tolerance of pain and agony had already reached monstrous levels. He truly didn't know how to respond to Gordon's question. He could only laugh ruefully and shake his head, saying, "I'm just a bit more thick-skulled than you guys."

When Odysseus came out and Nia recounted all that had happened, the greatly recovered Odysseus listened with a pounding heart and was incredibly astonished by everyone's encounters.

"Nia, I think I should go back now. My grandpa must be getting worried." Angelica realized that no one was paying attention to her here, tilted her head, and thought for a moment, then spoke up in her boredom.

Nia smacked her forehead in sudden realization when she heard Angelica's words, "I almost forgot about you. Let's go, I'll take you to your grandpa's. It's too dangerous in the Dark Forest, so don't randomly run around next time."

Nodding, Angelica smiled sweetly and bid everyone farewell. When she got to Han Shuo, she waved her hand and said, "Goodbye bad guy!"

"Nia, will you be alright just by yourself? Gordon, you accompany her." Odysseus frowned and said to Nia.

Shaking her head, Nia smiled, "No need, captain. Her grandpa is just nearby. I'll yell if there's a situation."

She left swiftly with Angelica after speaking and vanished out of sight within a blink of an eye.

"I think my promise to you has been fulfilled, and that it's time for me to leave." Trunks looked at Han Shuo and opened his mouth to speak to him.

After spending a certain amount of time together, Han Shuo had discovered that Trunks wasn't as bad as outside rumors made him out to

be. At least, his actions during this struggle didn't make Han Shuo feel uncomfortable. Han Shuo had even unconsciously started viewing Trunks as one of his companions, and was a bit unused to the situation now that he heard that Trunks was going to leave immediately.

"Be a good Samaritan to the end. Look at how heavily injured I am now! You should stay and take care of me for a little bit at least. It won't be too late for you to leave once we're clear of this dangerous territory!" Han Shuo looked at Trunks as he joked.

"This wasn't what I promised you before. To be honest, our agreement should've terminated ever since you had the Fruit in hand. Helping you against enemies afterwards was already extra service. Don't be too greedy!"

"Look at me being injured now and Odysseus not being able to move. It'll be quite difficult for the rest of the group to walk safe and sound out of this dangerous area. I don't think you'd be so cruel hearted as to just leave us, right?"

Trunks was silent for a while after these words and finally opened his mouth to say, "How about this Han, promise me one thing and I'll protect you guys and help to get you to a relatively safer area."

"What thing?" Han Shuo was startled as he asked Trunks.

"I won't say what it is for now, but just remember that you promised me."

"Aren't you afraid that I'll renege on my word? Heh heh, I'm not a person of my word!"

"I believe you!" Trunks looks deeply into Han Shuo's eyes as he carefully pronounced each word.

Han Shuo suddenly quieted down and exchanged a look with Trunks. Although he was still grinning cheekily, he nodded and responded, "Alright, I promise you!"

Odysseus looked at the two with a look of gratification, suddenly feeling in this moment that these two people were similar in many ways. They



both had mysterious origins and were both strong. Their personalities were similar in that they were calm and composed when the unexpected happened, and they showed no hesitation when they should make a move.

Just as Odysseus was staring at Han Shuo, Han Shuo too was looking at Odysseus. He thought for a moment and said to Odysseus, “You ventured into the Dark Forest this time for the Fruit of Dagmar. I know that you had no high hopes originally and didn’t seem to value the Fruit as much as I did. As friends, I’d like to ask you Odysseus, do you really need the Fruit of Dagmar?”

“Not really. Our main goal in entering the Dark Forest was to increase our strength. Of course, if we were lucky, we would also gain some items of value. I think by now, we’ve completely attained our wishes. The Fruit of Dagmar was just a vague goal, we didn’t think that we’d really be able to acquire it. Normal people go mad if they eat this fruit so we have no use for it. We’ve only lightly promised someone that we would come and try our luck.” Odysseus also explained seriously when he saw Han Shuo’s face full of gravity. He then looked at Han Shuo with befuddlement, “Han, what are you asking this for?”

Breathing out in relief, Han Shuo smiled and nodded his head, saying, “Because I want to claim the Fruit of Dagmar for myself. The martial arts technique I’m training in confuses the mind like I mentioned. I can improve this condition with the Fruit of Dagmar, so if you don’t really need them, I’d like to keep all three for myself, but I can compensate you with gold coins!”

“Then take it all for yourself, heh heh. We’ve already received too much. You’ve given us the twin headed dragon and Medusa core. These will be enough to trade for gold coins. If you need the Fruit of Dagmar, then take all of them. There will be less meaning in all of this if you talk any more about reimbursement.” Odysseus smiled dashingly and said sincerely to Han Shuo.

Aphrodite, Gordon, and the others all indicated for Han Shuo not to stand on ceremony and said that they didn’t really need the Fruit of Dagmar.

“Then alright, I won’t hold back then.” Han Shuo really did need the Fruit of Dagmar in the demonic realm of “molded spirit” and thus he didn’t make any more hypocritical protestations. He accepted decisively and happily.

In the next couple of days, the group traveled back on their original path, with Han Shuo’s original demons scouting the way and under Trunks’ protection. They planned on leaving the depths of the Dark Forest as soon as possible.

Han Shuo had originally been so weak, that he had to rely on others carrying him around. He could actually get down from the litter after a few days. A pair of slender arms and pristine as jade cheeks were revealed after the old skin had scabbed over and shed from his originally severely burned arms and cheeks. There wasn’t the slightest traces of burns to be found.

The burned parts of his body and charred bits of his hair also returned to normal after a few days. The miraculousness of this made Odysseus and the others once again wonder, “What kind of monster are you?”

His magical yuan also recovering swiftly, Han Shuo carefully put away the Fruit of Dagmar during this process. He planned on consuming them when he was quietly alone after returning to the cemetery of death. The injuries within his body also recovered speedily with the circulation of the magical yuan. Han Shuo’s injuries quickly healed with the passage of each day.

On this day, Han Shuo’s original demons detected the passage of a large group of people in the distance traveling with earth dragons. He discovered the adept mage Leon within this group and suddenly discovered that these people were part of the McGrady Guild.

Counting the days and the distance they’d traveled, Han Shuo discovered that they were nearing the area where the forest trolls resided. He suddenly remembered those renowned robbers and villains were still waiting for instructions from their great Datara. Connecting the dots to those McGrady Guild guards and the despicable acts they’d committed

against him, a slightly chilly and cruel smile grew involuntarily on Han Shuo's lips.

# Chapter 117: Rob them all

“Odysseus, we met here, so let’s part here!” Han Shuo smiled faintly as he looked at Odysseus in the spot where they’d first met.

This was close to where the forest trolls lived, and after the healing properties of the Medusa’s essence blood kicked in, Odysseus could be assured of a full recovery from his injuries. After a few days of recovering, Han Shuo’s injuries had also mostly healed. There was no danger to him leaving now, and thus Han Shuo has raised the suggestion of departing.

All good things must come to an end. Odysseus and the others also knew that this location was relatively safe. After Han Shuo voiced his proposal, Odysseus nodded with resignation and said, “Since this is the case, then let’s part here. I hope we will be able to meet again in the future.”

Everyone bade Han Shuo and Trunks farewell a bit reluctantly and slowly left the area, moving to the outskirts of the Dark Forest as Han Shuo and Trunks waved them onwards.

It wasn’t until Odysseus and the party of six had vanished from sight that Trunks finally said, “You no longer need my protection with your current body condition, it looks like it’s time for me to leave!”

Han Shuo looked at Trunks and shook his head, smiling, “You can’t leave yet.”

“Why?”

“I’m quite furious with the injuries that the McGrady Guild has gifted me. My anger won’t be assuaged before that earth adept mage Leon has died by my hands. Heh heh, I’ve discovered that you and the manticore have been disappearing for certain periods at a time recently. Have you already discovered traces of the McGrady Guild and are planning on slowly making a move against them?”

Trunks said with a dumbfounded look when he heard those words, “It looks like there is indeed something mysterious about you. It’s like there’s

nothing I can hide from you. Indeed, I am planning on making a move against the McGrady Guild, but there's an archmage holding down the fort within it. They also have a lot of helpers, so I can only make moves in the darkness and wouldn't dare to be an openly declared enemy of theirs. You're currently injured, so if we were to start fighting, you won't have much of an effect. That's why I ruled you out."

Looking deeply at Trunks, Han Shuo mused silently for a bit and then opened his mouth to say, "I have a way to handle the McGrady Guild, and I also know that they'll pass through here. It will be tough for me to handle an archmage. As long as you help me handle the archmage, leave the rest to me."

"Are you crazy? The McGrady Guild is traveling on the back of earth dragons, and all their followers, guards, and others add up to a hundred or so in number. There are sixty to seventy guards of various professions within this powerful group, do you think you can handle so many with your power alone?" Trunks stared at Han Shuo and exclaimed in bafflement.

Smiling slightly with great meaning, Han Shuo said, "Don't worry about that. You'll understand why I can handle them after I appear. From now on, just follow the McGrady Guild. You'll see how heavy of a price they will pay after a while."

Han Shuo didn't stay for further questioning after saying his piece and left with a long laugh, walking in another direction and leaving behind Trunks with a face full of confusion.

After arriving at the forest trolls' sacred ground, Han Shuo summoned the little skeleton and took out the raft that the forest trolls had hidden here, taking him downstream to the forest trolls' residence.

When the little skeleton appeared, the silent forest troll tribe immediately sank into a panic. The forest troll warriors who led the way in immediately ran inside after arriving, and the excited old priest came scrambling out shortly thereafter, falling to his knees in front of the little skeleton and started genuflecting loudly.

“The great Datara commands you to fully equip and ready yourselves. The great Datara plans on leading you into battle to rob a large human merchant train passing by.” Han Shuo threw his head back and issued orders in a proud fashion.

All of the forest trolls, whether the elderly, women, or children, immediately became excited when they heard news of a robbery. They waved the weapons in their hands and shook the pockets that were always on their bodies, yelling loudly. It looked like this race’s innate nature to steal was something that no one could change.

“Many thanks to the great Datara, many thanks to the great Datara’s guidance!” The old priest was beside himself with excitement as he immediately turned to the strong forest troll chief running in from the distance and started giving instructions in a mumble.

The head of the forest trolls raised a spear and stood at a high vantage point, mobilizing everyone. All the various young and strong forest trolls within the tribe automatically lined up in long columns, with the combinations of hunters and priests automatically splitting up. Five to six hundred forest trolls were standing at the ready after not too long.

Seeing that they were all ready, Han Shuo nodded and didn’t say much else, giving an order to the little skeleton. The little skeleton was in vigorous spirits and stood from a high vantage point like the forest troll chief, waving the bone dagger in his hand high above his head.

The little skeleton, wearing the pirate’s eyepatch, did indeed have a few traces of a robber’s demeanor at the moment. Under the old priest’s calls, the carriage that had been used to carry the little skeleton was once again brought out, and the little skeleton took up residence within. Han Shuo took out a black magic robe and completely wrapped his body and head with it, walking towards the road that the McGrady Guild was sure to take.

Because the forest trolls truly did have such a horrid reputation, it would bring him some trouble if other people discovered that he’d gone raiding with them in the future. Therefore, after considering for a while, Han Shuo decided to conceal himself to the best of his abilities. He’d diverted

Odysseus and the others away because he knew that they were too kind and simple. Not only would their existence not prove to be much use, but it might impact him and thus he had them leave halfway through.

From the observations of the original demons, Han Shuo was quite clear with regards to the McGrady Guild's location. He brought the five to six hundred forest trolls to a mountain valley. Under Han Shuo's orders, the forest trolls started adeptly setting traps and rocks that would impede forward movement. When all was ready, the forest trolls stood to the side amongst the trees and shrubbery, becoming one with the foliage with their oily green skin. It would be difficult to detect them without taking a close look.

Trunks rode on the manticore and followed this group of people behind from quite a distance away. Because there was an archmage within the company. Trunks didn't dare make any rash moves either. He only followed them according to Han Shuo's earlier instructions.

After half an hour, the group of people, with the earth dragons leading the way, slowly began to appear. The earth dragons plodded in front, the goods on their bodies swaying back and forth. Guards of all sorts of professions walked in front, patrolling the surroundings with wary eyes. Two of them were quite familiar with Han Shuo, they'd been amongst the group that had attacked him in the swamp.

Apart from the two earth dragons, this group of people from the McGrady Guild also had several enormous lizard pack animals. Several opulently dressed merchants were sitting on top of them, surrounded by highly experienced guards. No wonder Trunks didn't dare to make a move.

When they walked into the valley, some of the guards scouting ahead suddenly sank into the traps. Rocks rolled down the small slopes of the surrounding hills, completing blocking off their paths. Spears and javelins were hurled out from the sides, nailing the ground at these people's feet.

Enormous cheering sounds suddenly sounded from all directions. The excited forest trolls flung off the concealing props and charged over to encircle the caravan and surround the people from the McGrady Guild.

“Datara, Datara!”

At this moment, the forest trolls discovered that this group of prey was indeed very large. They all felt that that this was the gracious bestowment from the great Datara and started yelling out involuntarily. The old priest even knelt reverently in front of the little skeleton’s carriage and started offering thanks in an ancient language.

“Damn it, it’s the cursed forest trolls!” All sorts of complaints sounded from the McGrady Guild train. When they saw that the attackers were forest trolls and in such large numbers, the McGrady Guild people also felt that this was an extreme inconvenience. The way forward and backward for the train had been blocked off and a conflict seemed inevitable.

A beautiful woman with fey features and a fully rounded body slowly walked out from one of the carriages in the back, wearing a luxurious magic robe and holding a magic staff embedded with many gems in her hand. The emblems on her magic robe testified to her status as an archmage. She walked over merrily and used a soft voice to call out, “Hello, is there anyone I can talk to?”

“Liaison, do we talk to her?” The old priest, who was still genuflecting to the little skeleton, looked involuntarily at Han Shuo, hidden in the corner of the carriage and wrapped in a black magic robe, when he heard the woman’s call.

“Go see what she wants.” Han Shuo nodded and opened his mouth.

Under Han Shuo’s orders, the old priest stood quite a distance from the beautiful woman, under the protection of the forest trolls. The old priest opened his mouth to say, “Ugly human female, what do you have to say?”

The woman had been smiling merrily when her face immediately darkened as she heard the old priest’s words. It was only for an instant however, and her facial expressions quickly recovered and a smile made its way onto her face again. She opened her mouth to say, “We’re people of the McGrady Guild and know the strength of you forest trolls. So, we’d like to enter a transaction with you. We’re willing to pay ten thousand



gold coins in exchange for our safety in leaving this place. We have many people on our side as well and you're sure to suffer injuries if we fight. What do you say?"

"Ugly human female, don't you know that the appetite of our race has always been big?" The old priest looked arrogantly down at the mature, alluring woman as he spoke with a stiff, cold voice.

To Han Shuo's eyes, the woman had a curvaceous body and strikingly beautiful features, and was full of a mature feeling. She did possess a high amount of allure for ordinary humans. However, the old priest was a forest troll and had completely different standards of beauty compared to humans. A beauty in Han Shuo's eyes had rather turned into another word for ugliness in his.

Beneath the repeated blows of "ugly human female", the beautiful woman took in another deep breath to control herself, but her gaze was no longer as friendly. She stared at the old priest and opened her mouth to say, "Then what do you want to do?"

The old priest puffed out his chest and was about to open his mouth to respond when he suddenly recalled Han Shuo's existence. He said, "We need to discuss this."

The old priest walked quickly towards Han Shuo after this and several forest troll warriors blocked Han Shuo from sight so that those around them didn't learn of Han Shuo's existence. The old priest came to Han Shuo's side and looked at him, "Liaison, what do we do now?"

His brow furrowed as he looked into the distance. Han Shuo saw Leon appear in the back. The McGrady Guild specialized in smuggling and had some conflicts with Phoebe's Boozt Merchant Guild, not to mention their crimes earlier had offended Han Shuo. He hesitated only for a slight moment before opening his mouth to say coldly, "There's nothing much to say. Rob them all according to the rules of our tribe. Kill anyone who resists!"

The old priest immediately exclaimed excitedly after he heard these words, "The liaison is wise and great! The liaison is wise and great!"

The old priest didn't say much else as several forest troll warriors walked out from the huddle and nodded to the forest troll chief in the distance.

The forest troll chief raised the spear in his hand and gave a charged, high cry as forest troll warriors rushed out from all sides, charging the Guild's guards with a death defying attitude after the priests had cast their magics on them from the back.

"Damn these greedy forest trolls! We'll fight them to the death!" Various furious mutterings came from the Guild's party.

The smiles on the fey, mature woman's face disappeared at this time as she chanted a magical incantation. A grey cloud of air flew out from her staff as she waved it around, transforming into the head of a demon in mid air and rushing forward to entangle the forest trolls that were rushing over.

More than ten grey clouds continuously changed shape within the air, sinking into the bodies of the forest troll warriors with no resistance. Their fast dash forward suddenly slowed down as mutations seemed to occur within their bodies. Tumors quickly appeared and looked quite frightening as they expanded and pulsed.

Pfft, the tumors on the first forest troll's body burst open and a dark black liquid oozed out. As the liquid remained on their bodies, it brought with it an incomparably strong corrosive effect, causing a round of wild shrieks and howls to sound from the forest trolls as their bodies slowly turned into liquid.

White smoke also arose from the other forest trolls that were sprayed by the liquid, and they appeared to be in great pain.

Standing behind the others, Han Shuo recalled some of Fanny's magic teachings when he saw the archmage attack. He recognized that this was the advanced dark magic, "Demon Entanglement", and finally understood that this fey, mature woman was a frightening dark archmage.

The gruesome death of the first ten or so forest trolls caused a certain amount of panic to the forest trolls, but it was a good thing that this race had also lived in the midst of cruel raiding. Although they panicked

briefly, but they continued forward due to strength in numbers.

A shrill piercing sound suddenly sounded from Han Shuo's mouth. Trunks, hiding in the shadows and observing everything, didn't quite understand things because Han Shuo's whistle came from within the forest trolls. No matter how Trunks envisioned things, he hadn't thought that Han Shuo would be in the company of the forest trolls.

But due to his trust in Han Shuo, Trunks still abruptly dashed out of his hiding place according to their previous agreement and made for the dark archmage who was torturing the forest trolls.

Riding on his manticore and longsword in hand, Trunks set his sights on the female archmage. He made use of everyone being in a frantic mess to charge directly at the female archmage. He planned on taking her down first because the power of her dark magic was simply too strong. Any ordinary person simply couldn't defend against it.

"It's that Trunks! Everyone stop him and don't let him come near me!" The female dark archmage had actually discovered Trunks and immediately called out.

Five or six senior swordsmen, plus archers and other mages, immediately ran over from all directions to block the path to the female dark archmage when they heard her yells. Attacks poured out from from this group of people, making it so that Trunks couldn't approach easily.

The female archmage didn't pay any attention to Trunks as she stood with her back to him and sent out wave after wave of dark magic with enormous destructive power, sweeping across the more than ten forest troll warriors who were dashing over. They fell down one by one, with not a single one being able to approach the female archmage.

"Liaison liaison, what do we do now?" The old priest scrambled to Han Shuo when he saw the forest troll warriors die one by one and asked in extreme panic.

Staring at the frightening female archmage for quite some time, Han Shuo felt that he would still be hard pressed to escape death if he rushed in. The invasion of the dark magic was simply too horrifying. It looked like

only the little skeleton, that made entirely of bone, would be unafraid of the dark magic's invasion.

“Look, the great Datara has already come out.” Han Shuo reassured the old priest as he pointed at the little skeleton that had stepped out of the carriage.

# Chapter 118: The little skeleton immune to dark magic

Upon seeing that the little skeleton had walked out from the carriage, the old priest heaved a sigh of relief and called out excitedly, "Datara, Datara!"

Under the old priest's excited yells, the forest trolls, that had turned somewhat cowardly, all regained their fighting spirit and followed behind the little skeleton, once again charging towards the female dark archmage.

The bone dagger wielding little skeleton had a eye patch on its smooth and shiny skull plate as it dashed nimbly towards that fey, female archmage.

"Oh, heh heh. It's only a comical skeletal warrior!" The female archmage had thought some strong reinforcements were coming her way when she saw the forest trolls regain their courage. When she saw that what was dashing towards her was just a low level dark creature, the skeletal warrior, she immediately started chuckling in mockery.

When the little skeleton arrived in front of her, she spoke to a journeyman swordsman next to her, "Kill that ridiculous skeletal warrior!"

"Understood, Lady Emily!" The swordsman responded respectfully in a low voice and strode forward, grasping his broadsword, towards the little skeleton, smirking coldly.

It was a pity that before the journeyman swordsman had approached, the little skeleton, that'd been approaching with normal speed before, suddenly sprang off both calf bones and hugged the ground in magical flight. The increase in speed was more than ten times as the little bone dagger in his hand abruptly, aimed directly for the journeyman swordsman who was attempting to block his way.

The little bone dagger drew a round arc after leaving his hand, and had already made its way to the journeyman swordsman's neck in the midst of his shock and surprise. Frightened senseless, the journeyman

swordsman's body abruptly came to a halt, drawing his sword in a no holds barred attempt to defend against the bone dagger attack.

Clang rang out softly as the bone dagger crashed into the broadsword held in the journeyman swordsman's hand, causing his stopped body to involuntarily take a step backwards. Although the journeyman swordsman was surprised that he'd had to take a step backwards in defending against the bone dagger, he still breathed out a sigh of relief as he felt that he'd already gotten past the danger.

However, a sudden change in fortune occurred, one that he would never understand, even in his moment of death. The bone dagger that had fallen to the ground once again shot towards his chest just as he was about to charge forward. It completely upended his knowledge of the world as it opened a bloody hole in his chest and caused him to lose his life where he stood.

The swiftly moving little skeleton didn't pause for a single moment here as the withered bones of his left hand extended, and the little bone dagger that had just pierced through the journeyman swordsman returned marvelously to its his hand. The remaining empty eye socket in the little skeleton's head once again fixed its gaze on the astonished female dark magus Emily.

"Oh my gosh, that little skeleton killed a journeyman swordsman." Although Trunks was busy fending off enemies in the distance, he still paid heed to the little skeleton's movements. When he noticed that the little skeleton had murdered one of the journeyman swordsman, he immediately gave an involuntary cry of shock.

"Stop him, stop him!" Emily had also witnessed the little skeleton's miraculous performance. The jeering smile that had been at the corners of her mouth had long since vanished as her heart was in frantic disarray.

She quickly recited several journeyman and adept dark magics, with them landing directly on the little skeleton's body. However, the little skeleton was made entirely from bone and had been repeatedly refined by Han Shuo's magical yuan, and had no reaction whatsoever. He stood there

and rather looked at Emily in confusion, as if wondering why Emily's attacks were so feeble.

"The great Datara has demonstrated his courage and power, what are you standing there dumbly for?" Concealed in the distance, Han Shuo suddenly called out coldly at this moment and once again gave the little skeleton the order to attack archmage Emily.

Yells of gobbledegook suddenly roared out from the old priest and forest troll chief's mouths. When the forest troll warriors, who were following behind the little skeleton, saw that the previously frightening Emily couldn't do anything to the little skeleton, they cried out "Datara" with excitement and once again charged forward with no fear of death

The forest troll hunters in the distance shot out a dense wave of javelins and long spears as ranks of attacks shot towards the McGrady Guild's guards. Add to that the arrows from the archers as well as magic attacks from several priests, numerous guards were pierced full of bloody holes after this wave of javelins and spears had shot past. Bloody froth bubbled from their mouths as they lay on the ground, unmoving.

"Stop that damned skeletal warrior!" Emily saw that the little skeleton was chasing her in hot pursuit and became a bit frantic. When several dark magics had no effect on the little skeleton, Emily finally realized that this bizarre little skeleton had an extremely high defense against dark magics.

Emily gathered up the folds of her magic robe in one hand and bedraggledly fled towards the back as she hollered. Her well rounded buttocks swayed continuously as she had no further time to cast destructive and harrowing dark magics.

Because of Emily's retreat, the pressure on the forest troll warriors decreased greatly. Add to that the little skeleton's presence strongly boosted morale, this caused these faithful followers to completely ignore their injuries and casualties and charge towards the McGrady Guild guards like the tidewaters.

At this moment, the forest troll warriors that had been unable to draw

near the McGrady Guild train finally crashed into the guards after paying the price of several dozen forest troll warriors.

The low roars of the earth dragons, the stomping sounds of the lizard beasts, the frantic calls of the merchants, and the sounds of combat between the forest troll warriors and the guards permeated the scene. The advantage in numbers quickly became apparent. Although their personal strength didn't measure up to the forest trolls, they were much more disciplined than the randomly scattered guards. They were not in the slightest bit disorganized after rushing over, and each was more unafraid of death than the other.

In only the span of a moment, the forest troll contingent, made of young warriors and boasting of numbers more than five times that of the McGrady Guards, had already taken the high ground. Han Shuo stayed in the back, commanding the little skeleton to pursue the archmage Emily and directing the forest troll hunters to attack as well.

The rows of javelins and spears landed on the earth dragons and lizard beasts afterwards, causing the deaths of all the merchants. When the two main pack animals were injured, they began to run wildly in their madness. When their enormous hooves trampling down, they caused the deaths of many guards.

Finally, the merchants of the McGrady Guild saw that they would be unable to obtain victory and they decisively decided to make a break for it in their timidity. Some personal guards protecting them, these merchants yelled and hollered, saying that they were giving up the goods and split into several directions to break through.

The situation was already under control and Han Shuo didn't continue to further conceal his movements. He walked out from the midst of the forest troll warriors and set his sights on the earth mage Leon who had personally attacked him.

The dark archmage Emily was completely frightened with fear beneath the little skeleton's pursuit. She'd tried to fly through the air, but became the target of many under Han Shuo's order as she immediately took the



brunt of several dozen javelin and long spear attacks.

Even though she'd erected a dark magic shield in the nick of time, she didn't have an easy time of it as a walking human target. The magic shield blocked this round of attacks, but also greatly depleted her mental strength, even causing her to spit out a mouthful of blood.

With the warning of previous experience, Emily didn't dare fly through the air again in such a short distance. She could only hide amongst the McGrady Guild's Guards to the best of her abilities and continuously cry for help, asking for someone to help defend her from the little skeleton, but it was a pity that the scene was a chaotic mess at this moment. Under circumstances in which one's own personal safety was tough to guarantee, no one else would pay heed to someone else's survival. This caused her to flee haphazardly, in great panic.

"Eh, how did you know it was me?" Han Shuo looked askance at Trunks after he'd revealed himself and asked.

"I didn't fully recognize you, but it could!" Trunks smiled and shrugged his shoulders, pointing at the manticore beneath him.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "So this was the case!"

"It's you guys! What do you want?" Leon immediately recognized the memorable Han Shuo when the latter revealed himself, and he asked timidly.

"Your life of course! An eye for an eye. Shouldn't you pay up for the injuries you've caused me?" Han Shuo looked coldly at Leon and dashed towards him after saying this noncommittally.

"Han, leave this person to me. You haven't fully recovered from your injuries yet, best not to make a move that easily." Trunks saw that Han Shuo was about to make a move and suddenly spoke up to stop him, then spurring the manticore forward to Leon before Han Shuo had responded.

The earth adept mage Leon immediately chanted an incantation when he saw that Trunks was spurring the manticore forward to him. The ground before Trunks suddenly roiled and an earth wall quickly formed,

forming an obstacle in the direction that Trunks was charging from.

Having released the earth wall magic, Leon understood that Trunks wanted his life and that there was a Han Shuo of unknown strength hovering around the edges. He didn't dare linger at all and immediately fled without another thought as soon as the earth wall had appeared.

"Don't worry, I'll kill him!" Trunks smiled from the back of the manticore at Han Shuo and charged the wall together after these words. Beneath the manticore's impetus and the efforts of the longsword in his hand, the wall of earth that had just formed suddenly collapsed. Leaping across the wall, Trunks leisurely pursued the escaping Leon and he seemed quite at ease.

The original demons were spread out in three directions, and Han Shuo retained a complete picture of the entire situation through their observations. He discovered that the forest trolls, with their strength in numbers, had completely grasped the situation with the cowardly merchants leading the way in fleeing. The Guild's guards were retreating beneath their attacks. No one was laying down their lives to protect the goods and they did everything in their power to break through to the outside.

The little skeleton pursued the dark archmage relentlessly under Han Shuo's orders. A group of forest trolls were following tightly behind the great Datara and handling the female archmage along with the little skeleton. The female dark magus couldn't use her dark magus due to the little skeleton's continual harassment, and the forest was blocked off on all sides. They finally forced the archmage Emily into a trap, capturing her with a large net woven out of branches.

"I have what you need, you can't kill me, you can't!" Emily abruptly called out when javelins and spears were aimed at the archmage and about to descend.

A thought struck Han Shuo as he immediately gave the little skeleton an order. When the little skeleton received the order, he waved his empty left hand, giving the forest trolls next to him a gesture to halt. The little

skeleton walked towards Emily with bone dagger in hand, her frightened gaze fixed upon him. The little skeleton tore the shirt off a random corpse of a guard next to him and shoved the rag into Emily's mouth, using ropes to tie up her arms and legs at the same time.

When the female dark archmage's gaudy red lips had been stoppered up, she continuously emitted sounds from her throat, but no one paid attention to her. The little skeleton wielded the bone dagger and took up the responsibility to looking over her. Han Shuo leveraged his observations through the original demons to continuously give commands to the forest trolls and point out where people were escaping, maximizing their spoils of battle to the greatest degree possible.

After half an hour, the scattered sounds of fighting from all sides had all stopped, and when Trunks approached from the distance on the back of his manticore, the forest trolls also tried to kill, but stayed their hands beneath Han Shuo's orders.

When Trunks spurred the manticore on to Han Shuo's side, he saw the forest trolls on the side look at Han Shuo with respectful and humble expressions. He seemed to understand something in that moment.

"I'll explain in detail to you later. Trunks, you must believe me." Han Shuo also noticed the oddities in Trunks' gaze and opened his mouth to express his apologies.

Trunks smiled and nodded, saying, "I have time to listen to your explanations."

Looking at Trunks with gratitude, Han Shuo walked to the side of the dark archmage and roughly tore the cloth out of her mouth. He lowered his body and stared at Emily, saying coldly and cruelly, "Give me a reason not to kill you!"

# Chapter 119: Liaison, you can't be this cruel!

The trussed up Emily suddenly kissed Han Shuo's left cheek when he neared her, leaving behind a red mark.

"Oh heh heh, you've fallen to my curse. If I die, you'll be cursed until your body rots all over and dies." Emily immediately looked at Han Shuo in ease after kissing Han Shuo, delivering these lines merrily.

A strange pulse of energy flowed through Han Shuo from the place that Emily had kissed. Just as Han Shuo wanted to investigate the location of this energy, he suddenly discovered that the strange energy had already vanished without a trace.

This curse was one of the dark major's most bizarre and mysterious magics. Many legends and stories passed down through the ages all spoke of the frightening and mysterious power of this curse. Han Shuo could clearly feel it when that strange bit of energy had flowed through his body just now, and understood that the dark archmage Emily hadn't done this randomly.

Looking at the enormously proud Emily, Han Shuo's face was sinister as various fleeting expressions made their way across his face. He seemed to be wavering between whether or not to dispose of her. With the protection of the magical yuan, Han Shuo felt that this kind of curse wouldn't be able to cause any trouble for him, but he didn't dare to take the risk either.

"Han, you'd better not leap into the dark. The curses of the dark major are a most mysterious magic. It can often achieve quite frightening things. We can temporarily allow this b\*tch to live, and then kill her when we find a way to break the curse." Trunks offered this suggestion when he saw Han Shuo frown in contemplation.

Nodding, Han Shuo chuckled oddly, his unfriendly gaze patrolled over Emily's well-rounded and charming, mature body. Emily's body was quite curvaceous, particularly her pair of heavy, well rounded breasts. They

looked like they would explode out of her clothes at any moment. Her sexy lips were a brilliant red and a trace of a wanton smile curved at her lips, full of naked lust for men's bodies.

Under Han Shuo's odd gaze, Emily chuckled and swayed forcefully within the net. The durable branches tightened around her body, making her curves look even more wondrous, exuding a strong force of attraction.

"Mm, not bad, not bad. I won't let you die. There will still be plenty of ways for you to help me slowly lift the curse." Han Shuo started at Emily for a few deep moments and said to the old priest, "I think our strong forest troll warriors would enjoy this beautiful and mature human woman together."

The arrogantly chuckling Emily's face immediately drained of color as soon as he'd spoken and she cried out, "You can't do this!"

"Heh heh, why can't I? I'll have the forest troll warriors be careful when they rape you. Don't worry, they won't kill you!" Chuckling evilly at the panicking Emily, it was Han Shuo's turn to kick back leisurely.

Emily was frightened and panic stricken, her horrified eyes looking at the exceedingly ugly, yet fiercely built forest trolls. She didn't dare say anything else.

"Liaison, please don't make us do this. This human is so damned ugly, the children will have nightmares after having her. We're all followers of the great Datara. Liaison, you can't be this cruel!" At this moment, the old priest suddenly knelt down before Han Shuo and begged Han Shuo with a look of pain on his face.

"You blind old dog of a thing, how dare you sully my beauty! I'm going to kill you disgusting old worm!" Before Han Shuo had a chance to react, the previously panic stricken Emily immediately struggled furiously within the net and glared ferociously at the old priest, cursing loudly.

Han Shuo was involuntarily dumbfounded. Who would've thought that Emily would be so ugly in the eyes of the forest trolls? It looked like it was actually a cruel torture to gift Emily to them. This made Han Shuo not know whether to laugh or cry.

“Han, I think you should get back to more serious matters.” Trunks looked at Han Shuo with a slight smile and said.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “Take back the spoils to the tribe. Stopper up the mouth of this woman and also take her back. Guard her well, but don’t touch her for now.”

The old priest immediately called out instructions to the forest trolls when he heard that they didn’t need to undergo such cruel torture. He told them to pick up all the spoils of war in the surroundings according to Han Shuo’s orders. The little skeleton was on guard duty next to Emily, ready to give Emily a strong blow at any time.

Throwing a significant look at Trunks, Han Shuo and Trunks left the area, with Han Shuo avoiding the forest trolls and stopping when he found a quiet place. He began to explain everything to Trunks.

Of course, Han Shuo withheld everything about the cemetery of death and refining the little skeleton. He only picked the bits that he could tell Trunks.

Trunks paused for a long while after Han Shuo had explained all of this and looked at Han Shuo in confusion. “This means that you’re also a necromancer?”

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, “Of course, I’m a bonafide necromancer. Except, the little skeleton I’ve summoned is a bit odd, leading to the forest trolls mistakenly taking him for their great god Datara. Although these forest trolls are irritating and greedy, since they accept my orders, rather than let them commit evils as they will, why not control them so they raid targets they should raid? That’s why I’ve kept them around.”

“If you can use them appropriately, these forest trolls will be of a great help. I hadn’t thought that you’d be a necromancer as well. Hah, there are quite a bit of magical things about you. How much more are you keeping from me?”

“Eh, not too much else. Everyone has their own secrets. You never mention your own matters either.”

“Alright, then I won’t ask any further. You continue doing your own thing, I need to continue training in the further depths of the Dark Forest. Remember what you’ve promised me. I’ll have you help me when the time’s right.”

“Yes, I think we’ll have plenty of opportunities to meet in the future. When I finish handling all the matters at hand, I’ll also head deeper into the Dark Forest for more training. I think I’ll find a way to locate you then.”

The two were truly treating each other as friends by now, but everyone had their own secrets. Han Shou’s current base was in the cemetery of death, and he also had further necromancy magic to study. In addition, he needed to report to the Empire’s Dark Mantle organization and prepare the dwarves’ rations. He temporarily couldn’t just head further into the depths of the Dark Forest to train.

There wasn’t too much melancholy and sadness in parting with Trunks. When Han Shuo picked up the location of the original demons and little skeleton, he headed towards the forest trolls, finally reconvening with the forest trolls and heading back to the tribe.

The forest trolls had sent out five to six hundred trolls this time. All of them had brought pockets especially for raiding. Everyone mobilized themselves and brought back their spoils of war to within the forest troll tribe.

The McGrady Guild had been couriering resplendent silks and satins, soft and comfortable carpets, and a few other luxury items that nobles enjoyed. Apart from those, there were also battle chariots as large as carriages and a few items for use in attacking cities.

The luxury items were easy to take care of and sell off, but the battle chariots and other siege weapons would be a source of great trouble if they were being ferried to the Empire, but not to the army.

Han Shuo had learned from Phoebe that the McGrady Guild conducted a lot of smuggling. In this way, it seemed that these items likely weren’t being supplied to the Empire’s army. It seemed that the McGrady Guild

did indeed have unfettered boldness.

Luxury items were usually stored within the space rings of the dead merchants. The battle chariots and siege weapons couldn't be stored within space rings, this was why they were being transported by the earth dragons. They took count of inventory back at the forest trolls' tribe and discovered that the number of luxury items filled two of the forest trolls' warehouses, and there were another three warehouse worth of battle chariots and siege weapons.

Looking at the five warehouses full of resources, Han Shuo wasn't sure how to handle this. The space ring on his hand was already full of gems and gold from the forest trolls. He had no way of storing more items. Han Shuo smiled ruefully as he looked at the mounds and heaps of resources within the forest trolls' warehouses.

"Right, how do you usually handle the items that you've raided?" The forest trolls were a race of high intelligence that understood the pleasures of life. Therefore, Han Shuo inquired after their previous methods as he looked at these items.

"Someone will make a trip to trade food, weapons, and necessities for these items. Stuff that we have no use for is in high demand from others. This is enough for us to trade for a winter's worth of food and necessities. Many thanks to the great Datara's favor. It was the great Datara who led us down the right path." The old priest explained to Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo privately thought that this was indeed the case. The merchants who traded with the forest trolls must've garnered their trust and brought the food, rations, necessities and weapons necessary to come and trade for these priceless items.

Items like food, rations, and necessities weren't that expensive within the Empire. If they were transported here and used to trade for the valuables that the forest trolls had looted, then these merchants would be sure to be able to earn an eye-popping margin. This was no wonder that despite the presence of danger all throughout the Dark Forest, there were still so many merchants who still swarmed into the Dark Forest without



heed for their lives.

The Dark Forest would be exceedingly cold when winter arrived, and many magical creatures wouldn't venture out then. Because the roads would be sealed off, merchants and adventurers wouldn't easily venture in as well. Therefore, all tribes had to hurry and prepare the rations and food they needed to weather the winter, otherwise they'd be in bad straits when winter arrived. This was why the dwarves were worrying and why the forest trolls were raiding and looting in all directions.

The old priest was dumbfounded but nodded his head in understanding, as if thinking that Han Shuo's command was a bit baffling. However, the old priest was accustomed to following orders and didn't ask much.

"All of you temporarily don't go out raiding during this time. The great Datara and I will look around and notify you when we discover a better target. When I come back next time, I'll bring a portion of rations and necessities for your use. Be at ease." Han Shuo said to the old priest after thinking for a while.

"Liaison, what do we do about the ugly woman?" The old priest nodded and brought up the difficult question of Emily.

Han Shuo also felt a bit of a headache when this question was posed. He mused silently and then said, "I'll take her with me."

It wasn't until they were a few li away from the forest trolls and at a pond that Han Shuo finally loosened the restraints that covered Emily's eyes. Two zombie warriors had been carrying the ensnared Emily along the way, with Han Shuo completely disregarding her groans and moans. There was no other way they could proceed out of the forest troll tribe territory, thus Han Shuo had to proceed in this fashion.

When he reached the water's edge, Emily started cursing at Han Shuo when the coverings over her eyes and restraint on her mouth were released. Han Shuo ignored Emily's curses and undid his shirt, revealing an evenly fit body.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, several traces of panic were displayed in Emily's eyes when she saw that Han Shuo took off his clothes

without another word. She hastily spoke, “What, what do you want to do?”

Han Shuo had only wanted to take a shower within the pond, but a plot formed in his mind when he saw the panic in Emily’s eyes. He immediately leered and chuckled oddly as he took steps closer to Emily, wantonly looking up and down her mature, full body. He asked her in return, “What would you like me to do? Ahaha!”

# Chapter 120: Forcing himself on a female archmage

Emily's body was alluring and curvaceous, presenting a deadly attraction as her mature body was revealed as it was tightly leashed within the net. Emily's eyes were full of obvious panic now, and this only further heightened the temptations of her body.

Han Shuo had only planned on terrorizing Emily, but as he drew near to her, a surge of an uncontrollable desire grew from his heart, uncontrollable like an avalanche. The speed in which his magical yuan was churning was many times faster than usual, and the heavily panting Han Shuo suddenly felt his mind go dull and heavy and his consciousness slowly become hazy.

"No, please spare me, I'll lift the curse for you!" Emily was truly panicked and watched Han Shuo prowl over like a wild beast. She could no longer suppress the fear within her heart and started screaming frantically.

## NSFW Part

Walking towards the pond, Han Shuo suddenly felt alert and full of vigor. The heavy injuries he'd sustained a few days ago seemed to have all taken a turn for the better. When he walked into the pond to wash himself, Han Shuo suddenly discovered that there were traces of red between his legs.

He was immediately shocked as his gaze swiftly landed on the unconscious Emily. Her body mature and tantalizing, Emily had seemed like a beautiful woman and her actions had been rather wanton. Han Shuo had originally thought that she was greatly experienced, but hadn't thought at all that this would be her first time. This was simply too baffling.

No wonder Emily would have such panic in her eyes when she first saw him display that lascivious expression. No wonder Emily had sobbed with pain in the beginning, later moaning involuntarily, and finally

unconsciously continuously moving with him in the end.

If Emily's body had long been defiled, Han Shuo wouldn't have had too much of a burden. A mature woman wouldn't be too overly concerned with this matter, but now that Emily's body condition was obviously testifying that Han Shuo was her first man, this made the tenor of this matter a bit different.

As Han Shuo washed himself, he wracked his brains to decide how to handle this. His brain was a churning mess in that moment, and he couldn't find an appropriate way to handle this matter. Han Shuo washed himself unconsciously like this within the pond, coming to himself with an abrupt start when a low moan sounded.

A broken piece of rag was still shoved into Emily's mouth and her hands were still tied. Standing across from Han Shuo, she seemed to have just woken up and was looking at Han Shuo with a frightening gaze. All sorts of hatred, anger, and hesitation were swimming within her clear eyes as she coldly stared unblinkingly at Han Shuo, who stood within the water.

Scratching his head awkwardly, Han Shuo also felt his scalp tingle with numbness. He hesitated, then hesitated some more and thought a bit more, finally walking out of the pond and taking out a new set of clothing from the space ring to wear. He smiled with embarrassment as he walked towards Emily, "I didn't mean that, that was an accident!"

Emily still looked at Han Shuo with that frightened gaze. He suddenly remembered that her lips were still sealed only after he walked up to her, and thus she likely wasn't able to talk. Taking a deep breath in, he first summoned the little skeleton and then took the rag out from Emily's mouth.

Exactly as he'd expected, a string of furious curses exploded out from Emily's mouth, like bombs, when the rag was taken out of her mouth.

Her voice choked up, Emily switched various sorts of evil curses, hectoring Han Shuo's shamelessness and that he was less than an animal. She finally stopped when she herself was tired after half an hour, and then sobbed lowly, saying a few words that Han Shuo couldn't hear clearly.

Seeing that Emily's out of control emotions were finally calming down, Han Shuo finally awkwardly opened his mouth as he scratched his head. "Everyone's a grown adult here. It was my first time as well. You aren't any worse off. Let's just let it go like this!"

"Release me, release me! You damned kid, I'll have your life for this!" Emily had finally gotten herself under control, but her struggles began anew when she heard Han Shuo's words, as if she wanted to lay down her life.

His scalp numb, Han Shuo took a step back and spread out his hands with a rueful grin. He asked Emily, "How was I supposed to know that that was your first time? Now that the matter's happened, what do you say we should do?"

"You little brat that's less than an animal, you shamelessly raped me! What do you say should be done?" Fires of anger spurted out from Emily's eyes as she said furiously.

"Although you were in a bit of pain originally, I saw that you also looked quite comfortable afterwards. It was my first time as well, you weren't that taken advantage of. How about I let you go, and then we go our separate ways? It can be as if we don't know each other. Han Shuo furrowed his brow and thought carefully, proposing this to Emily.

"Shut up!" Emily yelled out, making Han Shuo jump with fright. Emily then quieted down and first displayed a weak expression of resignation, then stared directly at Han Shuo, saying lowly, "If you don't have an explanation for me, I'll kill myself immediately. You'll be hard pressed to escape death as well when the curse takes effect upon my death."

Scratching his head out of habit, Han Shuo walked ruefully towards Emily. He took out the Demonslayer Edge and removed the restraints from Emily's hands and legs. He opened his mouth and said softly, "Why don't you wash your body first, we can talk after!"

After saying these words, Han Shuo raised his level of alertness and was privately on guard against Emily suddenly attacking him in a rage. However, when the restraints on Emily's body had been released, she

didn't make any moves out of the ordinary. She only continuously patrolled her eyes over Han Shuo's body, as if wanting to see him clearly.

After staring at him for a while, Emily nodded her head blankly and wrapped the robe around her body tightly, walking towards the pond. She tripped halfway through and almost fell to the ground. Her face reddened as she cursed lowly, slowing down her pace afterwards.

When she walked into the pond, she took off robe and flung it far away from her, revealing the charms of a mature woman and started washing up without any reservations.

Taking in his fill of Emily's mature body, having had his first taste of the pleasures between man and woman, Han Shuo's heart started itching again, but he spoke with all seriousness, "Hey, I'm still here. You've taken off the robe and started washing up just like this, that isn't the best option, is it?"

Suddenly turning around, Emily fully displayed her taut abdomen and a patch of black between her legs to Han Shuo. She glared ferociously at Han Shuo, saying, "You've seen all there is to see and touched all there is to touch! How dare you act serious in front of me, you're truly not just typically shameless! Humph. If I were to move too far away, who knows if you would take advantage of the opportunity to run away. I'm going to keep you close at hand."

Han Shuo had really been about to run away when given the chance. When he heard her say so, he smiled awkwardly with some embarrassment, "I'm not the type to avoid responsibility. Heh heh, go ahead and wash up, I'll keep a look out for you."

After a while, a freshly washed up Emily with a new set of luxurious magic robes once again reappeared in Han Shuo's vision. Radiating with beauty, she walked to Han Shuo and first looked askance at the little skeleton wielding a bone dagger, then stared at Han Shuo and asked, "After contemplating for so long, have you decided what explanation to give me?"

Having looked his fill for a while, Han Shuo pulled Emily into his

embrace with one hand and suddenly kissed down on Emily's red, luscious lips. His hands started unceremoniously roving all over Emily's well rounded body. An intoxicating, wondrous sense started to spread out from Han Shuo's heart as their mouths and tongues entangled and he entwined himself with her body.

Emily started struggling fiercely at first, but even with the restraints on her hands and feet having been released, she still had no way to break free from Han Shuo's embrace. As Han Shuo drew her into a long kiss, her body also started becoming pliable as her struggles became weaker and weaker, finally voluntarily moving within Han Shuo's mouth like a little snake.

After a while, when both their breathing was starting to become difficult, they finally panted heavily and broke apart. Han Shuo then drew close to Emily's bright red ears, nipping her bright red ear tips, and said softly, "Well then, you're my woman then!"

Emily's body first stiffened, and then encircled Han Shuo's body like a snake after he'd spoken and also bit his ear tip, "Humph, shameless brat, at least you know what's the right thing to do!"

Laughing wildly in pride, Han Shuo swept up Emily by the waist and started a ravaging campaign on her amidst her protestations. He only stopped when Emily was about to faint.

Over the next three days, Han Shuo and Emily appeared on the path leading to the cemetery of death. The two had been at odds with each other, but suddenly became inseparable after three days of intimacy.

During this process, Han Shuo's strong body had caused Emily to sway and waver whenever she walked. Emily had gone from her initial lust to subsequent panic, and finally begged Han Shuo to let her off the hook before she could finally recovered.

Having tasted sweetness, Han Shuo finally knew that the taste of the pleasures between man and woman were beyond words. The conquests of the past two days made Han Shuo feel that he'd lived in vain before, and had thoroughly let himself go in depravity.

The closer they drew to the cemetery of death, Han Shuo finally thought of something as he looked at the brilliant and mesmerizing Emily next to him. The two of them hadn't volunteered information about their own identities, and neither had they asked each other. Therefore, Han Shuo still didn't know Emily's identity, even until now.

At this moment, the only thing that Han Shuo felt was a bit inappropriate was that he wasn't sure how to face Fanny in the future. He had true feelings for Fanny, and was only with Emily due to ridiculous circumstances. He wasn't sure how to handle the future, and could only take each step as they came.

But as they neared the cemetery of death, Han Shuo involuntarily started worrying. The cemetery of death was Han Shuo's greatest secret, and the fastest way to the Empire was through the transportation matrix within the cemetery of death, but Emily had already expressed that she was going to cling onto him no matter what. He knew nothing of Emily's status right now and didn't dare take the risk of telling her this secret. Therefore, he was in a bit of a hard spot.

"Don't worry, I was lying to you about the curse I'd cast on you. You don't need to be worried at all. Such a strong curse would need something from your body as a medium, it wouldn't be as simple as a kiss if I really wanted to cast it. I would have to pay a heavy price as well." Emily saw that Han Shuo had a long face and thought that he was worrying about this. She smiled involuntarily and spoke up in comfort.

Han Shuo started, and although he wasn't fretting over this, he still felt a bit relieved to hear her say that the curse was fake. He then recalled the strange feeling that had entered his body when Emily had kissed him. He furrowed his brow and looked at Emily in confusion, asking, "But I clearly felt a strange energy enter my body then. What was that?"

"Heh heh, that was a low level disease magic that I'd released, purposefully to create an illusion for you." Emily looked at Han Shuo with pride as she explained with a smile.

Pausing, Emily seemed to suddenly remember something and stared



oddly at Han Shuo. “Speaking of this disease magic, I rather forgot that you should’ve long since been sick by now. You’re just a small necromancer. Why is it that there’s nothing wrong with you at all, and you’re full of boundless energy when you commit that bad act? What’s going on?”

An ordinary magic of disease would, of course, not have any effect on his perverted body. The magic yuan’s repeated reforging had crafted an enormously strong body for Han Shuo. Add to that Emily had always thought Han Shuo was just a necromancer, it was no wonder that she would find it odd. However, Han Shuo didn’t explain and only chuckled evilly, not saying a word.

“Mysterious evil little brat!” Emily paid no attention and also rolled her eyes at Han Shuo.

Suddenly, Han Shuo’s brows knit together as an original demon patrolling nearby suddenly detected the appearance of people who shouldn’t be here – the wind archmage Duke and the senior swordsman Erick!

Last time in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, because Han Shuo had made a report to the Dark Mantle, the old witch Camilla disappeared without a trace. Duke and Erick had also hastily returned to the Kasi Empire. Who would’ve thought that these two would appear again after only twenty or so days.

“Someone’s seen the cemetery of death nearby, but that person died suddenly of unexplained circumstances.” Erick waved the longsword in his hand and hacked away at the strong growth of shrubbery and grass around him, speaking as he opened a path.

“Mm. It looks like the cemetery of death is nearby. The Dark Mantle of the Lancelot Empire is very frightening indeed. I wonder how Camilla’s identity was exposed – she was actually killed that night. It was a good thing that we read the situation correctly, otherwise we would’ve been hard pressed to escape death as well if we’d stayed.” The old mage Duke frowned and revealed some information in his low murmurings. It looked

like Camilla had been done away with by the Dark Mantle organization.

“Hey hey hey!” A shout that became louder and louder suddenly rang out from Emily’s mouth. When Han Shuo abruptly came to himself, Emily was tenderly stroking his face. She asked merrily, “My cute little devil, just what evil thoughts are you thinking of that you’re so entranced?”

“Eh, there’s sounds to the south, let’s go take a look!” Duke had been walking along unhurriedly and unrushed when he suddenly made a shushing motion towards Erick, saying this softly afterwards. He immediately floated up using a floatation spell and swiftly neared where Han Shuo and Emily were.

“Someone’s coming, we need to hurry and hide!” Han Shuo had been about to respond when he detected Duke’s movement and hastily called out to Emily. He used another original demon to continue observation and grabbed Emily by the waist, dashing towards a big tree on the left.

When he arrived, Han Shuo said lowly, “Use a floatation spell to go up the tree, we should stay together.”

Han Shuo climbed adroitly up the tree when his words had finished, landing into a thick patch of branches and leaves in the blink of an eye, waving down towards Emily who was floating in the middle of the tree.

“How come I haven’t heard anything? Are you overreacting?” Emily said softly with some suspicion, but still meekly squirmed into the thick of the leaves and even leaned comfortably on Han Shuo’s body, squirming her snake-like body around.

“Shh!” Han Shuo made a shushing motion and then took a deep breath in, immediately calming down his heartbeat and breathing.

She’d originally thought he was overreacting and was about to speak again to make fun of Han Shuo, Emily’s brow suddenly furrowed as she too felt the same disturbance. She chanted out an incantation in a low voice as a cloud of grey air appeared and obscured the two’s location.

As an archmage, Emily also naturally had sensitive hearing, but because a wind archmage majored in wind magic, their ears would be a bit more

sensitive than ordinary archmages, otherwise Duke would've been hard pressed to hear Emily's cry.

"It's Duke from the Kasi Empire!" Killing intent suddenly flared in Emily's eyes when Duke appeared.

Han Shuo was surprised when these words were spoken and looked quite in surprise with Emily, didn't think for a moment that Emily would also know Duke.

# Chapter 121: It turns out it was our own people

Duke used a floatation spell to arrive where the two had been hiding and inspected the four surroundings for a sign of anything out of the ordinary, with a lofty air and above everything. The senior swordsman Erick also rushed in from a distance and carefully poked his head through the shrubbery. He raised his head towards Duke up in the sky, “Mister Duke, nothing out of the ordinary here!”

The wind archmage Duke closed his eyes and didn’t say a word, concentrating and listening to the wind, as if trying to obtain some clues.

Situated within the thick growth of branches and leaves, Han Shuo and Emily were completely concealed. Their surroundings were also covered by a grey magic wall from the dark major arts. The dark major magics were veiled in mystery and adept at hiding traces of movement. As a fellow archmage, it would be difficult for Duke to detect the dark magic wall that she had set up.

After a low exclamation, Emily looked at Han Shuo, extremely astonished. “How did you do that?”

His expression grave, Han Shuo looked at Duke, who hovered in the distance, and made a careful gesture, indicating for Emily not to speak and alert Duke and Erick.

Extending a finger to tap Han Shuo’s forehead, Emily smiled. “What are you being furtive and scared about? There are thick branches and leaves concealing our whereabouts. The wall I just set up has sound insulating properties. Even if Duke is a wind major archmage, he won’t be able to hear a bit of our conversation. What are you worried about?”

Emily had spoken several times, but Duke, standing in the distance, was still listening with his eyes closed. It looked like he truly hadn’t discovered anything. Heaving a sigh in relief, Han Shuo grabbed the finger that Emily had extended and bit it, making her roll her eyes at him with a brightly

flushed face.

“Speak, how did you do it?” Emily, her face brilliantly red, stared at Han Shuo as she asked.

At this moment, Emily was leaning on Han Shuo’s left side, and half her body was pressing against him. Her full chest was resting on Han Shuo’s left arm and her long and smooth thigh tightly mashed against his waist. Emily, with an extremely amorous expression, was an uncontrollable temptation for Han Shuo, who had just gotten an initial taste of the pleasures between man and woman.

Chuckling lowly, Han Shuo said, “So there’s a soundproofing effect. Heh heh, we haven’t done it on a tree yet!

Han Shuo grabbed Emily as soon as he’d finished speaking and moved to position her behind at his waist. He immediately started ravaging with his hands as Emily’s face and necks immediately flushed red from Han Shuo’s actions and the finger that he’d just bit. She said, “Duke is below and Erick is also observing from below as well. We can’t do this! It’s too embarrassing!”

“No worries, that’s what makes this exciting. Heh heh!” When Han Shuo had ripped Emily’s shirt apart, his mouth neared her earlobes and he kissed her tenderly as he chuckled evilly in a low voice.

After this string of teasing, Emily finally couldn’t hold it any longer and emitted a tempting moan from her sweet lips. She forgot everything that’d they been talking about before and no longer cared that they were in a large tree, with two enemies making observations around them. She voluntarily reached out a hand into Han Shuo’s shirt as her well rounded bottom searched for the right position.

“Ah... “ Both of them gave out a comfortable cry when he entered.

After a while, when Emily’s body had gone completely soft and she’d screamed herself hoarse, everything began to slowly calm down. Maintaining their position, Emily sprawled on Han Shuo’s chest and used her index finger to trace small circles. She asked again, “How did you do that?”

At this moment, the wind archmage Duke and Erick had long since left. An original demon trailed far behind the two and relayed everything it reacted to into Han Shuo's mind. Because the two of them had come with the intention of finding the cemetery of death, their speed in walking away wasn't that fast. They would find it difficult to escape the surveillance of the original demon within a short amount of time, thus Han Shuo wasn't in a hurry.

His large hand unconsciously roved over Emily's naked back, Han Shuo asked, "How did I do what?"

"I'm a dark major archmage and I didn't discover when Duke was approaching us. You're just a minor necromancer, how could you detect this disturbance? In addition, you're a mage, but your adroitness and deftness in climbing this tree was more ridiculous than an ordinary swordsman. I've also seen how you've adjusted your breathing and heartbeat. What's going on?" Emily breathed out lightly in enjoyment after they'd calmed down from Han Shuo's motions and asked him on the side.

Remaining silent for a while, Han Shuo said, "Apart from training in necromancy magic, I'm also training in a wondrous martial arts technique. This wondrous technique is different from ordinary fighting aura. Therefore, I can count as a mage swordsman. All of the particular points you saw just now are because of this martial arts technique."

Her body straightening slightly, Emily looked in astonishment at Han Shuo, "Such a wondrous martial arts technique exists? Then can you fight like a swordsman?"

Nodding, Han Shuo said affirmatively, "Of course." His forehead then creased as he looked at Emily with confusion. "How do you know those two?"

It was Emily's turn to be silent after his question. She hesitated, and then said slowly, "I haven't told you everything about me because I was afraid of bringing you trouble. I'm actually someone from the Lancelot Empire and was escorting the McGrady Guild's smuggled goods from the Brut Merchant alliance this time because I was investigating something. I

wanted to get to the bottom of who was receiving this batch of resources that would be used for war.”

“Honestly speaking, I belong to a secret organization. Duke and Erick have come with an unspeakable secret to the Empire this time, and their actions threaten the livelihood of the Empire. Therefore, our organization is making a move against the two. Although I wasn’t in the Empire, I have the clearance level to know everything that happens.”

“I also saw Duke and Erick’s head shots within the organization’s files. The organization is sending people to shadow their movements. The organization said that they might appear on the borders of the Empire and thus wanted me to return to the Empire through the border. I paid quite a bit of attention, that’s why I know so much. Although our organization allows everyone their space and usually won’t interfere in members’ lives, there’s still no benefit if you know too much.”

The soft and tender voice emitted from Emily’s mouth as she calmly relayed the entire matter and her identity. After all of this, Han Shuo suddenly displayed a strange smile, scaring Emily. She wondered if something was up with him.

“What’s wrong? Are you frightened? Don’t worry, our organization answers to His Majesty the king and exists completely and only for the security of the Empire. We don’t interfere in members’ lives and I don’t think they will be of any threat to you. Oh, are you afraid of me? Are you prepared to throw me away?” Emily first explained, but then felt a bit afraid when she saw Han Shuo’s weird smile. This man had gotten everything of hers and was quite cute when he was acting bad. He had helped her heart enjoy the past few days in peace, and so she wouldn’t let him go, no matter what. Emily’s heart raced frantically.

Beneath Emily’s worry and fear, her previously reddened and flushed face appeared full of fear and trepidation. When she got to the end, her voice was choking up. No matter how strong or as mature a woman was, when she gave her body and heart to a man, she would display weakness and timidity in front of the man who had received her all. Emily was naturally no exception.

After a while, Han Shuo said with a shadow of a smile, “Your organization is called the Dark Mantle, right?”

Her heart leaping in fear, Emily’s body stiffened as she looked at Han Shuo in astonishment and shock. She asked, “How do you know that?”

His space ring lighting up, the iron medallion that represented his identity as a Dark Mantle member suddenly appeared in Han Shuo’s hand. Han Shuo said to Emily, “Because I’m also a member of the Dark Mantle!”

Emily, “...”

“Heh heh, who would’ve thought that we’d be colleagues? Hurry and let me see your medallion and let me know what rank you are?” Han Shuo chuckled oddly as he grasped Emily’s small hand and caressed her space ring with his finger.

“You wicked little brat!” Emily blanked for a moment and suddenly started chuckling delightfully, splaying herself on Han Shuo’s chest with tears of joy. She reached out her hand and ran it across Han Shuo’s chest. When Han Shuo was breathing out comfortably, her teeth suddenly bit down fiercely and started squeals from Han Shuo.

“See if you dare bully me again, humph!” Emily chuckled with pride when she saw Han Shuo scream out of startlement. She put on an air of glaring ferociously at Han Shuo before subsiding.

Feeling that the distance between them and the original demon trailing Duke was increasing further, Han Shuo suddenly pulled down his shirt and also looked over Emily before saying, “Let’s follow Duke and see what he’s up to?”

When Han Shuo finished speaking, Emily recited an incantation in a low voice and the grey air that had been surrounding them suddenly disappeared without a trace. As Han Shuo poked his head out of the leaves and grabbed Emily, he directly jumped down from the tree amidst her screams. He landed solidly within the shrubs in the back and didn’t cause any harm to Emily’s body.

Leveraging the original demon tailing Duke, Han Shuo and Emily



exchanged some information. Han Shuo also told Emily about his recent experiences within the Dark Forest. However, he picked which ones he could say, and still concealed what he had to conceal.

“A minion of the Third Dark Star, you need to listen to me in the future or I can directly punish you!” When she knew that Han Shuo was just a lowly Third Dark Star, Emily continued to lightly tease Han Shuo along the way. Candide, one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, was at the highest level of Fifth Dark Sun. Emily was already a Third Dark Sun and thus her status within the Dark Mantle would surely be very high. No wonder she had the authority to know so much.

“Who would’ve thought you would be a Third Dark Sun! Heh heh, so what if you are? You’re still conquered by my prowess! You live if I want you to live, you die if I want you to die.” Han Shuo smacked his palm on Emily’s butt and laughed delightedly.

“You crude, despicable little brat! I’m going to make you completely tame and make you answerable to me sooner or later!” Emily’s hand that was curled around Han Shuo’s arm suddenly pinched him fiercely, and wasn’t in the slightest bit angry about Han Shuo’s crudeness.

His body suddenly froze as Han Shuo discovered, through the original demon, that Duke and Erick had actually discovered traces of the cemetery of death. Duke kept circling the area around the cemetery of death with a frown on his face, as if he’d discovered something.

Emily stopped when Han Shuo halted and looked askance at him, opening her mouth to ask, “What now? Are you annoyed at me because I said I would tame you? You know I’m joking!”

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said lowly, “Should we kill Duke and the other?”

“Let’s not for now. If I’m guessing correctly, the old fox Candide must be planning on thoroughly understanding Duke’s intentions. That’s why he’s still alive. Otherwise, there’s no way that the two of them would be able to leave the Lancelot Empire alive. You’ve just entered the Dark Mantle so you don’t know how strong the organization is. It’s impossible for a wind

archmage and a senior swordsman to escape from that sly fox Candide's hand." Emily mused deeply and then opened her mouth to explain to Han Shuo.

"I actually understand, because I answer directly to Candide!" Han Shuo said in a low.

Covering her surprise and looking at Han Shuo, Emily said lightly, "You're joking! You're just a Third Dark Star! You don't have the right to be managed by him at all?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo said, "If you don't believe me, you can look into the internal information of the Dark Mantle. I was directly inducted by Candide, and he said that I would be under his deployment in the future. That's how things are."

Emily rather believed Han Shuo after his words. She stroked his cheek as she said, "You're quite something alright. How did the old fox take a fancy to you?"

"Let's not talk about this, we should hurry and follow them. I think Duke and them are planning on doing something." Han Shuo suddenly said and tugged Emily towards Duke and Erick's direction.

Leveraging the original demon's vision, Han Shuo discovered that Duke and Erick were circling the outside of the cemetery of death. It looked like Duke had indeed discovered something. He changed magical incantations and released several Grim Wind spells. They howled around the edges of the cemetery of death, attempting to discover something.

Just as this moment, the concealed original demon discovered someone crouched within the shrubbery. This man wore a body of dark brown clothing, with the color of the clothing melding into the trees. He lay there unmoving, and it would be difficult to discover him if one didn't look carefully.

His clothes and actions clearly indicated that he was after Duke and Erick. From the information that he'd just received from Emily, Han Shuo's thoughts raced and he immediately understood that this man was likely someone that the Dark Mantle had sent to keep an eye on Duke and

Erick.

The Grim Wind spells blew randomly and tore through everything around them. When one of the Grim Wind spells blew over, it happened to crash directly into him. Although the man lay crouching on the ground and didn't move, a bloody furrow was gouged out of his body and he involuntarily cried out from the pain.

"Who is it?" The sensitivity of Duke's ears were beyond belief as he heard a cry of pain from such a distance away. He'd been standing within the bushes, but suddenly once again, used the levitation spell to drift through the air and make straight for where the person was.

Seeing that he'd been made, the person immediately stood up and planned on hastily leaving the area. However, as a wind archmage, Duke's speed was obviously faster than this person. He'd arrived behind the person with a whoosh as soon as he'd activated the levitation spell.

"You Dark Mantle people again, you really linger and refuse to leave. You've discovered me even in the Dark Forest! I have to say that you Dark Mantle people are truly infinitely resourceful!" Duke said this with a light smile and chanted an incantation.

Great winds suddenly appeared in front of the Dark Mantle member, who was attempting to leave, obstructing his path forward. The howling wind formed blades of wind and criss-crossed as they shot towards the Dark Mantle member.

When his body met the obstruction, a dagger appeared in his hand as he dodged nimbly within the shrubbery, evading most of the attacks from the wind blades. He then waved the dagger to defend against the other wind blades. Explosions rang out, and although his dagger defended against a few of the wind blades, two deep gouges of blood appeared on his legs.

"Oh no, the observer from our organization keeping an eye on their movements seems to have been caught. We should hurry on over. You take care of Duke and I'll handle senior swordsman Erick." Han Shuo was deathly afraid that the cemetery of death would be revealed and thus planned on using Emily's power to kill Duke and Erick once and for all. He

immediately cried out when he saw this situation developing.

Emily's facial expression immediately changed when she heard Han Shuo's words. A grey robe suddenly appeared as it covered her entire body. She also casted the levitation spell and flew out after murmuring "be careful" to Han Shuo.

Apart from serving within the Dark Mantle, many within the organization had other identities. Therefore, unless there was no other option available, they wouldn't easily show their true faces to others. This was the basic *modus operandus* of all Dark Mantle members.

When Emily left, Han Shuo also took out a grey robe to cover his entire body as two of the original demons flew towards Duke, with the other closely tailing Erick. Han Shuo was quite familiar with this area as he dashed over from another path and planned on intercepting and getting rid of Erick halfway.

Han Shuo's injuries were mostly healed by now, and his magical yuan had greatly increased after last time's experience of entering a demonic trance. As his magical yuan circulated now, it gave Han Shuo a feeling of being free from inhibitions.

When Erick heard Duke's voice, he grasped his longsword and quickly, but cautiously approached the same spot. When he reached an uneven hill, Han Shuo, who'd been lying in wait, suddenly chanted a magical incantation. A bone spear suddenly shot towards Erick, and a crossbow also twanged when the bone spear materialized.

When the crossbow bolt shot out, Han Shuo's body also shot out like lightning. When Erick saw these two attacks charging towards him, Erick completely lost his composure as he panicked and used a most practical, yet exceedingly ugly roll to move out of the way towards the front, not giving a thought to how he looked.

The ugly method was quite useful as he evaded Han Shuo's two waves of attacks. Erick then appeared right in front of Han Shuo and stabbed forward with a sword imbued with dark green fighting aura. Han Shuo hastily took out the Demonslayer Edge, but his hand trembled slightly

from the impact.

Erick also grunted, but didn't actually make use of the opportunity to follow up. He stood up and chased in Duke's direction.

Snorting lightly, Han Shuo grasped his Demonslayer Edge and quickly followed. Another original demon, who was observing Duke, discovered that Emily had already exchanged blows with Duke, and it seemed that she had the upper hand. It was a pity that she seemed to be a few steps too late as the Dark Mantle member already had multiple lacerations crossing his body. He seemed to be dead.

"Master Duke, I'm going!" Erick cried out loudly and charged over with upraised sword. Duke, in the midst of his fight with Emily, had his facial expression flicker rapidly, but when he saw Han Shuo chasing behind Erick, the staff in his hand suddenly shook as he released a hurricane spell, lifting up Han Shuo's charging body and flinging it into the distance.

At this moment, the Eye of Darkness that had been stored within Han Shuo's space ring actually flew out of the ring automatically, flaring out with sparkling green light, opening the boundary that protected the cemetery of death. Han Shuo's body also landed within the cemetery with a thud.

"Oh, my gosh, it really is the cemetery of death!" Duke had been about to turn back and handle Emily when he saw the green light explode in the air, revealing the bizarre view of the cemetery of death. He immediately cried out with joy and suddenly dashed over, paying no heed to anything else.

Erick and Emily were both incredibly astonished. They first stared, dumbfounded, and then sprinted forward with all their might before the boundary to the cemetery closed again.

# Chapter 122: Thinking for you

Tall and angular buildings were erected within the cemetery of death that was strewn with bones. All of them drew Duke's attention. In that instant, he concerned himself with looking around wildly and didn't continue making a move against Han Shuo.

However, when Emily rushed into the cemetery, her first task wasn't to take in the surroundings. Rather, she flew to Han Shuo instead and asked anxiously, "Are you alright?"

If it'd been an ordinary person falling from such a height, they might have actually been injured. but Han Shuo, of course, wasn't injured at all. He shook his head at Emily and stood up with a darkened face, fixing his gaze tightly onto the wind archmage Duke in the distance.

Looking around with excitement, Duke said joyfully when senior swordsman Erick arrived next to him, "This is the cemetery of death, there's no doubt about it. Who would've thought that we'd actually make it inside?"

"Master Duke, we didn't discover anything after a such a long period of studying, but the boundary to the cemetery of death opened when green light was emitted from that person. It's very strange!" Erick looked at Han Shuo from afar and said lowly to Duke.

Nodding, Duke said, "That's right. It looks like there's something odd about this person. That green light just now also gave me a familiar feeling, it seems to have come from the Eye of Darkness!"

Erick was greatly astonished when these words were voiced. "How is that possible?"

Grasping the Demonslayer Edge in his hands, Han Shuo recited an incantation and the little skeleton, wielding a bone dagger and sporting seven wings, appeared. Three zombie warriors also appeared. They all held wooden clubs and barred the path to Han Shuo and Emily along with the little skeleton.

“You were the one who opened the boundary to the cemetery of death?” Emily breathed a sigh of relief when she saw that Han Shuo was unharmed. She then recalled what had just happened and asked Han Shuo with great confusion.

Nodding, Han Shuo said with a darkened face, “That’s right. The cemetery of death was opened by something on my body. Duke and Erick must die now. You help me take care of Duke, and I’ll explain to you after we kill them!”

Emily didn’t ask anything else after hearing Han Shuo speak thus, and docilely picked up her magic staff, setting her sights on the approaching Duke with a look full of killing intent.

“He’s also a necromancer to boot, it looks like this will be a slightly difficult fight!” Erick had traded blows with Han Shuo and could feel that Han Shuo’s strength was not in the slightest bit weaker than his own. When he saw that Han Shuo had even summoned zombie warriors, his brow creased as he spoke.

“Kill them first. We’re excavating the secrets of the cemetery of death!” Duke snorted lightly and floated over. Erick didn’t say much else after pausing for a moment and following Duke in a charge over.

A string of incantations leisurely surged out of Emily’s mouth. The magic staff in her hand suddenly shot out a few strands of black air and like snakes twisted and twined towards the approaching Duke. When Duke saw the black air attacking him, his face became incomparably grave. A tornado formed suddenly in front of him and churned up all the white bones on the ground. It made for the black air and twisted all of them into the tornado.

Snorting coldly, Emily said, “Be careful”, to Han Shuo and also flew towards the black air. She waved the magic staff in her hand and started fighting fiercely with Duke within the air.

“We shouldn’t just idly stand around either.” Han Shuo grinned and gave a long laugh. The little skeleton led the three zombie warriors in heading towards Erick. At the same time, Han Shuo kept an eye behind Erick and

Duke, via the original demons, observing their every gesture and move.

“Do you think three zombies and a skeleton are enough to stop me?” Erick snorted lowly with disdain as dark green fighting aura flared out of the longsword in his hand. His body was like a bulldozer as he sent dirt and dust flying as he charged directly towards Han Shuo.

Continuously laughing coldly within his heart, Han Shuo made use of his mental strength to manipulate the zombie warriors and little skeleton, blocking the way in front of him. The little skeleton’s usual speed was as fast as lightning, but was now being purposefully curtailed by Han Shuo so that he was as slow as the zombie warriors. Dashing over, Erick’s dark green fighting aura formed a ball of light as it enclosed a zombie warrior within it.

The sound of bones exploding suddenly emitted from the zombie warrior’s body. Beneath the effects of the dark green fighting aura, the first zombie warrior had its body shattered. Its wooden club also broke into several segments. Turning his body sideways with a disdainful smirk, Erick’s nimble body evaded the crashes from the other two zombie warriors’ wooden clubs and stabbed forward with his longsword, slashing open the neck of another zombie warrior. The zombie warrior swayed and looked like it was about to fall down.

The little skeleton raised the bone dagger and pressed itself against the other zombie warrior, jerkily raising the bone dagger in its hand and stabbing it towards Erick. Erick could easily handle even the zombie warriors, so he paid absolutely no attention to the little skeleton’s upraised dagger, raising his sword rather impatiently to block the strike.

At this moment, the originally abnormally slow bone dagger suddenly increased more than tenfold in its striking speed. The previously stiff and slow little skeleton became so agile that it caused Erick’s eyes to bug out. Erick’s longsword had just started rising and he hadn’t had time to make his move before the bone dagger was already landing on its target.

Erick retreated in horrified fright, but he was still a beat too slow. A puncturing sound rang out as a large piece of flesh and blood flew out



from his chest. As Erick cried out in pain, he also called out with incredulity, "How is this possible?! What kind of skeletal warrior is this?"

It was a pity that the little skeleton had no reaction to Erick's astonished yells. When he'd succeeded with one of his blows, he didn't relax and immediately followed up afterwards. He didn't wait for Erick to stabilize his footing before appearing in front of him. As Erick's fighting aura gathered anew on his longsword, the seven bone spurs on the back of the little skeleton's spine flared out at the same time and they flew in a semi-circle, landed accurately on Erick's body.

The seven bone spurs pierced through Erick's neck, forehead, and heart. He didn't even have time to release the fighting aura that he'd gathered before his body fell backwards. The frightened and terrified expression on his face didn't even vanish in death.

Duke and Emily had been fighting when they both noticed the disturbance on this side. When they saw that Erick had died a gruesome death, both were surprised. However, Duke's worry and Emily's joy followed closely after that surprise.

Emily had already witnessed the little skeleton's miraculousness last time, and even she, a dark archmage, had been powerless in the face of the little skeleton's pursuit. The little skeleton's nimbleness and speed had left a powerful impression on Emily. Upon seeing that the seven bone spurs on the back of the little skeleton could even harm someone, she had a deeper understanding of Han Shuo's mysteriousness.

Duke was already having trouble fending off attacks from Emily alone, he'd actually been hoping that Erick would help him after taking care of Han Shuo. He hadn't thought that the seasoned and well experienced Erick would die so quickly. Han Shuo was still standing there, having made not a move. This made Duke panic momentarily.

"What, you want to run? Do you think you can get away today?" After killing Erick, the original demon noticed that Duke's eyes were darting around. Han Shuo drew near to him with a shadow of a smile as he opened his mouth in mockery.

Duke's face suddenly grew frosty as his usually benevolent features twisted as he stared at Han Shuo, "You're seeking death!"

Many sharp shards of bone fragments on the ground suddenly shot towards Han Shuo as Duke waved his magic staff. The sound they made while shooting through the air was extremely ear piercing, and their momentum was quite frightening. When Emily saw that Han Shuo was under attack, she was even more nervous than Han Shuo as she hastily chanted a dark magic spell.

An inky black opening appeared out of thin air before these sharp bone fragments reached Han Shuo. When the bone fragments arrived, they were all attracted to the black opening and completely sucked in.

After releasing his attack, Duke didn't continue to attack, but rather hurtled his body towards the outside in an attempt to escape. It looked like he'd counted on Emily being concerned for Han Shuo. That's why he'd attacked Han Shuo so that Emily would save him, and then take advantage of the opportunity to run off.

However, it was easy to enter the cemetery of death, but quite difficult to leave. After the Eye of Darkness had revealed itself, it'd once again sank back into Han Shuo's space ring. Without the Eye of Darkness, even him, a wind archmage, would be unable to open the boundary.

He crashed headfirst into the boundary, and a large bang sounded out. A ball of green light flared out from the boundary as Duke was affected by its power. He was unable to maintain his levitation spell and fell from midair. Some broken pieces of bone happened to pierce his calves, stomach, and waist, causing immediate injury to his body.

"My condolences!" Han Shuo approached Duke with a cold smile as Emily and the little skeleton surrounded Duke. Han Shuo ripped the mask off his face and said, "Long time no see, benevolent Mister Duke!"

Duke, crying out painfully, immediately spoke with fear when he saw Han Shuo reveal his true face. "Why is it you? I remember that I once saw you in the Babylon Academy. Aren't you that necromancy student?"

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled sinisterly and said, "That's right, it's me." He

then took out the Eye of Darkness and placed it on his palm, lighting it up. “The small errand boy, whose tracks you guys discovered last time, in the cemetery in the mountains at the back of the Academy, was also me. Heh heh, I was the one who gained the Eye of Darkness that Dylan buried in the ground. You guys didn’t think that I wouldn’t die, did you? It’s come full circle not too long afterwards!”

“So you were the one who obtained the Eye of Darkness! No wonder the boundary to the cemetery of death was opened after that light came from your body!” Duke spoke in sudden enlightenment.

Three more zombie warriors appeared, making it a total of four zombie warriors and one little skeleton. They walked slowly towards archmage Duke. Han Shuo raised his crossbow and took aim at Duke, Emily chanted a dark major spell, officially sealing Duke’s fate as the little skeleton’s seven bone spurs flew around in a dance.

When the seven bone spurs flew out, Duke used wind blades to rapidly defend against them all, but the approaching four zombie warriors and little skeleton made him feel quite troubled.

When Han Shuo’s crossbow had shot it, the bolt pierced through the hastily dodging Duke’s thigh and nailed him to the ground. Emily’s dark magic had already enclosed Duke before Han Shuo had taken out the Demonslayer Edge. Thick smoke rose up from Duke’s body in that instant as he became another set of stark white bones within the cemetery of death.

The little skeleton drew close to Duke and took off the space ring from the white bones of his hand. He handed it over to Han Shuo along with the pouch of the senior swordsman Erick.

Emily stared at the little skeleton with clear eyes and was dumbfounded for quite a while by the little skeleton’s motions. She finally couldn’t hold it in any longer and asked Han Shuo with an exceedingly high amount of curiosity, “Can you tell me what was up with that wondrous little skeleton?”

“Heh heh, nothing much. I refined it with a secret art. That’s why its

performance is so wondrous!” Rubbing the little skeleton’s clean and smooth skullcap, Han Shuo smiled as he picked up the spoils of battle being offered up to him.

Emily glared fiercely at Han Shuo and said huffily, “Just how many more things are you hiding from me? Why do you have the Eye of Darkness and how come you’re able to refine such an amazing skeletal warrior? You’re just a small necromancer, yet you also have uncommon fighting techniques. Just what is going on here?”

Some things had to be explained at this moment. Han Shuo explained everything that had happened in the necromancy major, including the discovery of the cemetery of death, to Emily. However, he still didn’t mention anything with regards to refining the little skeleton and the magical yuan.

This conversation caused exceedingly great shock to Emily. As she contemplated silently, Han Shuo started searching through Duke’s and Erick’s things.

But after rifling for a while, Han Shuo discovered that Erick was one heck of a poor guy. There wasn’t anything valuable in his pouch. Duke should’ve had some interesting items on him, but he’d set up a magical boundary within his space ring and Han Shuo was completely unable to break it to obtain anything from inside.

After a while, Emily looked at Han Shuo with a grave face. “Does anyone else know that you’ve obtained the Eye of Darkness and that you can come and go from the cemetery of death, apart from you and me?”

“No one else knows.” Han Shuo looked at Emily and hesitated before asking, “What do you plan to do?”

“In that case, then we’ll continue to keep this secret. Duke and Erick are dead anyways, and the agent that the organization had sent to chase them is gone. No one else knows about this matter. Then, in the future, the cemetery of death is still your secret alone, the foundations for you to train your body to slowly control the Dark Forest.” Emily gazed deeply at Han Shuo as she spoke lowly.

Staring in stupefaction for a bit, Han Shuo smiled slightly and suddenly yanked Emily into his arms. He smiled, “You’re my woman alright, I thought you’d want me to offer the secret of the cemetery of death to the organization!”

Rolling her eyes in a display of ill temper at Han Shuo, Emily said, “Do you think I don’t know what you’re thinking? If you wanted to tell the organization about this secret, you would’ve done so a long time ago, why would you wait until now? I understand what the cemetery of death means to you, and it seems very important for your future development. We’re already like this now, I would naturally think for you.”

Han Shuo was really a bit touched upon hearing Emily’s words. He privately thought to himself that women were incomprehensible creatures alright. Once their bodies and hearts were captured, then all their previous resolutions would completely collapse. When she spoke these words, it meant that Emily had chosen to lean towards Han Shuo between the Dark Mantle and himself. If Han Shuo had any conflicts with the Dark Mantle in the future, it looked like Emily would be willing to make a stand against the Dark Mantle for Han Shuo.

“Right, you said that your goal this time was to investigate where those weapons had gone. I used the forest trolls to rob that batch of resources this time, will it affect your mission?” Seeing that Emily was thinking on his behalf, Han Shuo thought for a bit and suddenly recalled what Emily had mentioned last time, and so opened his mouth to ask her.

Smiling merrily for a bit, Emily looked soulfully at Han Shuo in the midst of his surprise. “You bad boy, you’re finally willing to think of my situation. How nice!”

Han Shuo was speechless as he thought back to prior events and discovered that he really had never thought on Emily’s behalf. He’d thought for himself from start to finish, and he now felt a bit embarrassed by her words. He laughed a bit awkwardly.

“Don’t worry too much about this matter, I actually had a fair guess of where these resources were going. I just wanted to catch him in the act so

that he'd have nothing to say. Although these resources have been intercepted, many of the McGrady Guild's men have made it out. They'll surely think of a way to ransom back the siege weapons from the forest trolls."

"If anyone wants to purchase the siege weapons from the forest trolls, just let them handle the matters they usually would. You'd be doing me a great favor that way. When they obtain all their items, they'll still deliver it to my target. I'll arrest him then, and it won't affect the greater picture." Emily looked at Han Shuo and said with a smile.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "No problem, I'll go back to the Empire and get my hands on some rations. I'll return to the Dark Forest after that. I'll go speak to the forest trolls so it won't impact your mission at all."

"Oh right, you can't open Duke's space ring either. So why not give it to me? I'll think of a way to break through the barrier and see just what's inside."

"Okay, you take it then." Han Shuo straightforwardly handed Duke's space ring over to Emily, and then suddenly remembered Yuna's pretty space ring from his previous encounter when that thought struck him. Yuna was only an adept mage. Theoretically, the boundary that she'd set up should be easily broken by Emily.

Therefore, he took out Yuna's space ring and gave it to Emily. "There's also a boundary placed within this space ring, but that person was only an adept mage. I think you should be able to break the barrier inside and see what's in it?"

Emily took the space ring without asking how Han Shuo obtained it, took a deep breath, and focused her concentration.

The jade green space ring suddenly lit up, and abruptly dimmed when a strong pulse of magic was felt. Breathing out slightly, a few items suddenly appeared in Emily's hand. There were some female personal effects, a crystal card, a book on water magic, and some medicine to treat injuries.

Staring at Han Shuo oddly, Emily asked, "To think you would be such a brutal person as to destroy a feminine flower. How did this woman die in

your hands?”

Turning the items over after taking them from Emily, Han Shuo put away the jade green space ring when he discovered there wasn't anything valuable. He smiled, “A wanton woman betrayed me. I was so angry that I killed her. This is quite normal.”

“Pah! I don't believe you!” Emily said.

“Alright, I have two more days before I need to report to the organization. I must hurry and leave the cemetery of death. You already know my identity and origins, so we can temporarily leave this place. Go about your business first, whether you are going to report to the Dark Mantle or the Academy first, I think it'll be easy for me to find you. We should part ways here.” Han Shuo remembered that he had a ton of things to do and spoke to Emily.

“Alright, although you're a dishonest brat, it is indeed easy for me to find you. I'll ask you a final question, between Bryan and that weird name Han Shuo, which one should I call you by?” Emily asked.

“How about Han Shuo? This is the new name that the person who passed on the martial arts technique created for me. Call me that in the future!” Han Shuo thought for a moment and responded.

Nodding and saying nothing else, Han Shuo took Emily on a quick tour around the cemetery, and the two left via the transportation matrix amidst Emily's repeated exclamations of surprise.

# Chapter 123: You didn't rob the giant dragon, did you?

After leaving the cemetery of death, Han Shuo and Emily went separate ways. Emily still had to accomplish her mission from her superiors and couldn't stay by Han Shuo's side.

He hadn't returned to the Babylon Academy in a while and he was rather missing Fanny. Except, the whole incident with Emily had happened, and this made Han Shuo a bit uncertain of how to face Fanny. He hesitated and didn't directly return to the Academy, rather walking to the Boozt Merchant Guild first.

Han Shuo had asked Phoebe to help look for items to refine an earth elite zombie. So much time had passed, it was time to ask if she was ready. There were also treasures that had come from the forest trolls' sacred land within his space ring that needed to be disposed of via Phoebe. Add to that the fact that he needed to prepare rations for the forest trolls and the dwarves, so he rather needed to make a trip to the Boozt Merchant Guild.

After experiencing the Grover incident, Phoebe had already grasped the reins of power at the Guild. After making a couple visits, those within the Guild were all familiar with Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo presented himself at the door this time, the guards sent him in directly. When he walked towards the living room, Han Shuo suddenly heard the sounds of Fabian lecturing someone in a room, "Your father spent gold coins to help you enter the Guild, so you must work hard! Otherwise, with my position in the Guild, I won't be able to protect you."

"Understood, uncle." Another voice that Han Shuo was familiar with responded honestly.

When this voice sounded, Han Shuo's body sped up in surprise. When he arrived at the door to the room, he pushed the door open without knocking because he was so agitated, giving Fabian a shock. He



immediately cried out, “Who dares to trespass in my territory!”

“It’s me, Mister Fabian.” Han Shuo laughed lightly and walked in with great strides.

When he heard Han Shuo’s voice, Fabian heaved a sigh of relief and walked out chuckling from the room. He said, “So you’ve come, heh heh, are you here to come see our Miss Phoebe again?”

Another fat and chubby body quickly dashed out of the house. When he saw Han Shuo, he cried out with unexpected surprise. “Bryan, how come it’s you! How come you’re in the Boozt Merchant Guild as well? Heh heh, are you a member of the Guild as well? We can be colleagues again?”

Little fatty Jack’s body had grown a bit taller, but his weight seemed to have increased even faster. When he rushed out of the house with large strides, the ground sounded with thumps.

“Long time no see Jack! How come you’re with the Guild?” Han Shuo was also quite happy to see Jack again. Little fatty Jack was the closest friend that Han Shuo had met after arriving at the Academy. When Han Shuo gave him a sum of money last time, he thought he’d never see Jack again. Who would’ve thought that the two would see each other again after not too long had past.

“You two know each other?” Fabian was a bit taken aback as he looked at Jack and then at Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled as he explained, “When I was in the Academy, I was an errand boy with Jack. Heh heh, not only do we know each other, but our relationship is quite good.”

“Yes uncle, Bryan is quite amazing. Who would’ve thought that I’d run into him here?” Jack said, delighted.

“Mister Fabian, I’d like to catch up with your nephew. I’ll go meet Miss Phoebe later! Please pass that along for me!” Han Shuo said to Fabian with a smile.

Han Shuo had saved Fabian and Phoebe’s lives, and had brought a great deal of business with him the last couple of times. This made Fabian long

since view Han Shuo as a person of great fortune. When he heard Han Shuo speak thus, he immediately agreed and winked at Jack, as if hinting something to Jack.

It was a pity that the excited Jack didn't discover his uncle's hints, but rather, the more mature and experienced Han Shuo saw it all clearly and laughed ceaselessly in his heart.

When Fabian left, Han Shuo immediately asked, "Jack, how did you come to the Boozt Merchant Guild?"

"When you gave me the gold coins. I left the Academy. When I returned home, I didn't know what to do and helped my father butcher cows and sheep. I saw that things were difficult at home, so I secretly exchanged the gold coins you gave me into bits and pieces and gave them to my father, but he discovered my secret in the end, so I told him I found a bag of gold coins on the streets."

"My father felt that I couldn't always be a butcher, and so he took half of the gold coins to find my uncle Fabian to ask him to let me help in the Guild. I'm learning bookkeeping from someone, and that's how things are. Right, why are you in the Guild? I see that my uncle seems to have a lot of respect for you, what's going on here?" Jack looked at Han Shuo with surprise and asked in confusion.

Han Shuo said something random and fobbed Jack off with them. Han Shuo and Jack chatted for a while. From Jack's expression and words, Han Shuo felt that he was actually quite happy to work for the Guild. So he decided to help Jack a bit and was prepared to say something to Phoebe. He felt that Phoebe would at least give him this face.

No wonder he was happy to stay here. When he was an errand boy in the Academy before, not only did Jack have to work day and night, but he was often bullied by other students and errand boys. His days weren't too comfortable. Now that he was in the Guild, he had the protection of someone like Fabian, who worked at Phoebe's side. At least no one dared do anything to him. Compared to the backbreaking work of an errand boy, the material he was now learning was much more interesting. No wonder

Jack liked it here.

They talked for quite a while until Fabian came to rush Han Shuo, telling him that Miss Phoebe was waiting for him. Han Shuo then patted Jack's shoulder, saying with a smile, "Then I'll be going. Since you're within the Guild, we'll have plenty of chances to meet in the future."

"Alright, you go about your business. Come see me whenever you have the chance! Although I'm doing well here, I don't have that many friends."

"Mm, I know."

After leaving Fabian's room, Han Shuo's sensitive ears immediately heard Fabian and Jack's conversation. Fabian was telling Jack to build a good relationship with Han Shuo, saying that Han Shuo was a person of great fortune, etc.

Phoebe was still stunning as usual. A well-tailored, form fitting green robe even more fully offset her tall, slender, and uncommon demeanor. Faint blush powdered onto her cheeks displayed their clean smoothness, with a hint of red blush hidden within them. Her bright eyes were embedded into a face that seemed a work of art, appearing completely perfect and flawless.

"You've disappeared for almost a month, what do you plan on talking about this time?" The surrounding maids had long since left as Phoebe sat within the hall, holding a cup of tea within her hands and leisurely sipping it. She flicked a noncommittal glance at Han Shuo and delivered her words faintly.

"I've only been gone for a month, but why does Miss Phoebe look even more beautiful?" Han Shuo spoke truly. When he'd seen Phoebe before, she'd never purposefully dressed up, but this, time, she'd noticeably put on some makeup, and her beauty truly had been enhanced a bit in Han Shuo's eyes.

When these words were spoken, Phoebe's eyes lit up as the faint red on her cheeks slowly spread out. A happy curve traced her lips as she said in a soft, gentle voice, "You've grown more glib in the month that I haven't seen you."

Laughing heartily, Han Shuo walked in front of Phoebe and took the teapot and cup from in front of Phoebe, pouring himself a cup and taking a sip before saying, "Before we chat about serious matters, I hope you can do me a favor. Help my friend advance a bit."

Phoebe wasn't surprised to hear that, and her translucent chin nodded lightly twice. She said in a quiet and beautiful voice, "I heard from Fabian just now. Who would've thought that you'd be friends with the fatty? Heh heh, he's such an honest person and has you as a friend?"

Breaking out into laughter, Han Shuo scratched his head, "With your words, am I not honest enough?"

"Humph! If you counted as honest, then there'd be no people who don't abide by the rules in this world. I remember all the bad things you've done to me, how dare you say that you're honest?" Phoebe rolled her eyes in a pretty way as she bit off her words while glaring at Han Shuo.

Abruptly taking in a sip of tea to hide his awkwardness, Han Shuo said awkwardly, "Don't mention what's in the past! You still haven't agreed to help me take care of Jack!"

"No problem, I'll take good care of him for you. It's easy to help you with a small matter like this, but the other matter is a bit trickier." Phoebe said a bit thoughtfully.

Starting, Han Shuo looked askance at Phoebe, asking, "What's tricky?"

"About the materials you asked me to buy for you," Phoebe thought for a moment and opened her mouth to speak.

The refinement of the earth elite zombie was something that Han Shuo felt imperative he wanted to complete. When he heard Phoebe said that she'd run into some trouble, Han Shuo immediately felt a bit worried. He hastily asked, "What trouble? Is it that your Guild can't find those materials?"

Shaking her head, Phoebe's painted eyebrow creased slightly as she sighed lowly, "With our Guild's abilities, if these items exist in the world, then we'll be able to get our hands on it as long as someone can afford the

price. I had thought that the items wouldn't be that expensive, but who would've thought that after careful inquiry, I'd discover that all those unknown items would all be at an exorbitant price."

"According to my calculations, all these materials added together would need at least thirty thousand gold coins. Although I hold the power within the Guild, but I've just become the head and don't have the authority to completely mask such a large transaction for you, because each transaction will leave behind a record."

Han Shuo had been a bit worried when he heard her say she'd run into troubles, but now that he saw that it was due to the price, he rather breathed a sigh of relief. The current Han Shuo could be short on other things, but he had so many gold coins that he couldn't take them all with him at any given time. When he heard Phoebe say that the problems resulted from pricing, he immediately smiled.

"What are you smiling about? I know you've got some savings in your hands, but thirty thousand gold coins isn't a small amount. I can privately put together ten thousand for you, but I can't access my father's savings before I'm 25, so I can only take out so much. Why are you still laughing? I'm talking about serious matters!" Phoebe was frowning and trying to think of a plan for Han Shuo, but he was smiling and laughing as if nothing was the matter. This made Phoebe feel a bit irate.

"Right, how old are you now?" Han Shuo halted and asked Phoebe.

Her face reddening, Phoebe appeared a bit shy. She hesitated, and then snuck a glance at Han Shuo with a bashful expression, "23, you?"

"17!" Han Shuo said.

Phoebe's face whitened and she appeared a bit panicked. She hastily cried out, "Who are you kidding? Do you talk and look like a seventeen year old?"

Han Shuo only remembered that he'd already been 24 when he'd possessed Bryan's body. Bryan had originally been thin and small, but now looked completely like an adult after the reforging from the magical yuan. Add to that his original way of speech and experiences, he didn't look like

a seventeen year old no matter how one cut it.

Thinking for a while, Han Shuo finally chuckled, "I'm kidding, I'm 24."

Phoebe noticeably heaved a sigh of relief when she heard these words and then laughed wryly at Han Shuo, "Don't think of using me to make a plan. There's still two more years until I'm 25. I don't think you can wait two more years. Let's think of another plan."

A smile still hanging on his lips, Han Shuo blew a breath of air at the space ring and rubbed it with his fingers. Blocks of gold and all sorts of jewels, jade, and precious gems appeared one after another within the hall. In that instant, the hall was filled with the luster from the jewels as all sorts of dazzling, opulent splendor made the hall extremely luxurious and extravagant.

"Is this enough?" Han Shuo looked at Phoebe, who'd sunk into a dumbfounded state, and asked merrily.

The riches within the hall had come from many years of forest troll looting. When he took them all from the space ring and piled them in front of Phoebe, it did indeed cause a huge shock to her.

"Heart of the Blue Ocean, Sierra Leone Jade, the Mudanee Necklace, King Finley's Crown..." Phoebe's stunning face was full of shock as her slender fingers rifled through the jewels that had appeared. She murmured these amazing names in a low voice.

After a while, Phoebe took in a few breaths in a row, finally looking deeply at Han Shuo and asking, "A lot of missing treasures are here. You didn't rob a giant dragon, did you?"

Shaking his head with a low laugh, Han Shuo said, "Don't ask how I obtained these items, just tell me if they're enough for me to exchange for the materials I requested?"

"Eh... I temporarily can't estimate the value of these goods, but I think their value will definitely exceed thirty thousand gold coins." Phoebe's clear eyes still stared firmly at Han Shuo as she slowly responded.

Nodding, Han Shuo said straightforwardly, "Good, these items are showy

but not substantial, they don't have much value for me. Collect them all and dispose of them for me at a reasonable price. I need the materials that I mentioned earlier. In addition, please purchase another space ring for me, I'd like to take the rations from last time with me."

"With so many treasures, aren't you afraid that I'll list some random price that disadvantages you?" Phoebe looked at Han Shuo and stared for a bit, a trace of a faint smile blossoming on her lips as she asked him.

"I believe that you won't!" Han Shuo smiled. "I'll visit again in a few days, I hope the items I need will be ready then."

"Stay for lunch." Phoebe nodded and hesitated, suddenly saying lightly when she saw that Han Shuo was about to leave after leaving the treasures behind.

Han Shuo felt a bit strange when he heard these words, but Phoebe truly could help him with a great deal of things right now. Although he had a lot of things to handle at the moment, the time it took to eat a meal wasn't that long either. Therefore, he decisively nodded and agreed to it.

The location of lunch was near the artificial mountains where Phoebe and Han Shuo had once crushed themselves into. This place had been redecorated now and all sorts of expensive flowers and grass had been planted in the surroundings. The branches and leaves of some green and luxuriant, soft plants were entwined around the stone pillars of the little pavilion. It looked quite charming.

Han Shuo continuously felt a bit uncomfortable as he sat at the table within the little pavilion, after the maids had filled it with food and wine. His eyes kept drifting to the crack in the artificial mountain that he'd squeezed into with Phoebe as he kept recalling what had happened here.

Phoebe rather looked quite comfortable, and she didn't seem to pay any attention to that area at all. She waved her hand and dismissed all the maids and guards, hospitably encouraging Han Shuo to drink wine and tea. This change in attitude made Han Shuo feel uncomfortable.

After eating and drinking, although Han Shuo wouldn't get drunk thanks to the magical yuan, now that he'd tasted the wonders of women, he kept

recalling the time that he'd taken advantage of Phoebe, for some reason. His serious and professional glances at Phoebe were suffused with another meaning at some unknown point.

Phoebe observed Han Shuo's changes, and whether it was because of the sweet wine, her cheeks became even more reddened and beautiful. As her chilly facade retreated, Phoebe's charms continued to increase rapidly, making Han Shuo across the table from her panic inwardly and think random thoughts.



# Chapter 124: We haven't even slept together!

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Phoebe drank another cup of translucent and clear red wine that sparkled with a wondrous light. She flicked a glance at Han Shuo as she said lowly.

"No... nothing much." Han Shuo panicked and he stammered a bit.

"Then why are you drooling?" Phoebe pointed at the corner of Han Shuo's mouth as she lightly laughed playfully.

He touched his chin and discovered that there really was some trace of water on his chin. Han Shuo said awkwardly, "Eh, that isn't drool. It's wine, it's really wine."

"Oh." Phoebe smiled delightedly, "So it's wine. How is it possible that you'd miss some even when drinking wine? How interesting."

He kept feeling that the atmosphere was a bit odd. Han Shuo felt very comfortable at heart as he listened to Phoebe's soft and gentle words. His mind kept making connections as his eyes once again involuntarily drifted to the crack in the artificial mountain.

"It's only been a short time since we started eating, and you've already glanced to the left at the crack in the artificial mountain nine times. Just what is there that deserves your attention?" Phoebe's beautiful eyes darted around and landed on Han Shuo's body as she said lightly.

Panicking inwardly, Han Shuo blurted out, "How do you know that I kept glancing at that area, and that I've done so nine times?"

These words made Phoebe's face even redder. She tsk'ed lightly and said lowly, "You've been looking around shiftily. Sitting in front of you, of course I saw everything. I know what bad thoughts you were harboring when you looked there."

"Then what bad thoughts would you say I've been thinking?" After what he'd just gone through, Han Shuo suddenly felt that he was a bit too

passive. A demonic practitioner was unafraid of all conventions and was most at ease when he did what was on his mind, no matter what others would think or say. When he suddenly understood this, Han Shuo no longer wildly casted around surreptitious glances, but rather stared directly at Phoebe and asked her with a smile.

Phoebe started as the red blush on her cheeks slowly spread down her slender, white neck. She stuttered and stammered, but didn't say anything with her reddened face. Her affectedly bashful face was even more ill at ease than Han Shuo had been earlier.

Seeing Phoebe like this, Han Shuo gave a happy laugh, feeling that the depressing passivity from earlier was completely swept away. He said merrily, "Who would've thought that Miss Phoebe would care so much about me? You've even noted how many times I glanced over. I'm truly overwhelmed by your favor."

"Oh shut up Bryan, I've discovered that you're full of bad thoughts. Looks like I'll receive the short end of the stick whenever I do business with you in the future." Phoebe flew into a rage and glared fiercely at Han Shuo, complaining as she did so.

When Phoebe said this, Han Shuo suddenly remembered the matter having to do with the McGrady Guild. The humor on his face was immediately replaced with seriousness as he asked Phoebe, "Talking of business suddenly reminds me of something. You mentioned the McGrady Guild last time and said that they were your competition, right?"

Phoebe was a bit surprised that Han Shuo had suddenly mentioned this, and she looked at him, taken aback. Phoebe nodded and responded, "That's right, the McGrady Guild belongs to the Brut Merchant alliance and have been doing a lot of business in our Lancelot Empire lately. The items they transport do not travel through the towns of the Empire and thus they don't need to pay customs taxes to the Empire. When their goods arrive, they can keep their prices low and thus impact our Guild's business a bit as well."

Smiling faintly, Han Shuo said, "Not going through the proper channels

can indeed result in large profits, there are particularly huge, even frightening profits to be made in the industries forbidden by the Empire. The McGrady Guild is quite daring to act and risk a lot.”

“Why are you suddenly mentioning the McGrady Guild?” Phoebe looked at Han Shuo with confusion as she asked him.

“I have a friend in the Dark Forest with a rather particular profession. He robbed the McGrady Guild entourage lately and came by many luxury items. He wants me to get rid of them. I wonder if I can do that through you?”

“Being a robber is a robber, what particular profession? There are all sorts of robbers within the Dark Forest, there’s nothing strange about that. Heh heh, the McGrady Guild wouldn’t dare pass through the Empire’s cities because they want to avoid the high customs taxes. However, this naturally increases their risk of danger, but their McGrady Guild has private guards, and therefore, very few robbers are blind enough to make a move against them. Your friend is quite something to be able to rob them.”

“Of course. So, do you dare accept goods from the McGrady Guild?”

“Our Guild will accept everything as long as it’s not siege weapons. I’ve heard that the Empire is investigating this area rather closely recently. Forget it if it’s siege weapons.”

Han Shuo remembered the matter that Emily had mentioned when Phoebe spoke, and he seemed to catch a vague hint of something. However, Han Shuo had long since promised Emily the batch of war resources. He’d only planned on selling to Phoebe the goods used by nobles, and so he had no particular concerns.

“Be at peace, I wouldn’t make life difficult for you. I’ve eaten well today and will come by in a few days to come find you again. Help me take care of my matters as soon as possible if you can.” Han Shuo comforted Phoebe and stood up, preparing to take his leave.

Seeing that Han Shuo was about to leave, Phoebe hesitated and then said with a bit of difficulty, “I actually have a favor to ask as well.”

Looking at Phoebe in baffled surprise, Han Shuo asked, "What is it?"

"I need to attend a banquet in five days time. If I appear alone, some annoying people may bother me. I'd like for you to come with me and act as my boyfriend like last time." Phoebe looked a bit shyly at Han Shuo and said lightly.

A rueful smile on his face, Han Shuo shook his head, "Forget it, I don't want to be your shield again. If I trigger someone else's jealousy and they come at me from the darkness, I'll be in some danger. Why don't you find someone else?"

"No!" Phoebe shouted, and then explained with a wry expression, "I've previously introduced you to the founding elders in the Guild. If I suddenly change to someone else within a month, they'll say I have loose morals! This absolutely won't do."

Han Shuo was still hesitant and appeared a bit ill at ease. Phoebe stared at Han Shuo, and then pouted. "If someone doesn't agree, then I won't be serious about my business either. It will be very normal if the thing that I promised him is delayed by ten days or half a month."

This was what Han Shuo didn't want to see. He had no choice but to nod after Phoebe's words and say, "Then alright, as long as you don't think I'm embarrassing you then."

"There we go, how could you allow someone else to take me to the banquet? What if they take advantage of me, wouldn't you be worried?" A faint smile reappeared on Phoebe's face when she saw Han Shuo agree.

"Then aren't you afraid that I'll take advantage of you?" Han Shuo rolled his eyes at Phoebe and said bad temperedly.

When he said these words, Phoebe's beautiful face flushed again, and she turned her head away, too shy to look at Han Shuo. She said lowly, "No, you've already taken all the advantage you can."

Han Shuo's heart lurched as he looked at the redness of Phoebe's neck and ears, and in a curious coincidence, blurted out, "Not all. We haven't even slept together!"

Han Shuo immediately reacted and swiftly walked towards the outside before Phoebe had a chance to speak. He hastily said, "I'll be going now that I'm full. I'll come by five days later."

"You rubbish talking villain!" Phoebe hadn't thought that Han Shuo would say such things and immediately flew into a rage. She cursed at Han Shuo's fleeing back and only broke out into a low laugh when his body sped up and vanished. "Damnit, how dare he say that to me. Huh, he's getting bolder and bolder."

It was just past noon after leaving the Boozt Merchant Guild. Since the last time he'd reported into the Dark Mantle, it was almost a month. Thus, after seeing the time, Han Shuo hired a carriage and set off for the Dark Mantle's stronghold.

When he was a street away, Han Shuo disembarked and released the three original demons to survey the surroundings, walking to the manor on foot.

"Boss, you're finally here! I've been counting the days and knew that you would come and report soon. Therefore, I purposefully swapped shifts with others and have been waiting here to bring you into the organization's interior." The bandit Chester squirmed out from inside when Han Shuo arrived and said lowly with excitement.

"Eh, why are you calling me boss?" Han Shuo looked oddly at Chester and asked him with confusion.

"I'll follow you in the future, and I hope that you'll give me tips and pointers. Of course I need to express my respect towards you." Chester said matter-of-factly towards Han Shuo.

"This title doesn't sound very nice, let's just go by our given names. Heh heh, but don't you worry. If there are any good missions, I'll ask to bring you along as well." Han Shuo said.

After receiving Han Shuo's promise, Chester appeared overjoyed and brought Han Shuo inside with passion and excitement. He chattered away non stop, asking where Han Shuo had been during this time, and if he'd gone out on any missions.

Han Shuo carelessly responded to Chester's questions and walked slowly into the internals of the Dark Mantle organization. There was no surprise for him this time, and he walked with an air of familiarity directly towards Candide's room.

"Ooh, you really are here. I thought Emily was lying to me." Candide sat in a shadowy corner and was examining something in a magical flask. He didn't raise his head when Han Shuo came in.

Han Shuo hadn't anticipated that Emily would mention him, and was a bit surprised. He didn't know what Emily had said to Candide, and thus stood there silently.

After a while, Candide put away the flask in his hands, finally speaking with his never-changing sinister face, "Emily said she happened to bump into you in the Dark Forest and rather admired your style and competency. I was quite surprised. I hadn't thought that Emily, with her high standards, would speak so highly of you. It looks like there truly are some unique things about you."

No shit, Emily's my woman, of course she'd say good things about me. Han Shuo thought with pride, but maintained his usual expression on his face. He opened his mouth to say, "It's been one month since my last mission. I've come to report in as per the rules and see if there are any other missions."

The Dark Mantle usually didn't interfere in personal matters, thus Han Shuo didn't go into detail about how he and Emily had met. Since Emily had already spoken of it, she surely would've concealed all that had to be concealed. As long as Han Shuo didn't give anything away, nothing would happen at all.

Nodding, Candide said, "Emily gave you a round of compliments and said that she wanted you to complete the mission in her hands with her. You'll share the rewards and honor together then. What do you think? You're one of mine. Emily won't be able to make use of you without your agreement, but if you agree, then it's another matter entirely."

With Han Shuo and Emily's relationship now, there was naturally no

reason not to agree. Not to mention Emily needed to get the resources out of the forest trolls through Han Shuo for her mission. He had already become unwittingly embroiled in all this. If this became a mission that he could benefit from, then it'd be even better.

“No problem, I'm willing to complete the mission with her.” Han Shuo didn't hesitate and nodded in agreement. He paused and said, “The bandit who brought me in, Chester, is quite smart. Can he join as well?”

“The mission is Emily's, it's up to her if she needs another person. You can ask her directly.” Candide said faintly, paused and then said, “Emily is Amyes' sister by blood. Her status within the Dark Mantle isn't low. It will be good for you to interact more with her. However, Emily's identity within reality is a bit mysterious. Keep an eye out, don't give others any gossip to talk about.”

Amyes was one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle and was in charge of surveillance and investigation of all nobles and officials. He was a character within the Dark Mantle who was hugely active in the political scene, and one who held great power in his hands. To think that Emily was his sister by blood.

In addition, Candide seemed to be alluding to something else about Emily's other identity. This made Han Shuo a bit surprised, unsure of the meaning within his words.

“Looks like you didn't know all this, let this be a reminder to be careful. Mm. This will be all. She's already pulled your information to peruse and will be able to find you easily. Come find me after you complete the mission with her.” Candide said as he looked at Han Shuo.

# Chapter 125: I'm damn good aren't I?

When he left the Dark Mantle, Han Shuo left some instructions with Chester, telling him to wait here for news.

When he walked out of the Dark Mantle headquarters, Han Shuo didn't linger and returned to the Academy. When he was about to arrive, he disembarked from his carriage and went to the graveyard in the mountains behind the Academy, entering the tomb that went to the cemetery of death.

He didn't return to the cemetery of death, but rather rubbed his space ring and took out the Fruit of Dagmar that was shaped like a human brain. Han Shuo had sealed the three fruits in special containers. When he took it out, he took a good look and discovered that this Fruit of Dagmar didn't have a remarkable appearance, and it looked rather ugly.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo sat down cross legged, hesitated, and swallowed the Fruit of Dagmar that was a bit larger than the size of a fist. It tasted a bit bitter and was tough to chew. It tasted really bad compared to normal, ordinary fruit.

When Han Shuo had completely swallowed the Fruit of Dagmar, he immediately circulated his magical yuan and slowly started concentrating it towards the back of his brain.

Nothing abnormal happened as first, but Han Shuo slowly felt something was different after some time had passed. Swirls of strange energy emanated from his stomach and bubbled up from his lower abdomen, spinning as they moved to the brain.

The strange energy within these swirls was accompanied by a pain that pierced into his bone marrow. Even Han Shuo, with his resolute tenacity and willpower, felt it was a bit tough to endure. When these bubbles of strange energy made it to Han Shuo's brain, his mind shuddered greatly, as if a hundred bombs were exploding at the same time. The sounds of explosions rocketed through his brain.

Bone piercing pain accompanied the violent explosions in his head.



When his brain had been opened up by the magical yuan, the perceptiveness of his five senses greatly increased. Han Shuo could feel that the folds on the left and right sides of his brain was suffused with the power within this swirls.

It was a bit similar to when Han Shuo had expanded his meridians. Because of the effects of the Fruit of Dagmar, Han Shuo's brain was being developed bit by bit. This process was mysterious and strange. Even Han Shuo didn't know what had happened as he succumbed under the painful process.

If it'd been anyone else going through such strong stimulation of their brain. They would basically immediately turn into an idiot or a madman. This was because the brain was the most complex thing in the world. Any abnormalities within it could immediately trigger changes that upended the heavens and earth.

This kind of bone achingly deep pain that seeped into a person's heart would be enough to immediately make a normal person lose their mind and never recover from it. Even Han Shuo, someone with extreme mental strength and the protection of the magical yuan, suffered greatly throughout this process, under the effects of the Fruit of Dagmar. Any other bystander would've only faced death in front of them.

His entire body trembling, Han Shuo was raining sweat as he sat there cross legged. He hadn't screamed himself hoarse in a long time, but these screams once again erupted uncontrollably from his mouth. Finally in the end, the place that Han Shuo was sitting on was soaked with sweat, and his hoarse screams slowly became weaker and his lips trembled like the rest of his body.

He remained in this position for a long time as Han Shuo lay there stiffly within the drenched soil, sinking into a coma in that instant.

After who knew how long, Han Shuo slowly woke up. When he came to himself, he felt that his head hurt so much that it was about to split open, and that his body ached all over. He raised his head and shifted his body. When he looked upwards, Han Shuo's heart was immediately filled with

delight.

Within the gloom of the tomb, Han Shuo could clearly see even the smallest of the patterns within the stone slabs a few meters over his head. Although Han Shuo's original vision had been quite clear, the feeling was even more marvelous now, and he barely believed his own eyes in that moment.

When he'd carefully observed the four corners and discovered that he could see anything within the dusk of the tomb as long as he concentrated, Han Shuo's astonishment grew even greater. It was as if his eyes had transformed into a magnifying glass. If he slowly concentrated on something a few meters away, the distance would seem to slowly decrease. The originally small dot would be slowly enhanced, with him finally catching an eyeful of unparalleled clarity in the end.

This kind of feeling was quite marvelous and Han Shuo knew that this was absolutely due to the effects of the Fruit of Dagmar. If it wasn't for the fact that one couldn't eat the fruit repeatedly, Han Shuo really wanted to swallow the other two whole as well. In a frenzy of joy, Han Shuo sat down and meditated for a bit. He found that the concentration and circulation speed of his mental strength had indeed greatly increased.

In this regard, when Han Shuo meditated, he would obtain mental strength at an increased rate. When he used magic to fight against others, the recovery rate of his mental strength from meditation after it'd been exhausted would be vastly greater than the ordinary person's. This meant that whether in terms of training or battle, Han Shuo would be able to operate at a much faster tempo than ordinary mages.

In his great joy, Han Shuo didn't linger in this place. Now that he felt his mental strength had increased, Han Shuo decided to advance to the next step of necromancy magic. Han Shuo had only been able to fully grasp and skillfully employ several novice necromancy magics until now.

With the increase of his mental strength, Han Shuo was confident that he could achieve another breakthrough. It looked like it wouldn't be a difficult thing to graduate from the necromancy major as an adept mage

in a short period of time.

Han Shuo had studied some of the intermediate necromancy magics for a while in the days when he was injured. There were still a few theories that he wasn't fully clear on. Now that he'd returned to the Academy, it looked like it was time to find Fanny for some answers.

When he crawled out of the tomb, the sky was brightening over a silvery world. There'd actually been a huge snowfall, and the snow covered everything. It was a snow white world as far the eyes could see.

As the harsh, chilly wind blew, Han Shuo's already sweaty and wet body felt a bit cold. Han Shuo took off his damp clothes in this cold, snowy place and faced this silvery world with a naked body.

The range of his vision had greatly increased as he looked out across the world. If it was said that Han Shuo's eyes had the function of a magnifying glass within the tomb, then his eyes seemed to have the function of a pair of binoculars as he walked out of the tomb and looked out. His vision expanded endlessly, taking in even the sights in the distance.

His eyes alighted on several nearby trees. They all appeared incredibly clear, and it was so amazing that Han Shuo almost wanted to whistle loudly in appreciation.

Although Han Shuo's current body wasn't afraid of changing seasons, in order not to appear too out of the ordinary, he still took out some new, thicker clothes from within his space ring and wrapped up his naked body, proceeding towards the necromancy major.

All the landmarks had their own flavor to them beneath the cover of the thick snow. His various memories with Fanny kept resurfacing in his mind as Han Shuo walked over, but every time he thought of his current relationship with Emily, Han Shuo felt a bit shy about facing Fanny.

When he arrived at the dark major, earth shattering yells immediately traveled into Han Shuo's ears. They were filled with excitement and fervor, as if some grand party was being held.

Han Shuo was astonished as he didn't know what was going on. There

were a lot of buildings in the way on his way to the dark major, so he couldn't use his amazing vision to see anything. The distance of several hundred meters would be covered quickly, so he felt no need to release the original demons. Therefore, he picked up the pace and walked over quickly.

There were many students and teachers occupying the enormous square. There were dark and necromancy major students within, as well as the students and teachers from other majors. There were even a few knights and swordsmen mixed in, and it was all very exciting.

The enormous square appeared a bit crowded after taking in a hundred people. Many students on the outside were trying to push their way inside with all their strength. There were also a few dirty and depraved fellows staring at some female students and putting the weight of their bodies on the female students, eliciting a round of light screams and yells.

When he arrived here, Han Shuo had planned on releasing the original demons for surveillance, but felt strong magical pulses in the area. It looked like a magical boundary had been set up inside. If he accidentally had the original demons crash into the magical boundary and gave rise to attention from other people, that would be a bit unfavorable.

Therefore, he hesitated only a little bit and didn't release the original demons. He used his strong body to shove his way inside.

Several thunder mages glared at Han Shuo angrily beneath his shoving and pushing, and Han Shuo paid them no heed and ignored them, ramming them aside. Their fragile and thin bodies were a far cry from Han Shuo's, and they were shoved aside as Han Shuo's actions blazed a path for him.

His extraordinary senses were of use now. Han Shuo spied Lisa up ahead and immediately shoved aside those next to him, squirming his way towards Lisa. He was subjected to frowns and low curses along the way.

When he came near to Lisa, Han Shuo saw an exceedingly shiftY swordsman look hungrily at Lisa's now well rounded chest. He was attempting to get closer to Lisa and take advantage of her. Now that Han

Shuo was inside, he finally discovered that the magical boundary that had been set up was for the magical battle that was taking place inside. No wonder it had drawn a lot of attention.

Lisa was giving the fascinating battle inside her full attention, and would cry out excitedly every now and then. Amy and Athena, at her side, were just as excited, and weren't paying any attention to the looks of those around her.

The swordsman had finally made it next to Lisa. He was taking in his fill of Lisa's chest and licking his lips as he approached, wanting to take advantage of her in the crush.

Bam! Han Shuo suddenly appeared midway and body slammed the approaching swordsman, pushing him into a group of male thunder mages. He was subject to a round of abuse and curses.

Han Shuo, smiling merrily, flashed a proud grin at the swordsman who'd finally regained his footing. He then leisurely stood next to Lisa and purposefully pushed his way forward a bit, placing himself at Lisa's back.

The swordsman had been about to get what he wanted when Han Shuo had thrown him for this loop. He displayed an angry and depressed expression, flipping Han Shuo off from the distance and mouthing the words, "You cut in line!"

Shrugging, Han Shuo had a proud look on his face and also slowly mouthed the words back, "So what?"

Rolling his eyes, the swordsman was a bit resigned. His shifty eyes spun in a circle as he planned on finding another target. At this moment, Lisa's elbow suddenly shot back swiftly and suddenly attacked Han Shuo's chest, catching him unawares.

However, this level of attack had absolutely no effect when it landed on Han Shuo. The swordsman on the other side however, immediately revealed an expression that delighted in the misfortune of others, and he looked at Han Shuo with an eager expression, hoping to see him get in trouble.

“Huh! Another blind idiot coming over to take advantage, how irritating!” Lisa’s impatient low growl sounded out, and she then twisted her head to angrily look over, but when she saw that it was Han Shuo, she immediately revealed a surprised and happy expression and hastily asked, “Eh, you’ve come back? Um... I didn’t know it was you, did I hurt you just now?”

Seeing the fellow across from him wanting to delight in his misfortunes, Han Shuo immediately pretended to rub his chest and displayed a pained expression. Lisa was greatly shocked and frantically reached out with her small hand, rubbing Han Shuo’s chest, because this place was already crowded, Lisa’s movement basically made her flush against Han Shuo’s chest.

The swordsman, who’d been ready to watch Han Shuo go down, was flabbergasted when he saw the situation develop. Han Shuo had a proud smile on his face and he mouthed to the swordsman, “Aren’t I awesome?”

The swordsman didn’t say anything else and stuck up his thumb at Han Shuo, indicating that, damn you’re good. I’m in awe. He then turned his head and set his sights on another girl, pushing through once again. It looked like he was trying to see if he had the same luck as Han Shuo.

By now, Han Shuo could fully see the fight within the square. He kept one eye on the battle between the dark major students and the light major students, and searched for traces of Fanny within the crowd.

# Chapter 126: I want to battle

The Academy would hold a competition every winter between all the majors according to tradition. The victor would gain rich rewards, and this was used to spur the students to study even harder.

This was when the Academy was bustling the most as the majors competed not only for rewards, but also for the face of their major and teachers. Even the future of their teachers were closely tied to these battles.

Therefore, all the majors would send out their strongest students at this time every year to take part in the fighting. This was both for the students' own benefit, and for the face and future status of the teachers within the Academy.

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The dark major and light major had always been hated rivals. Open conflict and veiled struggles between the two majors had waged on for many years. The battle between the dark and light major was to determine who would win the title of the strongest major. This was why it'd attracted so many observers.

An enormous magic shield had enclosed the entire square, allowing combatants to battle to their hearts contents without causing injury to anyone. There were five participants from both the dark and light majors, and a fine show was being put on the stage.

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Han Shuo's gaze wandered around, finally resting on Fanny, who was sitting in the back corner of the row of teachers sitting at the front stage. Their section was raised, and the teachers from all majors were sitting there. The dean was also sitting there quite primly. It looked like everyone was placing great importance on this time's demonstration.

“Is anyone from our necromancy major part of the team?” Han Shuo started after Lisa had explained the situation for him, and opened his mouth to ask her.

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Shaking her head, Lisa said, “Our necromancy major is an offshoot of the dark major. The dark major teachers and students were awfully afraid that we'd be a burden to them, so they didn't count us in for this time's demonstration at all. Therefore, it's only students from the dark major being involved from beginning to end, and there's nothing to do with our necromancy major.”

“So that's the case. Who do you think will win between the light and dark major this time?” Han Shuo stared at the two groups within the square and asked carelessly.

“Not sure. The dark and light major have always been the two strongest majors within the Academy. After all these years, the two majors have been trading the title of strongest major back and forth. No major has been able to win consecutively. The dark major won last year, but the captain that led the team last year has already graduated, whereas the light major's is still here. I think the dark major is in some trouble this time.” Lisa fixed her gaze on the situation within the square and explained for Han Shuo.

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“Ai, too bad there's nothing to do with our necromancy major. After all these years, the dark major has always directly counted us out. Although Master Fanny and Gene try quite hard, because of this, their standing within the Academy keeps decreasing. See, Master Fanny can only sit in the last row, and Master Gene doesn't even dare show his face because he's afraid that people will laugh at him. Our necromancy major is truly a failure.” Amy shook her head and spoke dejectedly with a woebegone expression.



“This can’t be helped either. The creatures that our necromancy major students can summon are innately weak to light magic. Without the help from our summoned creatures, it’s very difficult for necromancy magics to obtain the upper hand against light magic attacks. This is why Master Fanny can only resign herself to accepting the arrangements from the dark major and not have us join in the battle. If we did so, we’d only be making life more difficult for ourselves.” Athena was also similarly dejected as she followed up on Amy’s words.

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It wasn’t smooth and without obstacles within the square, but all sorts of artificial mountains and fake trees had been placed, as well as numerous moats that were jagged and uneven. The school authorities wanted the students to become used to real environmental situations, and thus had made the battleground quite complicated.

At this moment, the five students from their respective majors were making use of the fake trees and grotesque rocks to conceal their bodies within the square. They would pop out and attack each other every now and then, then make use of the terrain to back off or regroup with their teammates. The enormous magical shield protecting the square also made the light hazy and dim. It looked like this had been a conscious decision to create this effect, to make it easier for teams to cooperate.

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The two sides were probing each other when one of the members from the dark major suddenly clutched his stomach and fell down. Cold sweat beaded his forehead as his face was drained of all color.

Dark major archmage Deo’s facial expression changed drastically when he saw the situation develop and he immediately spoke to Dean Emma, “Dean, Phillide seems to be feeling unwell. I’d like to halt the battle and see what’s going on.”

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copy of the chapter.

Space grand magus Emma was also looking at the fallen Phillide with some surprise. She seemed to be puzzled as to why he'd suddenly fallen down when the real fight had yet to take place. When she heard Deo's words, she nodded and said, "Halt, let's see what's wrong with Phillide?"

Emma then waved her hand and the enormous magic shield suddenly lit up. The other dark major students helped the anguished Phillide to Deo. Dark major archmage Deo and several other dark major teachers examined Phillide, with Deo finally speaking to Emma with a darkened face, "Dean, Phillide's eaten some food that he shouldn't have eaten. I don't think he can participate this time."

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"Oh, my gosh! What's going on? Phillide is almost graduating and is someone who's about to become an adept mage within the dark major. He's also the current team leader and the strongest. If he suddenly can't participate, then the dark major has even less chance this time." Athena spoke with some worry as she looked at the pale Phillide.

Sara nodded and spoke, "Indeed. Keelung from the light major on the other side was captain of the light major team last year. It's said that he already has the strength of an adept mage, but purposefully delayed the timing of his advancement due to this year's competition. With Phillide present, they would've been evenly matched, but now that this has happened, it looks like the dark major is completely without hope."

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Han Shuo, with his sensitive hearing, could clearly hear Emma and Deo's conversation. Because of Phillide's health issues, Deo was attempting to convince Emma to delay this year's battle for a few days, but Emma rejected Deo's request on the basis of Academy's rules. She only agreed to allow Deo to swap out for another dark major student on Phillide's behalf.

Deo had a face full of fury as he argued shrilly with Emma, saying that

this was a conspiracy and he demanded for Emma to change the day of the demonstration.

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It was pity that archmage Deo was just a dark major teacher in the end, and naturally wasn't more important than the Academy's rules.

Unable to convince Emma, Deo said furiously, "Since this is the case, then we're not competing. Allow others to say what they will this time!"

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"Master Deo, please remember your status. Although an accident has occurred, I hope you don't think of changing the Academy's traditions. Please find a substitute for this year's demonstration and let's see it through." Emma, usually benevolent and kind, was obviously a bit annoyed as she spoke gravely to Deo.

Apart from being a space grand magus, Emma also had a sense of unquestionable authority since she'd established her position as dean of the Academy. When such a severe warning was issued from her mouth, Deo was immediately dumbfounded.

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Thinking for a bit with a darkened face, Deo turned to look at Fanny, who sat in the corner and spoke, "Master Fanny, the necromancy major has never been a part of the combat after so many years. I think it's high time that the necromancy major sent out someone. Please find someone to fill in Phillide's position so that the combat may continue."

Originally sitting in the back row expressionlessly watching everything, Fanny suddenly started when she heard Deo's words. She immediately recollected herself as rage filled her face, "Master Deo, what do you mean by this?"

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copy of the chapter.

Anyone could see that Deo had purposefully spoken to Fanny when he knew that he had no way to win after Phillide bowed out.

Even if they lost, those in the know could tell that Deo's actions were completely as a result of his bad temper. After all, the necromancy major was known for being weak. Deo could've asked anyone other than the necromancy major to fill in the spot. His actions were a noticeable jab at the necromancy major, and could even be construed as humiliation for the major.

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"Master Fanny, as a member of the dark major, you still need to make an effort sometimes, wouldn't you say?" Another dark major teacher, off to the side, naturally understood Deo's intentions and spoke up after thinking for a moment.

The teachers next to Fanny were watching her with an expression of delighting in her miseries, with some also displaying expressions of pity. However, the necromancy major was well known for being weak, and no one expressed anything. Expressions of watching a good show prevailed more than not.

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"When do you usually ever think of our necromancy major? You think of us when you need someone to act as a scapegoat, I think not!" Fanny had already lacked face with no necromancy students participating, and she'd only hoped for the battle to be over as soon as possible, so as to not suffer through the mockery and sympathetic gazes of others. Who would've known that she'd be so humiliated by Deo at the very end? This immediately roused her ire.

Fanny was someone who was soft on the outside and tough on the inside, of this Han Shou was well aware of. Under normal circumstances, Fanny always greeted others with a smiling face and wouldn't cause

conflict with others, but once someone stepped over her bottom line, Fanny would also fight back with all her strength. It was obvious that Deo had stepped over Fanny's bottom line this time.

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The conversations of the teachers on stage couldn't make it over here, so Lisa and the others were standing there with looks of bafflement, not knowing why Fanny had suddenly stood up. When Han Shuo relayed what was happening with a darkened face, they were all incredibly angry as they cursed at Deo's despicableness.

A strong body was useful in moments like this. He pushed everyone blocking the way aside, and walked towards the main stage amidst a flurry of student curses. He suddenly raised his voice, "Master Fanny, I would like to battle on behalf of Phillide. I hope you approve."

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Han Shuo could no longer contain the anger within him when he saw Fanny being humiliated. He cried out loudly with a look of seriousness, his voice ringing out clear as a bell and traveled a great distance to the stage.

The square was immediately silent without a sound as large hubbub immediately exploded after. Everyone's gaze was focused on Han Shuo and they were all full of excitement and curiosity, all wanting to know what was going on.

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"Who is that kid? He's got some guts!"

"Huh, such overconfidence. Even Phillide knew that he was no match for our major and pretended to be ill and backed out. To think there are those who invite humiliation!"

"Eh, isn't that our major's Bryan? When did he return?"

An uproar instantly suffused the scene as all the students and teachers patrolled curious gazes over Han Shuo's body. They even started asking those around them what Han Shuo's background was.

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Fanny was dumbfounded to see Han Shuo appear. Her clear eyes sparkled as a hint of a sweet smile blossomed on her angry face. She spoke tenderly to Han Shuo, "Forget it... can't you see that someone's purposefully using us as a scapegoat?"

Nodding his head, Han Shuo looked at Deo, who was busily pretending that nothing was out of the ordinary. He spoke to Fanny, "I know, but I still want to try. Our necromancy major has been quiet for so long that it's time we took our spot in the limelight again."

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This demonstration would affect the standing of all the teachers in the future. As a necromancy teacher, Fanny was being set up by someone like Deo. Han Shuo would naturally not allow something like this to continue to happen.

Some sort of message seem to be conveyed from Han Shuo's resolute gaze. Fanny stared dumbly at him for quite a few seconds before finally nodding. She spoke to Deo, "Alright, I agree to your request. He will act as a substitute for Phillide."

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Han Shuo's identity was quickly revealed from the mouths of the necromancy students. His life as an errand slave to his experiences within the Dark Forest quickly made their ways to the ears of all the teachers and students present.

When the tidbit of the old witch Camilla seeing Fanny and Han Shuo spending the night together and Han Shuo on Fanny's bed came out, this

filled the minds of everyone present with endless imagination. This caused the voices of discussion to be louder and louder as people's gazes sharpened and grew with enthusiasm.

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"Then it's settled, he'll substitute for Phillide and immediately join the battle against the light major. Mm, he's just taking the stage for show. It'll be over quickly and won't waste much time." Deo nodded and said to Fanny.

# Chapter 127: Cutting a smart figure

Under Deo's remote gaze, Han Shuo nodded his head woodenly and didn't say much. He flicked a glance at Fanny and walked inside of the magic barrier.

Arriving at Emma's side, Emma looked at Han Shuo with benevolence and kindly said, "You're called Bryan, right?"

Han Shuo was startled and looked at Dean Emma in confusion, and said, "That's right, how do you know?"

"Heh heh, of course I know of you. You made a great contribution to the necromancy major during the Dark Forest excursion. Mm, go in and have a good fight. You're not a good kid." Emma smiled merrily at Han Shuo and spoke slowly.

Han Shuo seemed to think there were some hidden connotations in Emma's words from the way she looked at him, but he didn't quite understand what she meant. He didn't pursue it and nodded politely at Emma, then walked into the square.

After Emma opened the shield, Han Shuo and the rest of the dark major, as well as the light major, all reentered the square. When they walked inside, Han Shuo suddenly noticed that what people saw inside and outside of the shield was different. When they looked in from the audience's perspective on the outside, they were able to see everything clearly although the lighting was dim.

But when Han Shuo walked in himself, he discovered that it was much darker inside than outside. There were even a few wisps of fog floating around the interior. All sorts of trees, artificial mountains, and moats existed, making the entire battlefield a place strewn with obstacles.

Han Shuo didn't dare to release the original demons within the magic shield. After all, there were so many audience members outside. Not only were there teachers from all majors, but the space archmage Dean Emma was there as well. With so many seasoned experts watching along with the existence of the shield, Han Shuo didn't dare take the risk of releasing the



original demons.

Even without the original demons, Han Shuo wasn't affected by the fog or duskiness due to the way his brain was developed. The sensitivity of his ears and eyes were far greater than any of the other students present within the square.

Leveraging his eyes and ears, Han Shuo discovered that the five from the light major seemed to be setting something up under the guidance of Keelung. On the contrary, the four from the dark major were all trailing their heads in dejection. They looked like they'd all been forced into fighting.

That made sense. Ever since losing Phillide, they could tell from Deo's conversation that even Deo had given up on this year's battle. Having them battle was just for show.

It was a given that they weren't willing to go on stage for a fight they knew they'd lose, but they couldn't disobey Deo's orders either. It was no wonder they were drooping their heads and had no morale whatsoever. Since they'd entered the fighting grounds, the four of them had had no inclination to discuss any details with Han Shuo. It looked like they were planning on acting according to what Deo had said, and just make a random showing.

From where Han Shuo stood, he could see all of their expressions. Yet he didn't say much, he just chanted a section of magical incantation and summoned a few small skeletons and zombie warriors to battle.

The small skeletons and zombie warriors appeared faster than normal beneath Han Shuo's incantation. The six skeletal warriors and three zombie warriors appeared in almost the blink of an eye within the square. There was no pause in between each one, and their speed was astonishing.

"Yo, that fellow's incantation speed is rather abnormally fast. He's summoned so many creatures in the blink of an eye."

Those observing in the crowd were students and teachers from all majors. They naturally understood that the chanting of a magical incantation needed to be in concert with the speed in concentrating

mental strength. If the two magics had a short interval in between them, that meant that the speed in concentrating mental strength was also very fast. They all displayed expressions of astonishment when they saw Han Shuo summon so many dark creatures in such a small time frame.

Even Dean Emma's eyes gleamed as she looked at Han Shuo in interest, as if she was very curious as to what Han Shuo was prepared to do.

"Humph. Light magic is the antithesis of dark creatures. He might as well save his mental strength for a few more necromancy magics, as opposed to wasting his mental strength in summoning dark creatures." One of the dark major teachers jeered as he looked at Han Shuo.

Fanny sat beside him, so these words were obviously meant for Fanny. Anger appeared on Fanny's face, but she didn't say a thing.

After summoning the skeletal warriors and zombies, Han Shuo was secretly delighted. When he'd summoned so many dark creatures previously, he'd felt a significant decrease in his mental strength. However, this time, after completing the summoning of so many dark creatures, the amount of mental strength depleted was negligible to Han Shuo. This was a practical demonstration that Han Shuo's mental strength had also increased by quite a lot.

Joy filling his heart, Han Shuo once again chanted an incantation and a few more skeletal warriors, zombie warriors, and ghouls appeared.

As he was summoning these dark creatures, Han Shuo had already left the clump of dark major students and arrived on the left most corner of the square. There was cover from artificial mountains and fake trees, as well as fog wreathing the area. Therefore, the light and dark major students wouldn't be able to see his motions.

When the dark creatures came out, they waved the weapons in their hands according to Han Shuo's commands and quickly began to set up traps within the area.

Ropes and snares, as well as further deepened moats became hidden dangers in the area. The skeletal warriors raised their bone daggers to work quickly, the ghouls speedily moved the dirt to pile up in the front

and formed a wall that would impede others from entering the side. The zombie warriors then used the wooden clubs in their hands to made the mud walls a bit thicker and firmer.

The three dark creatures started working orderly and without confusion under Han Shuo mental manipulation. Under the gaze of the students and teachers outsiders, they began to calmly and gravely set up the damaging traps, as if Han Shuo was a calm hunter.

They'd all originally held the mindset of watching a joke, but when they saw so many dark creatures appear and quickly work to set up the traps, their expressions turned from comical to gravely serious.

"As long as a necromancer's mental strength is strong enough, he can summon an endless numbers of dark creatures. Only necromancers can use their dark creatures to complete work that requires manual labor. This is the kind of advantage that all other majors aren't able to emulate."

"This little fellow's methods have thoroughly utilized the advantage of necromancers being able to utilize dark creatures. His mind is rather nimble. I think there will be a spot of interest with the fight this time." Dean Emma flicked a slight smile at Deo and said faintly.

Snorting lightly, Deo's expression was still cold and remote. "He still has to lure the people into his traps in order for them to be effective. I think the necromancy fellow will be hard pressed to do that. When he appears in front of the light major students, a wave of magical attacks will be enough to lay him flat. By then, his traps will be completely useless."

Deo couldn't help but be a bit regretful when his words finished. If he'd instructed the other four to work together with Han Shuo, then perhaps he could've lured the light major students into the traps and maybe truly caused some misfortunes to happen.

But battle had officially begun by now, and no matter how much Deo regretted things, there was nothing for it now.

Coldly surveying everything within the square, Fanny's bright eyes landed on Han Shuo. She didn't relax for a single second, and didn't pay any attention to the mockery and jeering from those around her.

They say that a man seriously going about his business held the most allure. At this moment, Han Shuo was going about his business with not a trace of panic or franticness. There was even a hint of relaxed confidence playing about his lips. Add to that the fact that Han Shuo's current actions were on Fanny's behalf, he truly did have a mysterious allure to Fanny at the moment.

Because of the magic shield's effect after entering the square, the noise and scenes from outside the square were completely obstructed by the shield. Han Shuo couldn't see anything outside the shield after he'd entered it.

The dark creatures were still were busily. Han Shuo, having given his orders, began to walk amongst the shadows of the trees and artificial mountains like a ghost, approaching the center between the light and dark majors soundlessly.

Han Shuo's movements weren't particularly surreptitious, nor did he purposefully display a fast pace, but with Han Shuo's current vision, his control over his movements had already reached the level of astonishing and magical. Ordinarily speaking, anyone passing through the shadows of the trees and artificial mountains would need to pass through an area of light. Any of the others students would be able to see someone pass through if they just concentrated a bit.

As these students walked, they would inevitably unconsciously turn their heads to observe their surroundings. Han Shuo would only suddenly move through two shadows in the instant that they moved their eyes or when they happened to blink. It was as difficult as trying to scale the heavens for an ordinary person to grasp that instant of open space. It could even be said that it was a wonderful art, but the current Han Shuo had well and truly accomplished it.

Therefore, no one discovered traces of Han Shuo's footsteps as he snuck through the shadows and arrived at the artificial mountains at the center between the light and dark majors. The students and teachers observing on the outside also found it odd why the students inside hadn't seemed to notice Han Shuo. This bizarre phenomenon made them feel that

something was afoot.

However, Emma and several other archmages with unparalleled vision happened to observe some peculiarities at the same time. Emma didn't say much after her eyes lit up, but two wind and water archmages exchanged shocked glances. Their originally disinterested expressions instantly refocused on Han Shuo.

Deo's face darkened even further. He hadn't thought either that Han Shuo would have such ridiculous powers of judgement and vision. As he was reeling in shock, he couldn't help but look at Fanny behind him, wondering if Han Shuo's wondrous abilities came from Fanny.

Han Shuo stopped in the shadows of an artificial mountain, and stood there without moving. The light major students had spread out and were cautiously probing in all directions on light footsteps, moving slowly towards the dark major's territory and using the surrounding trees and artificial mountains to conceal their movement. It looked like they hadn't lowered their guard even though Phillide had been taken out of the picture.

On the contrary, the four from the dark major side were lazily approaching the center area. Their expressions were dour and dejected as they complained ceaselessly. They seemed to be venting the anguish within their hearts. In their condition, they were likely to be demolished by the light major's first round of attacks.

A light major student suddenly approached where Han Shuo was and looked at the artificial mountains in which Han Shuo was concealing himself. He was paying attention to the direction where the dark major students were going to appear, drifting closer to the artificial mountain Han Shuo was residing in without any guard up at all.

This light major student was about ten paces away from the closest person. He'd initially looked over the artificial mountains as he walked closer, and didn't pay much attention to things when he didn't discover anything out of the ordinary. He started walking over with his guard down.

Within the shadows, Han Shuo's body was almost one with them. His

body was like a boulder as he stood there unmoving. The audience outside looked on as the light major student approached Han Shuo in the shadows, sucking in a breath as the entire scene became deathly quiet.

Suddenly, Han Shuo, hidden within the shadows, became a demon concealed by the darkness. His demonic arms suddenly opened as one hand covered the mouth of the light major student, the other hand abruptly closed on his body and the light major student was dragged into the darkness.

Just as the light major student was reacting with astonishment, Han Shuo brought a fist crashing down onto the back of his head. The light major's student went limp and he fell directly unconscious. Within the darkness, Han Shuo dragged this light major student into the shadows and quickly swapped clothes. He then strode out openly from the shadows and slowly approached the center.

The five light major students were more than ten paces apart from each other. They could see those beside them, but could only determine that they were on the same side via the same clothes, due to the fog and duskiness. They couldn't see faces or features clearly. Add to that the fact that winter clothes tended to be thicker and made all their bodies bulkier. Therefore, Han Shuo's appearance didn't draw anyone else's attention.

However, the students and teachers within the square got a full view of what was about to happen. The outside was going crazy with noisy chatter and discussion. The necromancy major had suddenly become the center of attention. Lisa and the other's yells stood out even in the midst of the boisterous square.

"Oh my gosh, that's incredible, he took out a person just like that."

"The five from the light major have been observing their surroundings with their eyes for half the day. How could they have not discovered that he's approaching them, how is that possible?"

"He's become part of the light major team now. I think the light major fellows are in big trouble this time. Their companion has suddenly become a ticking time bomb, but no one realizes it. This is quite

interesting!”

Voices raised in incredible conversation rose and fell in waves. The students still found everything hard to believe, but given that the truth was right in front of them, they had no choice but to believe.

“Master Fanny, your student is quite interesting!” Deo’s usually cold and remote face had become much more tender, as he looked at the composed Fanny. However, her subtly dancing eyebrows gave away her repressed excitement.

A feeling of comfort flowing through her heart, Fanny flicked a chilly glance at Deo and mocked, “Now how would that be? He’s just there to make up the numbers, Master Deo is too complimentary.”

Deo didn’t say much after getting shut down, and his expression also appeared a bit nervous. His gaze patrolled the demonstration area within the square as he paid attention to further developments.

At this moment, Fanny’s heart was filled with contentment. She’d been continuously mocked and belittled by others because of her major’s uselessness. Now, because of Han Shuo’s rise to prominence, the gazes of those looking at her were filled with astonishment and incredulity. Even Deo, who’d jeered at her before, had nothing much to say now. This almost made the joy within Fanny’s heart overflow.

Everyone had a vain heart, and Fanny had often been suppressed by others. Now that the situation was suddenly reversed, Fanny’s joy and comfort was felt even more strongly. When she looked at Han Shuo now, she found him extremely pleasing in her eyes and a trace of a sweet smile unconsciously curved on her lips.

Within the square, Han Shuo naturally didn’t know that there was an uproar outside the field because of his performance. He strode out calmly and steadily, slowly moving towards the center with the other four light major students.

The four dark major students slowly appeared from the other direction. They had spread out their formation and kept an appropriate distance from each other. When they saw the light major students, the four dark

major students abruptly halted their footsteps.

Two Deep Slumber spells and another two Hand of Darkness magics were chanted from the mouths of the four dark major students. The two Deep Slumber spells came floating towards Han Shuo and another light major student. Two enormous hands also suddenly formed in the dim sky and started swooping down towards the other two light major students.

Light major captain Keelung was standing in the center and watched all of this with a cold gaze, completely unmoved. This was because not a single dark major attack landed on him, or perhaps this was because the dark major students knew that they would be useless on Keelung.

Han Shuo had also been attacked with a Deep Slumber spell. He shifted his body at this moment and walked swiftly, dodging the spell.

The light major student standing beside Han Shuo remained coolly composed when the Hand of Darkness appeared overhead. A Radiant Slash suddenly appeared and shot towards the Hand of Darkness high overhead.

A bone spear suddenly appeared out of thin air at this time, with another one appearing shortly thereafter. It pierced the Radiant Slash attack and both bone spears and the Radiant Slash broke apart as white dots of light. At the same time, an Agony of the Soul appeared in front of this light major student, along with the Hand of Darkness.

The sudden change completely derailed the light major student's train of thought. The Agony of the Soul had already landed on him before he had time to react. The Hand of Darkness followed quickly after and grabbed his body.

"Deron, are you alright?" Off in the distance, Keelung immediately cried out and started walking over when he saw what had happened.

Deron immediately reacted. Although Han Shuo's chant had been made in an exceedingly low voice just now, he still heard it because the two were so close.

Deron was anxiously trying to tell Keelung to watch out for Han Shuo,



but unfortunately he was finding it difficult to breathe, given that the Hand of Darkness was wrapped tightly around him. The dark major student who'd casted it was watching with a face full of excitement off in the distance. The student reached out forcefully, causing Deron to pass out.

Apart from Deron fainting, the other light major students easily handled the dark major attacks that had targeted them. Keelung, having not been attacked, swiftly approached Deron, wanting to check on him.

There was one unconscious Deron between Han Shuo and Keelung. Han Shuo also approached the unconscious Deron as Keelung approached, appearing to want to see how Deron was doing.

The light major captain reached Deron first. He'd just stooped down and was about to examine Deron's condition when three bone spears materialized, followed by two bone arrows and an Agony of the Soul.

Keelung gave an abrupt start and suddenly stood up, finally catching a glimpse of Han Shuo's face. He shouted involuntarily, "This is bad!"

A light magic attack was suddenly released as an incantation was rapidly recited. It formed a semicircle in front of his chest and started rushing over. The bone spears, arrows, and Agony of the Soul were destroyed in an instant.

However, when the magical fallout had begun to settle down, several bone arrows flew out again. This gave Keelung a great shock as he hastily backed up.

The release of magic was dependent on the amount of mental strength and the speed of focusing it. Although the time elapsed between two magics could be decreased, theoretically speaking, the more destructive a spell was, the longer amount of time there must be between each cast. A spell, such as bone arrows, expended very little mental strength, and so it could be quickly cast in succession.

Seeing the situation, Keelung had sent out an answering wave of magic and needed a bit of time to recover. It was a pity that Han Shuo wasn't giving him any opportunity to. Three bone arrows flew out from behind,

causing him some panic and taking one to the rear when he couldn't dodge in time.

"The necromancy major fellow is masquerading as Billy. This person's too sinister! Take him down first!" Keelung rubbed his butt and immediately called out.

Off in the distance, the other two light major students evading the dark major attacks hesitated only briefly and immediately met up with Keelung to attack Han Shuo after hearing his shouts.

Han Shuo laughed loudly at this moment, raising his voice, "Fainting already counts as being out. It's three of you now against us five, I think it'll be difficult for you to win!"

Han Shuo didn't stay where he was as soon as he'd finished speaking. He dashed off to where the traps had already been set up with the speed of a normal mage. Keelung and the others were stunned for a second as Keelung then said resolutely, "Take down this fellow first. The other four from the dark major have no fighting spirit left, we'll take care of them after.

The other two from the light major nodded and rushed towards Han Shuo after hearing Keelung's words, leaving the four from the dark major looking at each other with some embarrassment. One of them yelled out, "We're five now, why should we be afraid of the three of them? Let's take them out!"

In this way, the odd scene of Han Shuo running in front, the three from the light major in hot pursuit, and the four from the dark major chasing madly after was formed.

It was a hubbub of noise outside. If it was said that Han Shuo had been lucky when he took down a person within the shadows just now, then his later interactions with Keelung and the fast speed of his magic being released and injuring Keelung's butt proved that Han Shuo's strength was definitely uncommon.

Add to that the fact that they had seen Han Shuo setting up traps and saw him running there now, the audience immediately knew what sinister

intentions Han Shuo had in mind.

“Oh damn it, why are things happening like this?” Light major archmage Voigtlander had been smiling smugly, assured of victory. He couldn’t help but cry out at this moment. The development of the situation was completely out of his expectations.

“Master Fanny, your student is very strong. To think that the necromancy major had a talent such as him. This is truly incredibly!” Suddenly, several teachers, who often mocked Fanny, had a complete change in attitudes, and they all spoke with great praise to Fanny.

This was Fanny’s proudest moment in all her years in the necromancy major. Han Shuo’s actions had won the respect of all those present for Fanny. She was crazy with joy inside, but still smiled demurely and said calmly, “This is nothing. Our necromancy major has great talent, we just tend to keep a low profile. Now do you understand how shallow your understanding was before?”

The other teachers looked askance at each other after Fanny had spoken. They hadn’t thought that thanks to Han Shuo’s bizarre rise to prominence, Fanny’s presence would also be bolstered as well.

# Chapter 128: Stomping all of them together

Amidst the clamor from outside the arena, Han Shuo's body leapt as he threaded through a wall that he had constructed earlier, landing onto the flat ground behind it. The traps, that the skeletal warriors had dug up, were a few paces behind Han Shuo, with branches and twigs concealing the entrance of the traps. The ghouls had covered the exterior with dirt, and it all looked quite normal.

Having completed their mission, the dark creatures spread out according to Han Shuo's orders, hiding behind the big trees and artificial mountains in the back. Han Shuo then stood behind the earthen wall, firing out bone spears and bone arrows again, attacking the three quickly approaching light major students.

"Huh. You're asking for trouble by openly attacking us." Keelung drew near as two Radiant Slashes flew out, destroying the attacks that Han Shuo had sent their way, rapidly approaching Han Shuo with the other two students.

The other two students also recited incantations just before reaching Han Shuo, demolishing the earthen walls that Han Shuo had just erected. One of them walked over the dirt, setting foot into a snare on the ground. Han Shuo immediately gave an order to the zombie controlling the trap when he saw that.

The zombie warrior, standing in the distance, suddenly yanked hard on the rope in his hand. The loose rope suddenly tightened beneath the light major student's foot and abruptly entwined around his ankle, sending him soaring into the sky.

"Damn it!" Keelung roared and was about to make a play to save the light major student when Han Shuo, standing quite a distance away, sent bone spear attacks at him from another direction, forcing him to temporarily retreat.

The other student however, had sharp eyes and nimble fingers and released a Radiant Slash, slashing through the rope. This caused the captured student to freefall from a great distance and cry out in pain.

A large stone, bound by a rope, suddenly started rolling down from the artificial mountain from the left and came crashing towards Keelung and the others. They gave a great start of fright and also released magic at the same time to defend against the large rock, hurrying in the direction of the other traps afterwards.

Light magic had a marvelous effect in restraining dark creatures, but the ones that Han Shuo had summoned never engaged them in direct combat. Rather, they leveraged other tools and elements to attack the three light major students. This caused the restraining effect that the light major had on dark creatures to be completely nullified.

Finally, the four dark major students, who were chasing them, also arrived. When they saw the three from the light major busily fending off the attacks from the traps, they immediately joined in the fray with great gusto. They started chanting dark major magic from not too far away, preparing to add fuel to the flame and offer Han Shuo their assistance.

A string of magical incantation suddenly sang out of Keelung's mouth. Eye searing light abruptly shot out of the darkened sky. Everyone's eyes temporarily lost vision wherever the extreme light landed. Even the other two light major students didn't have enough time to react as they temporarily lost sight of everything happening around them.

Keelung had closed his eyes beforehand and calculated when the Strong Light spell would arrive. He suddenly opened his eyes and was ready to deal out a devastating blow that would turn the tide against all those who'd lost their sight.

However, in the second that he opened his eyes, he didn't even have time to chant any magic incantation before he saw more than ten skeletal and zombie warriors surrounding him. Under the strength of two zombie warriors pushing him, his body backed up against its will as he fell into a trap when his foot stepped out into empty air.

The other light major and dark major students, who'd lost their sight, were all standing there, extremely anxious. The dark creatures advanced upon them one by one and picked them up or pushed them, throwing all of them into the traps, making an exception for no one.

The Strong Light spell was an extreme shock to the eyes of ordinary people. Han Shuo had also fallen victim due to its swiftness, but his body was different than that of ordinary people and his eyes recovered extremely swiftly. Most would need at least ten seconds to recover from such a bright flash, but Han Shuo was out for only two seconds.

Before the effects from the Strong Light spell had fully faded away, and before Keelung had even opened his eyes, Han Shuo had already recovered and directed the dark creatures into action that would change the course of the battle. He wrenched around the outcome of the battle and settled it with one move.

Not only the students from the light major, Han Shuo had also thrown the four from the dark major into the pit as well. The trap had been dug quite, quite deeply and could more than hold these small mages, who didn't know the levitation spell yet. There were also dark creatures holding large stones standing over them, ready to fling them down at any time. This heralded the conclusion of the competition.

Deo had been watching with a more relaxed face and excitement when Han Shuo had been performing particularly well earlier, but when Han Shuo had targeted even the dark major students and thrown them into the trap in the end, he'd snorted coldly and once again tightened his facial expression, speaking to Fanny, "Your student has no sense of team spirit, look at what he's done!"

"I think it's your four students who had no morale from beginning to end. They weren't that useful at all. Bryan must've thought that they were useless and wanted to give them this reminder. It's just a joke, no big deal." Fanny was in grand spirits as she chuckled and repositied Deo's words.

On the other side, Light major archmage Voigtlander stood up with a

face full of depressed dejection. He flourished his sleeves and spoke to Emma, leaving the square afterwards, leaving behind only Master Beacher to clean up the aftermath of the competition.

According to logic, because the necromancy magic was tied into the dark major, and that Han Shuo had taken the field in lieu of Phillide, this should have been a dark major victory.

But Han Shuo's motions were a direct slap to Deo's face. This made it difficult for Deo to be happy. When he saw Voigtlander give a random word of instruction to a teacher behind him, he also took his leave from Dean Emma and left gloomily.

As for Lisa and the other necromancy major students, they erupted into enthusiastic cheers. This was the proudest moment that the necromancy had had in many years. They'd always been suppressed and mocked, but because of Han Shuo's sudden appearance, not only had they salvaged Fanny's face, but all the students of the necromancy major had basked in glory as well.

When Han Shuo walked out after the magic shield was taken down, he immediately saw the light of fired-up glee in Fanny's eyes and the sounds of cheering from the other necromancy students.

"Eh... although the circumstances are a bit odd, I still must announce that the dark major has won this year's demonstration. Those who have participated in the fight will receive a space ring personally refined by me. Everyone will also receive a magic staff. I hope you will continue to learn and improve yourselves." Emma's voice sounded out smoothly after Han Shuo had walked out and carried throughout the entire square.

As onlookers watched in admiration, Han Shuo was the first to walk to Emma's side and receive the rewards from this time's battle. Those from the dark major side had finally crawled out of the trap with help from others. They were just about to get their revenge on Han Shuo when they heard Emma's announcement, and smiles made their way to their faces again. They ambled over to Emma.

Han Shuo swept the space ring with his mental strength after receiving

it and was quite satisfied. The capacity of the space ring personally refined by archmage Emma was at least five times greater than the one worn by Han Shuo right now. The materials needed to refine such a large space ring would be even more uncommon. It also looked like only a character on the level of a space archmage would be able to refine it.

## Part 2

Up until now, Han Shuo had never used a magical staff when casting magics. When he grasped it in his hand and imbued it with his mental strength, he suddenly discovered that there was another small space within the staff. The space had the ability to store mental strength. As he released a random spell and felt it circulate throughout the staff, the speed of the spell was increased slightly.

Judging from the looks of things, this magic staff had the effect of storing small amounts of mental strength and even increasing the casting speed of spells. No wonder mages were even willing to put their lives on the line in order to get a decent staff. A wondrous staff would more or less have a great effect of enhancing the mage's strength.

Han Shuo didn't hang around the square after receiving his space ring and magic staff. He nodded to Fanny from afar with a smile and left alone, leaving Fanny and the others to take care of any other remaining details.

"Wait a second, Bryan!" Han Shuo's departure wasn't unnoticed by the many students within the square. However, everyone only watched him leave with surprise, and didn't do anything after whispering to each other in hushed voices. When Lisa saw Han Shuo leaving however, she called out from a far distance and ran straight towards Han Shuo.

After leaving the square and arriving at the necromancy major's training fields, there was a look of astounded excitement on Lisa's face. She stared at Han Shuo and kept up a running litany of questions, "You were too amazing today! You handled them all by yourself! You did it all with a natural and smooth style, how did you do it?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo said noncommittally, "It wasn't that I was strong, but just that they were too weak."



Han Shuo had met many people during his trip to the Dark Forest that were all adept mages or senior swordsmen. He'd even met swordmaster Trunks and archmage Emily.

Those McGrady Guild guards, including Duke and Erick who'd shown up later, were experts who had experienced many battles and had astonishing strength.

Having fought against these people, Han Shuo had basically experienced all sorts of situations. He'd just faced off against mages who had yet to reach the adept stage, and whose battle experience was even more lacking. He naturally held every advantage, and it would've been odd had he not won instead.

If Han Shuo had mobilized the little skeleton, his own martial techniques, and the Demonslayer Edge, he wouldn't have needed to use any schemes or traps. He'd be able to completely annihilate the five light major students with his own strength, denying them the slightest change of resistance.

"When did you get this strong?" Lisa watched Han Shuo with every expression of interest as she asked curiously.

Grasping the magic staff in his hands, Han Shuo poured in his mental strength and began to practice the Bone Prison spell that a journeyman mage should be able to master. He imbued the staff with his mental strength and used it as the conduit to try to activate the Bone Prison spell.

The Bone Prison spell was a spell that imprisoned enemies. It would form a prison made completely out of white bones once it was cast and would confine enemies, making them unable to move a muscle.

If one had enough mental strength, one would be able to control every single bone within the Bone Prison. Not only would it be able to confine someone, but the caster would be able to use the bones within the prison to once again lock down the prisoner. The bones could be transformed into soft and supple vines. It was all very amazing.

It was his first time manipulating the Bone Prison spell. After more than ten bones had appeared in the air, they couldn't quite form a prison.

When Han Shuo relaxed his concentration, the bones didn't form any kind of structure before falling to the ground with a clatter.

"My strength is similar to yours and I'm not that great. If you practice diligently, I think your accomplishments will be even higher. You may even be able to represent our major in next year's battle." Han Shuo responded to Lisa carelessly as he continued to practice the Bone Prison spell.

Lisa made a silly face at Han Shuo at these words, then said lightly, "I'm too stupid. I've studied necromancy for so long, but you've only learned it for a few months and you're already much stronger than me."

"No, your strength is quite good compared to the other necromancy students. Heh heh, I meant that if you work even harder, you should be able to increase the rate of your progress. I feel that the magics of our necromancy major aren't worse off than any of the other majors. It's just that there are fewer people studying necromancy magic now, resulting in fewer experts emerging." Han Shuo chatted at ease with Lisa and practiced the Bone Prison spell over and over again.

After a while, some other students, who seemed to recognize the strength of necromancy magic for the first time thanks to Han Shuo's heroics, all skipped their meals and arrived enthusiastically at the training fields. They too began to practice magic one by one.

When the other students appeared, Han Shuo halted his magic practice and evaded the other students' excited babble. He walked out from the training fields and, after leaving them, headed in the direction of Fanny's lab.

When Han Shuo arrived at Fanny's lab, the door to the lab was locked. It looked like Fanny had yet to return. Typically speaking, Fanny would usually be at her lab right now. It looked like she'd been delayed by the necromancy major's newfound glory that she hadn't returned yet.

He wasn't in a hurry either as Han Shuo took a seat on the grass and took out the book of necromancy magic that he'd taken from the cemetery of death. He studied it as the three original demons patrolled three

different directions. With no fear of someone suddenly approaching, he began slowly studying the Bone Prison magic that he wanted to master.

After a while, the space in front of Han Shuo suddenly twisted as light flashed by and Dean Emma materialized in front of Han Shuo.

Giving a start of fright, Han Shuo immediately quickly put the book of necromancy magic away in the space ring and wore a smile on his face. He said to Dean Emma, "Hello Dean, what are you doing here?"

Dean Emma looked kindly at Han Shuo, and an admiring smile appeared on her wrinkled face. She opened her mouth to say, "You're a hardworking child alright. You aren't willing to waste the slightest bit of time and still study while you're waiting for Fanny. No wonder you've had such accomplishments in such a short amount of time."

Han Shuo felt a bit baffled by Emma's words. He didn't know why Emma had soundlessly appeared here and spoken such odd words to him.

He thought for a bit and look at Emma with a frown. He opened his mouth to ask, "Have you come in search of me?"

Nodding, Emma said straightforwardly, "Of course, heh heh. I didn't appear here because I failed a space magic spell."

"Then, do you need something from me?" Han Shuo hesitated and then asked again.

Emma smiled kindly after hearing Han Shuo's question, "I actually want to thank you. If it weren't for you last time, I wouldn't have known that Camilla was a member of the Black Underworld organization from the Kasi Empire."

Han Shuo gave another start of fright upon hearing these words. Han Shuo hadn't breathed a word of this to anyone other than Candide, and now that Emma suddenly spoke of this, it really did frighten Han Shuo. His thoughts raced as he looked at Emma, "Did Master Candide tell you this?"

Nodding, Emma smiled, "Smart kid. Our house's old man says you're a good talent and Fanny's mentioned it to me as well. After today's competition, I've discovered that there are indeed some mysterious things

about of you. However, I won't ask you why. I only wanted to try to convince you of something with my visit this time."

Shock written all over his face, Han Shuo would've never expected that Emma and Candide from the Dark Mantle would be husband and wife. No wonder Emma looked at him with that strange look before the battle.

"What would you like to tell me?" Han Shuo stared at Emma after coming back to himself.

"I can tell from your gaze that you have feelings for Fanny, but I hope that you don't develop anything with her before you're strong enough. If you're still just a student who has yet to graduate, and your relationship crosses over that bottom line, it won't be good for either you or Fanny, particularly Fanny. This could give rise to unnecessary troubles." Emma stared at Han Shuo and spoke sincerely.

Hesitating and then opening her mouth once again, "This is for your own good and Fanny's, I hope you take heed of my words of wisdom. When you graduate from the necromancy major and you're stronger than Fanny, I can even help you then if you run into issues in your relationship with Fanny. Eh, Fanny's coming, I'll take my leave now."

Emma's figure once again vanished after she'd finished speaking. When Emma had just disappeared, Han Shuo also heard the sounds of Fanny approaching.

# Chapter 129: Flirting with Master Fanny

“Eh? What are you doing here?” Fanny called out in surprise when she caught a glimpse of Han Shuo from far away – there was a delighted smile all over her face.

Han Shuo left the patch of grass behind the lab and strode towards Fanny. “I came to find you and saw that you hadn’t returned yet, so I decided to wait for a while.”

Han Shuo had to seriously consider Dean Emma’s words. From her words, Han Shuo understood that if they truly had a relationship within the Academy, it might actually affect each other. Han Shuo wasn’t scared of anything happening to him, but he really didn’t want to see anything negative affect Fanny.

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“Come in! Let’s chat.” Fanny was smiling a lot more than usual because she was in a happy mood. She opened to the door to the lab and gestured for Han Shuo to hurry and come in.

When Han Shuo entered the lab, Fanny’s beautiful eyes stared a bit fervently at Han Shuo. “I must really thank you this time. The teachers of the other majors were truly too ridiculous to treat our major thus. Heh heh, do you know how comical their faces were after you won? I haven’t been this happy in the longest time!”

“Then how would you like to thank me?” Han Shuo found a stool for himself after he came in, and then looked at Fanny with an intense look and smiled. Fanny’s face blushed as she seemed to think of something, this caused her to be unable to look at Han Shuo in the eyes. She lowered her head and said, “Then how would you like me to thank you?”

“Give me a kiss!” This blurted out of Han Shuo’s mouth with no forethought at all. He felt that he was in for a beating as soon as he said this and decided to turn it into a joke, “I’m joking, joking!”

Contrary to expectations, a flaming red faced Fanny didn't immediately erupt in anger. She stood there silently for a moment with a flushed face and shyly walked over to Han Shuo. Before he could react, her cherry red lips darted out and gave him a lightning fast peck on the left cheek.

"Cheeky little bugger, did you finally get what you wanted?" Having kissed Han Shuo, Fanny didn't dare to look at him as she abruptly turned her back, and pretended to sort the things in the messy lab with a nonchalant attitude. However, her flushed and trembling shoulders betrayed the agitation in her heart.

Han Shuo stood there in dumb shock, reaching out a hand, he subconsciously ran it over the cheek that Fanny had kissed. He could feel the faint fragrance lingering on his cheek and used a finger to tap that wet patch. He then stuck his finger into his mouth to suck on it.

When she saw that Han Shuo was remaining silent, Fanny finally couldn't resist looking back. She happened to see his ambiguous and somewhat horny move. She immediately stomped her foot in anger and cried out, "Damn it, you're really lecherous!"

Han Shuo had long since forgotten Emma's words of advice by now and spoke in an utterly leering tone, "How am I lecherous? You're just too mesmerizing. I actually wanted you to kiss my lips just now, but you seemed to have kissed the wrong place. That didn't count, let's do that again." Han Shuo actually closed his eyes when he was finished speaking and pushed his lips forward. He looked lecherous no matter how one looked at him.

Fanny felt breathless from the anger as she saw Han Shuo's appearance. Her slender right arm suddenly reached out to pinch Han Shuo's cheek. She hectored, "You bad little kid, reaching out for a yard after taking an inch!"

When Fanny's words of censure passed her lips, Han Shuo immediately knew that he couldn't get what he wanted. He hastily opened his eyes and suddenly saw Fanny's white, tender right hand reaching out to pinch him when he was about to retreat. His heart lurching, Han Shuo didn't think at

all and and turned with lightning speed, leaving a kiss in the heart of Fanny's beautiful palm, then retreating with lightning speed again.

A soft "eh" was emitted. It was as if electricity made its way through Fanny's body as she involuntarily emitted a low sound. She then recollected herself and huffily said, "You bad little kid are behaving more and more outrageously. You're dead meat!"

An irate Fanny immediately dashed towards Han Shuo after her words sounded as she seemed to want to get her revenge on Han Shuo. Having just committed a frivolous action on Fanny, Han Shuo felt his heart lurch as it became harder and harder to control himself. He'd also discovered that perhaps due to being happier than usual today, Fanny's attitude towards him was markedly different from the usual.

Under normal conditions, Fanny would've flown into a passion and denounced him had Han Shuo raised an outrageous request such as to kiss him. Who would've anticipated that not only would she not lecture him this time, she'd actually agreed to such a ridiculous request. When Han Shuo had kissed the heart of her palm just now, her embarrassment was noticeably greater than her anger. Han Shuo could clearly feel that the current Fanny was quite different from normal.

When he saw that Fanny was about to rush towards him, Han Shuo didn't dodge or evade, but suddenly snaked out a hand and grabbed Fanny's outstretched hand when she'd rushed to in front of him, pulling her into his embrace.

A waft of tantalizing scent suddenly surged towards Han Shuo's nose and mouth. When the fascinating, shapely body crashed into Han Shuo's embrace, the wondrous curves that stuck tightly onto Han Shuo's body immediately caused a great disturbance within his body, especially now that he was no longer a virgin.

At this moment, he'd long since thrown his conversation with Emma and the awkwardness having to do with his relationship with Emily to the four winds. His large hand wrapped around Fanny's waist as he descended upon Fanny's cherry lips and began to greedily taste his fill.

“Eurgh... “ With her body confined by Han Shuo, Fanny couldn’t budge. Even though she wanted to resist, she was powerless against him. Her small hands beat down furiously onto Han Shuo as protesting noises came from her mouth. But as Han Shuo continued his rapacious devourment. His big tongue churned behind her winsome lips, and an incomparably wondrous sensation slowly began to spread in Fanny’s heart.

She’d been pounding furiously on his chest originally, but the strength of her blows began to falter. Fanny’s hands had not only stopped their struggle in the end, but they’d even mysteriously entwined themselves behind Han Shuo’s broad back and neck. Her neck was tilted as she went along with Han Shuo’s avaricious intrusion as her almond-shaped eyes grew hazy. Her body temperature began to rise, and it was as if she’d sunk into a sweet dream that she was happy to stay within.

This wondrous sensation filled Han Shuo’s entire body. The person that he’d dreamed about day and night was lying in his embrace. This type of psychological satisfaction was enough to drive him wild.

Fanny’s shy response near the end brought a sense of glee that filled Han Shuo like an erupting volcano. He slowly found it difficult to control his originally innocent objective as his large hands unconsciously moved towards Fanny’s wonderful butt, and his highly erect lower body slowly began to look for an appropriate angle.

Suddenly, Fanny felt a hot passion that was as stiff as a metal rod around her waist, deep in the throes of her sensations. She immediately understood the current situation, and began to struggle without care for anything. Because Fanny had gone along with his motions earlier, his body had also relaxed. He hadn’t thought that Fanny would suddenly react so violently and was pushed away by her.

“You... you... I... I...” Having pushed Han Shuo away, Fanny stood there with her face flaming red and was panting loudly, trying to say something. But she couldn’t get a word out for a while because of her agitated emotions.

Han Shuo’s gaze was locked onto Fanny as he resolutely said, “Master



Fanny, I think you know that I like you.”

Han Shuo’s expression was solemn and firm, and his low voice seemed to have a magnetic attraction to it. Fanny’s heart trembled as she was in obvious disarray. Currently she didn’t dare meet Han Shuo’s eyes. She averted her head and said, “Say no more. I don’t want to talk about this right now. If you can advance to the adept mage stage and graduate from the Academy, I’ll consider giving you a chance.”

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Standing with her back facing Han Shuo, Fanny was still panting as her neck was a patch of red. Han Shuo stared at Fanny for a bit whilst behind her, and then took resolute steps towards her. He suddenly reached out and hugged Fanny from behind, saying tenderly, “You were the goddess that I thought of day and night from a long time ago. Your kindness and passion have touched my heart, your amazing body makes it even harder for me to restrain myself. I think my entire life has perished in your hands...”

When Han Shuo had hugged Fanny at first, she’d trembled and wanted to break free. But when Han Shuo started his passionate declaration of love, her body had gone limp and it was as if she’d melted as she leaned softly into Han Shuo’s chest, her cherry lips opening and closing.

“Really, I think I’m unable to escape your spell. The honor of the necromancy major, personal glory, and rich rewards have no value in my eye. I didn’t want to see anyone insult you and so I stepped out to do battle. All I did was for you. I think you’ve known of my feelings a long time ago...” Han Shuo put a spin on a passionate topic and spoke of it with sincerity that overflowed with emotions. This caused Fanny’s body to burn up, and she breathed even more loudly due to the agitation of her feelings.

After a while, Fanny used an almost inaudible voice to say shyly, “I... I actually know all this. However, our current statuses aren’t that appropriate. This will be disadvantageous to both of us. If you graduate from the necromancy major, then we can, eh... you know.”

These words revealed Fanny’s internal thoughts, and Han Shuo’s heart

was immediately drowning in gleeful joy. He then wrapped his arm around Fanny's waist, one that had not an ounce of fat on it and brought his mouth close to Fanny's exquisite ear. He blew hot air into it and said wickedly, "I don't know, can you tell me what?"

Han Shuo was holding Fanny and thus could clearly feel her shudder when he blew into her ear. That marvelous, subtle sensation had a different kind of allure to it compared to the excitement of previous. Han Shuo quite relished the situation.

"You bad little kid! What did I do wrong in this life to take you in as a student. Alright alright. If you graduate from the Academy, I'll be your girlfriend. Does this answer satisfy you?" Fanny turned around, rolled her eyes with a hotly flushing face and spoke softly.

With extreme joy and pride fully occupying all of his heart, Han Shuo only felt that this moment was the one most worth celebrating in his life. He stood there and smiled dumbly, not saying anything.

"Get out. I don't want to see you today. Hold whatever matters you want to mention. I want to be alone for now." As Han Shuo stood there and had a silly smile on his face, Fanny shoved him away in her shyness and pushed him out the door.

Just as Han Shuo had been pushed to the laboratory door, Han Shuo suddenly chuckled and reached out a hand, blocking the door that Fanny was about to close. He then said to Fanny, "Wait one more second."

Fanny couldn't close the door with Han Shuo's hand blocking it. She glared at Han Shuo with a red face and said huffily, "What else do you want, haven't you bullied me enough today?"

"No no," Han Shuo argued and said, "I agree with everything you said. But when I won today's battle, I received a space ring that Dean Emma had crafted herself. This space ring is of a much higher quality than the one I have, so I temporarily have no use for my space ring. I'd like to give mine to you." Han Shuo said tenderly with a smile to Fanny.

"I can't accept anything more from you. If I wear your space ring, then people will absolutely misunderstand our relationship. That won't do."

Fanny declined Han Shuo's gift with a reddened face.

Han Shuo abruptly halted and then understood after Fanny's explanations. Han Shuo had planned on giving Yuna's space ring to Fanny, but he'd suddenly received Emma's space ring and thus changed his mind to gifting his to Fanny. He hadn't thought that Fanny would have this level of consideration.

"Then, you can have this one. I don't think anyone will be able to read anything from this space ring." Han Shuo took out Yuna's space ring and handed it to Fanny.

"I said that I can't accept it." Fanny still didn't agree.

"I won't leave unless you accept it. Take it!" Han Shuo shoved it into her hands without caring whether or not she wanted it, and immediately left afterwards without waiting for her to say anything. He disappeared without a trace after a few steps.

# Chapter 130: Full speed improvement

The Bone Prison spell was a magic spell that journeyman necromancers had to master. When this magic was deployed deftly, it would create certain conditions for dark creatures that makes it easier for them to defeat their enemies.

Han Shuo practiced the Bone Prison spell by himself in the cemetery behind the mountains to the back of the Academy for the next three days. His resolute determination and the intelligence afforded to him after opening up his brain allowed Han Shuo to grasp a clearer understanding of the innate character of necromancy magic.

Some magical theory that had been obscure and difficult to understand, or needing prolonged contemplation from Han Shuo for comprehension, had become easy to understand due to Han Shuo's mind becoming incomparably clear. He could quickly understand many concepts when he put his mind to it.

In a short three days, the use of the Bone Prison spell progressed from continual failure to occasional release. He also started officially practicing another spell of Bone Shield during this time. His fast training speed astonished even himself.

Clapclapclap.

The sound of applause rang out in the distance, as the well rounded and alluring Emily appeared in the distance with a slight smile, approaching Han Shuo slowly.

Halting his magic practice session, Han Shuo looked at Emily and said, "I've already met up with Candide. Who could've thought that your identity in the Dark Mantle is this high? Looks like your mission will include me in it."

"Hehe, my mission will require your communication with the forest trolls anyways. Although I don't have a high status like that old fox Candide, he still had to do me this favor when I brought up this matter with him. Now that you've joined this mission, I'll give you most of the

credit after the matter's done. Perhaps your status within the Dark Mantle will increase another two stars this way." Emily reached out naturally to wrap her hands around Han Shuo's shoulder when she arrived in front of him, speaking to him in a seemingly fawning manner.

He was about to compliment Emily when Han Shuo suddenly remembered what Candide said, and was on his guard about Emily's other identity. He suddenly looked at her with a not so pleasant expression, "When I went to see Candide this time, he told me a bit about your true identity and told me to be careful, lest I incur unnecessary trouble. That was when I knew you were Master Aymes' blood sister. But I still don't know much about your other identity. Can you tell me now?"

Emily's face changed slightly when Han Shuo spoke. She looked at Han Shuo deeply and then sighed lowly, speaking, "Looks like Candide does value you highly, and he's deathly afraid that I'll lie to you. Alright then, since this is the case, I won't have to conceal some things from you then. I've actually been married for many years already, except my husband went out to war right after we were married and then died in the battlefield. I've been a widow until now."

Han Shuo became silent after Emily's words, finally speaking after a while, "It looks like that person's status must be high to warrant such a reminder from Candide."

Nodding, Emily said, "Yes, but that person's already dead and there's nothing much worth discussing. Because of my involvement with the Dark Mantle, I had a few missions to execute after he died and my actions were a bit odd because of the missions. This has caused my reputation to be a bit damaged amongst the upper echelons of society in the Empire."

"Why do you say that?" Han Shuo looked at Emily and asked faintly.

Emily shook her head self deprecatingly as she spoke with a dejected look, "Just like when you saw me just now and took me for a wanton woman, because of my status as a widow, it was inevitable that some gossip would start up because I had to come in contact with people when executing Dark Mantle missions."

Han Shuo had taken Emily's virginity from her. Therefore, while others may not believe her, but Han Shuo had no choice but to believe her. She was in such a dejected mood right now that Han Shuo unconsciously reached out a hand and wrapped her in his embrace, saying tenderly, "I don't care what other people think, but I took your innocence from you and naturally know that you're not like what they say you are. Be at ease, I won't be affected by those kinds of words."

Shaking her head with some gratitude, Emily said forlornly, "Candide's words reminded me, it looks like I must face reality. With your strength and rate of improvement, your future is bright without parallel. But because of the particulars of my status, it looks like I can only maintain an underground relationship with you. To do otherwise would bring no benefits to either of us."

Han Shuo was well aware of the meaning behind Emily's words. It was like when Emma had reminded him to be careful of the relationship between him and Fanny. There were some unavoidable taboos having to do with status in this world. If the rules were challenged, one would meet heavy oppression.

He kissed Emily as she laid in his arms —

Han Shuo spoke coolly with a darkened face, "Don't you worry, I won't force you to hide for the rest of your life! We'll be able to interact out in the open one day. I don't dare do so yet because I haven't yet climbed high enough. If my status is enough to decide everyone's life or death one day, I think everyone will shut up or give us well wishes if they ever open their mouths."

Emily's face showed delighted joy when she heard these words, as she turned Han Shuo's embrace around to hug him fiercely. She said with emotion, "You can do it, I believe you!"

After a round of entwinement, Emily spoke to Han Shuo with a hotly flushed body, "Hurry and handle the matter with the forest trolls. The McGrady Guild people have already contacted the merchants that deal with the forest trolls and they're heading for the Dark Forest. They're

planning on buying the batch of siege weapons. You have to make the forest trolls sell the weapons to them.”

Nodding to indicate his understanding, Han Shuo thought for a bit and said, “I have good relations with a robber. He wants to do this mission with us, can we possibly add him?”

“No problem. I’m in charge of this mission and plenty of my people are on it already. It makes no difference if another one joins. If he’s trustworthy, I’ll deploy him immediately when I get back. This way, I can contact you through him whilst you’re at the Academy. After all, it’s not entirely appropriate for me to come into contact with you directly at school with my identity.” Emily was quite forthright as she immediately agreed to Han Shuo’s suggestion.

“Alright, he’s called Chester and should be the guard in charge of the northern stronghold as of this moment. If you have any instructions and are not at liberty to venture outside to take action yourself, let him do it. I’ll make a trip to the Dark Forest as soon as possible. Go about your business at ease.” Han Shuo opened his mouth to speak with Emily.

“Okay, I’ll be in touch if anything crops up. Don’t worry, I have confidence in being able to quickly complete this time’s mission.” Emily left after saying these words.

When Emily had left, Han Shuo thought for a bit and walked towards the Boozt Merchant Guild. There were two days until Han Shuo’s predetermined time with Phoebe. But the days seemed to be getting colder and Han Shuo was a bit worried that the dwarves would run out of rations and life necessities. He planned on making a trip to the cemetery of death and taking care of the rations that the dwarves need to make it through winter first.

Now that he had a space ring with greater capacity, he would only need to make one trip to settle everything. Add to that the fact that he had to visit the forest trolls in a few days and prepare the same rations and necessities, he probably should take care of the dwarves first. There were more forest trolls and so it was likely the space ring wouldn’t be able to

hold enough rations to take care of things in one trip.

He made his way proficiently to the Booz Merchant Guild, but didn't get to see Phoebe today. Fabian was instead the one who came out to welcome him. He learned from Fabian that Phoebe was out today, and because of Han Shuo's relationship with Fabian, they could take care of the matter regarding the rations even if Phoebe wasn't present.

Because Phoebe held the reigns of power now, Fabian's status within the Guild had also risen accordingly. He took Han Shuo to the warehouse where the rations were stored and the warehouse was opened under his command. They filled Han Shuo's space ring with the rations that Phoebe had previously prepared for Han Shuo.

"Mm, tell Phoebe for me that I still need more. Please have her prepare them for me and we'll settle the accounts at once when I swing by two days later." Han Shuo said with a smile as he looked at Fabian.

"Heh heh, no problem. With our relationship, I can take care of a small matter like this. Don't worry." Fabian spoke merrily to Han Shuo as he promised.

"It looks like Mister Fabian's role within the Guild is becoming higher and higher." Han Shuo was surprised to see Fabian agree so easily.

"Not at all, not at all, this is all thanks to you. If it wasn't for you, I don't think I would've made my way up so easily. The reason Miss Phoebe values me so is also because I introduced you to her, I think. To be honest, I really need to thank you. Heh heh, even my nephew Jack has benefited from acquainting you. You truly bring great fortune to us." Fabian looked at Han Shuo as he spoke earnestly.

"You're too polite, please say hi to Jack for me and tell him I came by. However, I'm a bit busy today and don't have idle time to chat." Han Shuo exchanged some pleasantries with Fabian and left with a smile.



# Chapter 131: Some rejoice and some worry

The Dark Forest was now covered by a thick layer of snow. Han Shuo sloshed his way through it as he made his way towards the dwarf village.

The dwarves had been forced to leave their village because of the forest trolls. Although Han Shuo vaguely knew where they'd relocated to with the help of the original demons, but he wasn't quite sure where exactly they'd gone either such a long period of time.

The forest trolls had left long ago and hadn't reappeared. Han Shuo felt that the dwarves wouldn't necessarily be willing to give up their old village, so he still decided to head in that direction first.

When Han Shuo arrived at the passageway into the village and looked around, a smile blossomed from the corner of his mouth. From the various concealments and setup of things around the passageway, Han Shuo could ascertain that the dwarves hadn't left.

Han Shuo whistled long and loudly, shaking the accumulated snow off the tree branches. His sensitive ears heard the sound of approaching footsteps as several dwarf warriors, holding battle axes, appeared after a short while, approaching from afar with looks of caution on their faces.

"Don't worry, it's just me, I've returned as promised." Han Shuo immediately called out before the dwarf warriors had gotten close to him.

The dwarf warriors in the distance all heaved involuntary sighs of relief when they heard Han Shuo's voice. When they walked to Han Shuo, one of them said, "Many things have been difficult now that winter has arrived. Although the village has been exposed, we're unable to build suitable houses in such a short amount of time, so although we knew of the potential for danger here, we still didn't want to suffer in the cold and returned to the village."

"Winter is here, so I've come this time to bring some winter rations and thick clothing for you. In addition, you can be at ease about the forest trolls. They won't ever bother you again." Han Shuo smiled slightly and comforted the dwarves.

The dwarves immediately cheered when they heard this. Their expressions were bafflingly overjoyed and filled with sincere delight and celebration.

“This is wonderful! We’ve gone through most of the rations you brought last time in recent days. The chief thought something had happened to you because you hadn’t appeared in a long time, but we also didn’t know how to help you so we could only worry about you. It’s wonderful that you came. Let’s hurry and enter to village to tell the good news to everyone.” The dwarf that had spoken before spoke joyfully as his short, stout legs moved forward rapidly, moving towards the depths of the village.

When they heard that Han Shuo had come, all the dwarves that had been warming themselves up indoors, out of the frosty winter weather, squirmed out one by one to give Han Shuo friendly greetings.

“Oh, it’s fantastic that you’re alright Han. We were very worried about you.” The dwarf warrior Bennett spoke with a look of surprise.

Han Shuo didn’t say much and proceeded to an area with flat ground that had been cleared of snow. He then took out the rations and daily necessities from his space ring with a smile. He laid them all out and gathered them into piles, covering a large area.

“These are the rations and necessities that I’ve brought with me this time, along with some thick clothes to help you guys keep warm this winter. In addition, you won’t have to worry about the forest trolls making trouble for you in the future. You can live here in peace and without worry, the forest trolls won’t be making any trouble for you in the future.” Han Shuo explained as he observed the dwarves’ delight. He felt that his actions had resulted in a proper reaction.

All the dwarves were beyond themselves with glee when they saw the ground covered with rations and daily necessities. Even the female dwarves, children, and elderly hiding in the houses came out when they heard the news and started cheering in the distance.

“Thank you so much Han, if it wasn’t for your rations and necessities, I think many of us would starve and freeze to death this winter. These

rations and clothes are enough for us to make it through the winter. How can we thank you?" Chief Darwin genuflected to Han Shuo in the great gesture of the dwarves and spoke with great gratitude.

"We're friends, so say nothing of gratitude." Han Shuo responded.

To be honest, these rations and clothes weren't worth much money at all, but it was a bit difficult for merchants to transport them over. Therefore, after entering the Dark Forest, whether it was the forest trolls, dwarves, or other species, all would be willing to pay a high price in exchange for rations and daily necessities.

However, with the transportation matrix in the cemetery of death and the large capacity of the space ring, this task that would have taken a lot of people and resources to achieve was easily accomplished by Han Shuo with no difficulty at all.

"Han, you said that the forest trolls would no longer bother us, is it because the elves have already waged war against them and completely destroyed them?" The dwarf warrior Bennett thought of another matter and asked Han Shuo with great excitement.

When he asked this question, Han Shuo suddenly started and asked Bennett, "Can it be that the elves are already planning on waging a huge battle against the forest trolls?"

Nodding, Bennett spoke angrily, "Indeed, they've even invited us and said that they want to give those wicked robbers a harsh lesson. But the defensive capabilities of our village are too weak and the chief isn't planning on having us participate. Isn't it the elves that created this situation where the forest trolls won't invade us again?"

"Of course not, the scourge of the forest trolls will slowly be restrained in the future. Be at peace. Mm. Alright, alright. I still have some things to do and I'll come find you again in the future." Han Shuo spoke.

He then spoke a few random words and hurriedly left the village, despite the dwarves' efforts to keep him. Bennett said that the elves were going to wage war on the forest trolls. Han Shuo couldn't sit still after he heard that. If it was before, he would've wanted the elves to wipe the floor with

the forest trolls.

But now, the forest trolls were absolutely under his control and could even be labeled as his private army. In addition, he needed the forest trolls to cooperate with Emily's mission. If the elves stirred up trouble now, that would be quite an inconvenient timing to choose.

Except, many days were necessary to travel from here to the forest trolls' stronghold. Han Shuo had many things he still had to take care of in the Empire and he really couldn't spare the time. This gave him a bit of a headache.

After thinking carefully, Han Shuo felt that there was no particular rush for things either. He'd only be delaying things by a day or two if he settled Phoebe's matters first and accompanied her to a banquet, then head for the forest trolls afterwards.

The elves making a move against the forest trolls may not take place in these couple of days. Besides, although the elves were strong, the forest trolls were no pushover either. After so many years of conflict, the fact that the elves had not wrung any major concessions out of the forest trolls had already illustrated how things stood.

When the sky was dark, Han Shuo made use of the darkness/silence to hurry back to the cemetery of death. He was in no hurry to leave immediately, so he took out a Fruit of Dagmar again and endured exceedingly painful torture within the cemetery of death, digesting the Fruit of Dagmar like last time and once again opening up parts of his brain.

When Han Shuo felt that his body had recovered and was reborn once again, the clarity of his five senses had taken another leap forward, while the concentration speed of his mental strength and the circulation speed of his magical yuan had also all improved. Han Shuo could vaguely feel that there were signs of him breaking through the molded spirit realm. It looked like he'd be able to progress to the next level of demonic magic before long.

The next stage would be the "true demon" realm. Once he entered this

realm, Han Shuo would become an infant demon, truly becoming a demon in definition. The previous three stages of solid realm, open passages, and molded spirit were just to reinforce one's foundations for demonic magic. Before one became an infant demon, a practitioner didn't really count as a demonic practitioner.

Only after he entered the "true demon" realm will Han Shuo truly be considered as someone who has entered the halls of demonic magic. As an infant demon, he'd be able to fly through the air and use magical yuan to refine magical treasures. He'd be able to reforge the Demonslayer Edge all over again, and could train in various other amazingly powerful magics. He'd even be able to refine the yin demons that were a step above the original demons.

In other words, the true demon realm was a boundary. Han Shuo would have many ways to improve his strength after reaching this realm. His strength would once again take great leaps forward, so Han Shuo was filled with indescribable joy when he vaguely felt that he was exhibiting signs of breaking through.

By now, it was morning the next day, and Han Shuo didn't remain here. He used the transportation matrix in the cemetery of death to return to the Empire and walked directly back to the Academy.

After the ambiguous conversation with Fanny, Han Shuo's heart was filled with boundless expectations. Although Fanny hadn't immediately agreed to his pursuit, he basically understood Fanny's heart. He understood that if he advanced one step further, attained the level of adept mage and graduated from the Academy, he'd be able to capture the teacher's heart.

He was still a bit unclear on some parts of the new magics and more technical terms, so he had to inquire Fanny. Therefore, Han Shuo still needed Fanny's guidance in this stage.

Once he returned to the Academy and made his way to the necromancy major, he suddenly realized that he'd become a celebrity when he bumped into students from other majors along the way. The gazes that other

people used to use when looking at him were filled with surprise and admiration, with some pretty female students even revealing the light of romantic interest in their eyes.

This kind of attention hugely satisfied Han Shuo's vanity. He was in quite a good mood all along the way. When he saw the attention and feelings from the pretty girls, Han Shuo even gave them friendly greetings, displaying a brilliant smile. These female students immediately ran away with short strides and reddened faces.

However, once Han Shuo passed by the training fields, his good mood was immediately shattered. The smile on his face was replaced with a darkened look. Earth rider knight Clark was standing in front of the doors of one of the necromancy major's training fields, wearing a form fitting shirt and holding a large bouquet of fresh flowers in his hand. He was looking inside with a faint smile.

Passing through the open door, Han Shuo saw that Fanny was explaining some magical theory to some necromancy students with a smile on her face. Judging from her demeanor, she wasn't affected by Clark, nor did she look at Clark at all. She was practically ignoring Clark's existence.

Even so, Han Shuo still felt ticked off by seeing Clark stand there looking soulfully at Fanny. As he took large strides to the doors of the training grounds, he suddenly darted forward and purposely exerted pressure with his right shoulder after tilting his body, scattering the bouquet of fresh flowers all over the floor.

Han Shuo had purposely lightened his footfalls in his movements just now, accelerating only when he'd walked up to Clark. Engrossed in watching Fanny, Clark had been caught off guard and reacted too late. It was a bit comical how broken and scattered his bouquet was now.

"Oh, I'm sorry, so sorry. It's just that these are the training fields for the necromancy major, and I bumped into you by accident because you were blocking the door." Han Shuo immediately appeared apologetic when he saw Clark spitting fire with his eyes and staring at him.

"Oh, Bryan, what are you doing here in the training fields today?" When

Fanny saw that Han Shuo had come, her beautiful eyes immediately brightened and her whole face glowed with health. She indicated for Han Shuo to hurry up and come inside.

Han Shuo was somewhat mollified by Fanny's reaction, but Clark's existence still irked Han Shuo, and so his facial expression was a bit ugly. He looked at Fanny and then looked at the fresh flowers in Clark's hands. He spoke with a voice dripping with acid, "Just who is the noble knight Clark waiting here for with flowers in his hand?"

Fanny started and rolled her eyes bad-temperedly at Han Shuo. She then walked over as if expressing her stance, speaking a bit coldly to Clark, "Mister Clark, I think I've been clear enough. I only want to teach in peace, and hope that you'll stop bothering me. In addition, your status is noble and lofty. I don't want to be embroiled in any unnecessary trouble with you, I think you probably understand what I mean?"

Fanny's words were for Clark, but also for Han Shuo. They were an obvious refusal of Clark's pursuit and a subtle indication to Han Shuo of her own attitude, also telling him to relax and not to think too much.

Thus, when these words came from Fanny's mouth, Clark's face immediately dulled and became dejected, whereas Han Shuo felt damn good and had smiles reappear on his face again.

Clark nodded his head, hugely depressed, and sighed lowly. He took the destitute flowers and departed from the training fields with a downcast face, not saying a single word further.

"Are you satisfied now?" Reaching out a hand to pinch Han Shuo, Fanny said viciously, "How dare you not believe me!"

"Ouch, that hurts, I believe you, I believe you!" Han Shuo felt like he was on cloud nine as he pretended to be in pain.

# Chapter 132: Abnormalities in the night

“Master Fanny and Bryan, what are the two of you doing?” Lisa called out from behind them, looking at both of them suspiciously.

“No, nothing.” Fanny glared at Han Shuo and pointed her finger in the direction of her lab, turning and walking inside afterwards.

When she reached out her hand, the space ring that Han Shuo had given her was displayed very prominently on her hand. Han Shuo was filled with joy after taking only one glance at it. He knew that Fanny had already accepted the ring. She was pointing in the direction to the lab, obviously telling him to wait for her there.

He hadn’t planned on lingering anyways, and he smiled foolishly as he nodded at Fanny. He then left on his own accord and walked to her lab.

After waiting there for a while, Fanny returned to the lab after ending her class in the training field. She opened the door to let Han Shuo in and asked him with her usual expression, “Alright, what do you want?”

Although Fanny was acting normally, both of them knew that their relationship had undergone a subtle shift. It was basically impossible for Fanny to maintain the dignity of a teacher in front of Han Shuo now.

Grinning cheekily at Fanny, Han Shuo smirked, “Don’t be so serious!”

Rolling her eyes bad temperedly at Han Shuo, Fanny said, “I need to be serious towards you; otherwise you shine so radiantly if I give you the slightest bit of warmth and your hands and feet become naughty.”

How were these ambiguous tones those of a teacher to a student? It was practically a flirtatious byplay between lovers. Han Shuo still felt content at heart even when Fanny was glaring at him.

Although he was delighted, Han Shuo’s willpower had gone through much tempering and he wasn’t someone who didn’t know what was truly important. He stilled for a moment, then started asking Fanny about all the difficulties in magical theory he’d run into lately.

When she saw that Han Shuo was raising questions, Fanny also turned



solemn as she regained her attitude as a teacher. She carefully explained all the theories in detail detailed out all the theories for Han Shuo. When she saw how hardworking Han Shuo was, and that he could even use the journeyman magic of Bone Prison now, Fanny was happier than even Han Shuo.

She sighed after a while, "With your abilities, it looks like you'll be able to progress to adept mage before too long. I have to think for a moment before answering the questions you're asking now, and can't just answer off the cuff like I did before. It looks like I'll be unable to teach you before long."

A good student would impart onto the teacher an incomparable sense of achievement. But because Han Shuo had truly progressed too quickly, this gave Fanny some pressure. She was only an adept mage after all, and was only one level higher than Han Shuo now according to the divisions of power and levels.

Han Shuo's rate of improvement was beyond her imagination. If things progressed at the current rate, Fanny would make a weaker and weaker impact on Han Shuo. This made it difficult for Fanny to bear when this feeling permeated her heart, but she was still rather resigned to it.

"Heh heh, no matter what, you're always going to be the Master Fanny who brought me in and set me on the right path. Hehe, even if our relationship changes in the future, your identity as my teacher will never change." Han Shuo's brain was working quite fast at the moment, and he could more or less guess her current thoughts based on the changes in her expression. He immediately spoke to her with a smile.

Shaking her head with a slight sigh, Fanny's beautiful brows immediately creased and she spoke in a worried tone. "Our Babylon Academy only has Gene and I as the two teachers in the necromancy major. We're only adept mages. When you learn all of our knowledge and have no one to teach you then, your rate of improvement will surely face obstacles. I'm most worried about this!"

"You're thinking too much. When that day truly arrives, there may even

be an even better way to resolve things. You don't need to worry that much at this time." Han Shuo could clearly feel Fanny's concern for him. However, with the existence of the cemetery of death, Han Shuo believed that as his strength improved, he'd be able to make it into the further depths of the cemetery of death. He could vaguely feel that the inner depths of the cemetery of death would have ways to help him become even stronger.

Fanny seemed to think things through with Han Shuo's speech and she nodded with a smile. "Perhaps you're right, I am indeed thinking too much. Alright, it's getting late. Go practice magic if you have nothing else. I'm going to go get dinner as well."

"How about if we go to dinner together?" Han Shuo's heart lurched as he offered this naughty suggestion.

"Humph. Dream on. I will have nothing to do with you before you become an adept mage. Mm, hurry and leave now. You're never up to any good if you stay here." Fanny smiled and waved a magic staff in her hand, trying to get Han Shuo to leave.

Han Shuo was in no rush either as he yelped accordingly and backed up towards the door. Just as he was about to be swept out of the lab, he suddenly moved like a flash of lightning and kissed Fanny, laughing merrily as he made his escape amidst Fanny's embarrassment.

"Darned kid, I'll get you one day!" Fanny said huffily as she slammed the lab door closed with an audible clang.

At this moment, something registered in Han Shuo's mind as he suddenly heard a low panting sound. Three original demons suddenly flew out without a sound and floated towards the origin of the sound.

Earth rider Clark was hiding by a fence post in the distance, his originally handsome features distorted by anger. He was staring at Han Shuo with a look of hatred, and Han Shuo was quite familiar with that kind of look. That was how Fitch had been looking at him before he'd taken his revenge.

His heart chilled, Han Shuo suddenly felt that this was a bit tricky. Clark

was an earth rider, and Han Shuo had witnessed the might of his strength before. Although Han Shuo's strength had taken great leaps forward, he was well aware of his limits and knew that he absolutely couldn't take Clark on alone. It was a bit difficult to be hated by such a character.

Privately weighing up solutions to take care of him, Han Shuo walked slowly towards the dorm. The earth rider Clark was following close behind him, leaving silently only after Han Shuo walked into the dorm. Through his observation via the original demons, Han Shuo could clearly see the expression on Clark's face and knew that Clark wouldn't take things lying down.

With his strength as an earth rider and the methods he displayed in the Dark Forest, Han Shuo believed that if Clark was to make a move against Han Shuo, he wouldn't try hidden subterfuge like the kid Fitch. It was likely that Clark would bring about an attack as indomitable as a thunderbolt once he commenced, and would absolutely give him no chance to come back. With Clark's strength and confidence, he would never leave anyone alive.

Clark and Claude were brothers, and so their personalities were exceedingly similar. They were both people who appeared forthright and full of sunshine on the surface, but were characters that were filled with darkness inside. Han Shuo had long since discerned this point and thus he'd been privately on his guard.

Han Shuo didn't linger in the dorm that night, but rather hid himself in the old warehouse, placing one original demon in the dorm. He wanted to see if Clark would take advantage of this opportunity to bring about a devastating blow to himself.

The warehouse was as messy and dirty as usual as all sorts of useless items were shoved within, only to be cleaned in the morning by Borg and Carey. Now that Han Shuo was tall and buff, and more than double his original size, the warehouse was a bit of a tight fit for him. But for security concerns, he still had to do so.

When all was quiet in the dead of night, Han Shuo meditated silently to

concentrate his mental strength. As he remained alert mentally, his entire body seemed to meld with the color of the night. His breathing and heart beat decreased at an astonishing pace. If it wasn't for the fact that heat remained within his body, bystanders would've thought he was a dead man.

The speed of his meditations was much faster than previously. Although Han Shuo had been mentally prepared for this phenomenon, when he felt the concentration speed of his mental strength was much faster than before and that his mental strength was replenishing at a flabbergasting pace, he finally understood that the level of his mental strength training had surely outstripped ordinary mages.

After who knew how long, when the frosty night was about to pass, the original demons finally discovered Clark's body, just when Han Shuo felt that he'd overreacted and Clark wouldn't come by. In stark contrast to the Dark Mantle or any other nightwalker, Clark didn't conceal himself at all. He still wore the clothes he wore during the day, but his face appeared a bit overcast. He strode in from afar and didn't arouse anyone's attentions.

When he arrived at the window of the room Han Shuo lived in, Clark dashed forward and leapt upwards, flying through the air and landed adroitly within Han Shuo's room.

"Although I don't have concrete proof, the disappearance of my younger brother Claude must surely have something to do with you. Don't think that I'm too harsh, it's that you're simply too irritating. You'll vanish after today, and Fanny will never find traces of you even if she searches." Clark muttered to himself after landing through the window and surged forward like lightning, stabbing downwards with his sword.

Han Shuo had used some of the pillows in the closet to set up his bed and made it so that someone did seem to be sleeping there. Therefore, when Clark stabbed downwards and even made a faint sound ring out with his sword, it gave him a feeling that something was amiss. Clark pulled back the blanket to see that there were only pillows inside. His face changed slightly.

He stared off in space for only a moment and immediately put things back as they were. He retreated from the room like lightning and seemed to plan to return along the way he came.

Just as this moment, the original demons patrolling the area suddenly felt another person approaching. This person was like a shadow in the night, his body was almost glued to the wall of the classroom building and observing Clark's actions from afar.

Han Shuo had thought that this person was in cahoots with Clark, but when the person followed surreptitiously behind Clark after he left, Han Shuo immediately understood that this fellow's target should be Clark. He was greatly startled as he hadn't thought so many random, bizarre matters would take place in the Academy.

As he saw Clark and that person run in the direction of the knight school, Han Shuo was deathly afraid that the original demons wouldn't be able to see everything clearly because they needed to keep a distance. He immediately dashed out of the warehouse and kept an exceedingly far distance from the two, observing them through the original demons.

When the original demon followed them back to the knight school, Han Shuo discovered that Clark entered one of the rooms and sat there without speaking. This room was where Clark had once spoken to Duke. It seemed like this was where Clark lived now.

The shadow that had been following Clark made its way here and stood for a while in the distance after seeing Clark enter a room. He then made his way soundlessly in another direction in the knight school.

He sent an original demon to remain within Clark's room and had another keep watch on the surroundings. The third original demon followed behind that shadow, trying to glean more information about it.

After a short while, the shadow made its way to an isolated room in the knight school, lifted up a few tiles on the roof and bounded into the room from above.

"You've come back." Lawrence was sitting in the dim room and holding a cup of hot tea in his hand, speaking faintly to the shadow that had

landed from the roof.

Han Shuo was greatly astonished. He hadn't thought that the shadow's final point of return would be Lawrence's room. As the son of a great finance minister in the Empire, Lawrence had actually bought black iron ore from him a while back. Han Shuo had even sparred with Lawrence, and had some goodwill towards this person. To think that he'd sent someone to follow Clark!

Han Shuo suddenly thought of Candide's words to him the first time he'd arrived in the Dark Mantle. Candide had said that Lawrence's identity was uncommon, and had reminded him that if Han Shuo walked too closely with Lawrence, it could result in attracting an enormous amount of trouble. Candide had wanted to speak further about Lawrence's identity, but didn't say more.

When Han Shuo saw this scene, he immediately understood that Lawrence's identity wasn't as simple as merely the son of a great finance minister. The son of a finance minister wouldn't warrant such a reminder from one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle.

"Yes, Clark went to the necromancy dorms after leaving his room and darted into one of the rooms. He seemed to want to kill one of the students. However, I saw him walk out with a dejected look on his face and didn't hear any sounds of fighting. He likely didn't find who he was looking for." The shadowy figure responded.

Lawrence was suddenly interested as he looked at the shadowy figure. "Oh, that is a bit odd. Right, tell me which room did Clark enter?"

When the shadow described the location of Han Shuo's room, Lawrence was taken aback and then smiled mysteriously, "So he'd wanted to make a move against Bryan. Heh heh, this is interesting. Quite interesting. It looks like I need to sit Bryan down for a good conversation."

# Chapter 133: I want to kill him too

“He’s just a necromancy major student, is he really worth that much attention from you?” The shadow spoke in surprise.

“Heh heh, he’s not ordinary! There’s many mysteries surrounding him and even I can’t figure out what secrets he holds now. This person is quite interesting.” Lawrence spoke slowly with a smile.

“The goal of Clark’s visit to the knight school should be you this time. Most likely, he and that Duke from the Kasi Empire wanted to make a move against you, but for some reason, their mission was aborted halfway through and Duke suddenly left our country. This entire matter is very bizarre.” The man continued his report.

Nodding his head and remaining silent for a while, Lawrence opened his mouth to say, “Alright, you are dismissed for now. It’s not that easy for Clark to make a move against me in the knight school anyway. Hmm. It looks like I need to move first and eliminate Clark.”

The shadow didn’t say much when he heard those words and jumped up onto the roof, squirming out from a hole beneath the roof. He vanished into the distance as Lawrence sat inside, silently sipping his tea and contemplating something.

The sky had already brightened at this point as the figure left and flew towards the mountains behind the Academy, walking even further out. Han Shuo couldn’t blatantly continue his pursuit either because of the lightened sky. Add to that, the matters of today, Han Shuo decided to momentarily give up on investigating that fellow.

Making use of the time before the students of the knight school had awoken, Han Shuo returned to the necromancy major early in the morning. He spent the morning alone in the dorm, practicing necromancy magic as usual and silently contemplating Lawrence’s identity, and his relationship with Clark.

Han Shuo moved to the Academy’s cafeteria for the first time at noon, resulting in a small riot.

Each major of the Academy had their own independent cafeteria, the dark major was no exception either. The cafeteria was divided into two, with the lower level being completely free. Students were free to partake after turning in their tuition fees, but of course, what was free naturally didn't taste that good.

There was another level upstairs that many chefs were in charge of. Its level was much higher than the one beneath it. Of course, the food on this level could only be enjoyed by spending additional gold coins. It was usually for students who were more well off.

Han Shuo was no longer a poverty stricken scholar. There were enough gold coins stored in the crystal cards that were in his space ring for him to enjoy life as he would. Therefore, he didn't linger on the first level, went directly to the second. He swiped his crystal card to order a few expensive and exquisite dishes. He took a table for himself and started pigging out.

After last time's battle, Han Shuo had become a celebrity in the school. Those enjoying their meals were now all dark major students. Although Han Shuo had gained glory for the dark major last time, his actions hadn't won respect for the dark major. Rather, he had thrown dirt in their faces. So when he appeared on the second level of the cafeteria, he had attracted everyone's attentions.

Han Shuo paid no attention to any of this. As his strength and breadth of experience grew, he slowly paid less and less attention to these Babylon Academy students. In his heart, these students were only kids who'd never seen the outside world, so they posed no threat to him.

"Eh, so there you are!" Lisa exclaimed softly as she and Lawrence walked through the door. She smiled and walked over to Han Shuo with Lawrence.

Lawrence smiled and nodded at Han Shuo from afar, then he went off to order his own food. Lisa sat down peremptorily in front of Han Shuo and she looked at the looks full of hostility around her. Her charming face chilled as she stuck her hands on her waist, "And just what are you looking at? What is there to look at here?"

Although the little witch Lisa was in the weak necromancy major, her



bad temper was renowned throughout the entire dark major. Therefore, when she yelled, those glaring at Han Shuo had their expressions turn ugly and they ducked their heads, muttering a few curses and then turned their heads again.

“Pay no attention to them, they’re just jealous of you.” Looking around her and cursing angrily, Lisa sat down merrily and stared at Han Shuo.

At a loss for words internally, Han Shuo said, “Then just let them be jealous. I won’t lose any hair over their jealousy, but, if anyone dares materialize their jealousy into action, then I can promise that they won’t only be short of hairs!”

Han Shuo had spoken softly in the beginning, but when he noticed that there were still people staring at him in hatred, he raised his voice with a cold face, filling it with a warning tone.

Han Shuo hadn’t dealt killing blows in last time’s combat display, but the cold remoteness and resolution had already told everyone that he was absolutely not someone who was kindhearted and would show mercy. The bystanders then had even had the strange impression that if it weren’t for school rules, Han Shuo might very well have truly coldly killed those people.

Therefore, when Han Shuo issued those warnings with a angry face, those who hadn’t lowered their hostile gazes after Lisa’s hectoring slowly ducked their heads in the end.

“Heh heh, it looks like you’re quite unpopular!” Lawrence walked over from afar as he carried a tray of exquisite food. He said down across from Han Shuo with a smile, next to Lisa, after giving a plate to her.

Shrugging, Han Shuo said diffidently, “The key thing is that some people are truly too bored. They’re incompetent, but have a strong sense of jealousy. Not only will they not be grateful if you show them a friendly face, but they’ll think you fear them instead.”

“Indeed, I deeply empathize with your perspective.” Lawrence chuckled in agreement and nodded his head to say so.

Amy and Athena, the two girls from the necromancy major, suddenly appeared at this time. When Lisa saw the two take another seat, she hesitated and then picked up her plate. "You guys chat, I'll go sit with Amy and the others."

Lisa stood up after she spoke and made her way down two walkways, greeting Amy and the others in the distance and sat down with them.

Han Shuo and Lawrence were the only ones left after Lisa's departure. Because of Lisa and Han Shuo's repeated warnings just now, there was a large area of free space around Han Shuo. Therefore, no one should be able to listen in on their conversation.

"I've heard that Clark likes Fanny, but he left with a face full of dejected failure today because of your appearance. Did such a thing happen?" Lawrence seemed to ask randomly with a slight smile.

Han Shuo was frantically going over things at this moment in his heart. He lifted his head to take a glance over Lawrence and responded with seeming indifference. "How could such a thing have happened? Master Fanny turned down Clark because she wasn't interested in him. This had nothing to do with me, don't you go sprouting random nonsense."

Lawrence's expression abruptly turned normal after Han Shuo's words, and he then spoke merrily, "Bryan, ah Bryan. We're friends, do you want to lie to me? Rumors of the matter between you and Master Fanny is all over the dark major. They say that nothing comes from nothing. I, for one, don't believe that there's nothing between the two of you."

"Say whatever you want to say." Han Shuo declined to comment. He lowered his head and continued eating, seeming to not mind Lawrence's words at all.

"I happen to know a bit about Clark's personality, he's not as just and kind as he appears on the surface. It looks like you've offended him. I've also heard that he suspects that you killed his little brother. It looks like you're in a spot of trouble!" Lawrence continued to speak and used his eyes to silently observe Han Shuo's expression. When he saw that Han Shuo was completely unmoved, Lawrence remained silent for a bit and

continued to speak, "Bryan, we're friends, right?"

Nodding, Han Shuo put down his cup and looked at Lawrence with a smile, "I'd say so!"

"Then alright. Since this is the case, I'm willing to bet that Clark will definitely make a move against you. I hope you believe me." Lawrence spoke seriously.

"Of course, when I returned to the dorms today, I saw that the blanket on my bed had traces of it being sliced open. It was a good thing that I wasn't in the dorms yesterday, otherwise you likely wouldn't have seen me today. I thought for a bit and felt that only Clark would want to act like this towards me." Lawrence had beat around the bush and said so much. His aims were slowly revealing themselves. Thus, Han Shuo knew what Lawrence was trying to do and stopped talking in circles, directly admitting to things.

When these words were spoken, Lawrence's eyes lit up and he stared at Han Shuo in astonishment. He then flashed a brilliant smile and nodded, "You're not a simple character at all. So you'd been prepared in advance! And to think that I'd been worried for you. Mm. Since you treat me as a friend, I can actually help you take Clark down."

These words were the main point. A glimpse of astonishment flashed through Han Shuo's eyes as he took a deep look at Lawrence. He lowered his head and spoke lowly, "You mean to say, you'll team up with me to kill Clark?"

A prickle of fright rippled through Lawrence as he was shocked. He looked around and said lowly, "Bryan, what makes you think that?"

Han Shuo stared at Lawrence, pausing for a bit. When he'd stared at Lawrence so that he caused the hairs on the back of the latter's neck to stand up, he spoke lowly, "Lawrence, when you spoke of handling Clark just now, I could feel your killing intent. I can be certain that you also have these sort of thoughts too, right?"

It was Lawrence's turn to become silent after these words were spoken. It was like he was meeting Han Shuo for the first time. Lawrence looked at

Han Shuo with an odd look on his face and was silent for a long while before nodding. He sighed, "Bryan, I bow to your knowledge. That's right, I want to kill him too!"

"This isn't a place to talk. I have some things to do today. Come find me tomorrow afternoon. Perhaps we can come up with a good plan." When Lawrence also spoke of his desire to kill Clark, Han Shuo suddenly didn't look at Lawrence anymore. He lowered his head and ate nonchalantly, speaking lowly as he did so.

Also similarly silent, Lawrence and Han Shuo sat across from each other and ate with lowered heads. They didn't speak anymore, and didn't raise their heads to look at each other again.

Maintaining this bizarre situation for a while, Han Shuo stood up after, walking outside with leisurely and unhurried strides. When Han Shuo was about to walk out of the cafeteria, that was when Lawrence suddenly raised his head and looked intently at Han Shuo's back, speaking in a voice audible only to him, "What a frightening fellow!"

When he left the cafeteria, Han Shuo dwelled no more on what had happened. He left through the mountains to the back of the Academy and hired a carriage when no one was looking, heading for the Boozt Merchant Guild.

This was the day that Han Shuo had set an appointment with Phoebe. The materials needed to refine the earth elite zombies and the forest trolls' rations still needed to be done through Phoebe.

Han Shuo was also starting to make preparations to refine the yin demons that were a step higher than the original demons after advancing to the true demon stage. Han Shuo had also discovered a place of extreme wood in the sacred ground of the forest trolls. This way, he could also refine the wood elite zombies and would have to trouble Phoebe for more materials.

When he arrived at the Guild, Han Shuo learned from Fabian that Phoebe had yet to return. Phoebe had left instructions with Fabian that if Han Shuo swung by, to have him wait for a bit. She would return later in

the evening.

Seeing that the night was still young, Han Shuo had Fabian lead the way to catch up with Jack. When Jack heard that Han Shuo had arrived, he was also delighted. He found an empty place for the two of them and they began chatting happily.

Han Shuo learned from Jack that Phoebe quite valued him due to Han Shuo's recommendation. Jack was apprenticing beneath the best teacher in the Guild, learning how to keep the books and knowledge of how to operate a business. It looked like Phoebe was planning on cultivating Jack into someone of Fabian's status.

Phoebe finally returned when it was night and spoke immediately when she saw Han Shuo, "I've been busy all afternoon and made evening wear for you. Come with me to my room and change into it. Let me see if you fits you well."

When Phoebe said that she had spent all afternoon to make evening wear for him, Han Shuo felt something odd stir in his heart. His heart lurched as he ambled confusedly after Phoebe, following her to her room.

# Chapter 134: An awkward encounter

They entered Phoebe's room and stopped in front of an enormous mirror. Phoebe then stopped by a pile of black evening wear hemmed with exquisite, rolled gold edges that included a full set of boots and undergarments.

"Change out of your clothes first and I'll help you with the exterior wear in a moment." Phoebe left after handing the pile of clothes to Han Shuo and went to wait outside.

Han Shuo looked at the dress shirt, boots, and bow tie with an aggrieved look. He hesitated, then followed Phoebe's request anyway and put them on. He looked at himself in the mirror and felt that he'd noticeably become more vigorous and handsome.

"Are you done yet?" Phoebe asked outside.

"Yes, I'm done." Han Shuo responded.

When she heard Han Shuo's response, Phoebe walked in from outside and looked Han Shuo up and down with her clear eyes. She nodded, "It fits you very well. You look quite dashing in these clothes!"

"Oh, is that so? I feel quite good as well." Han Shuo smiled faintly with a careless response.

"I'll help you with the outer jacket." Phoebe walked next to Han Shuo and picked up the jacket in Han Shuo's hands with ease. She didn't wait for Han Shuo to speak and took the initiative to help Han Shuo into the jacket, her expression quite happy.

The two of them were close to each other as the faint fragrance wreathed around Phoebe wafted into Han Shuo's mouth and nose. Add to that Phoebe's indescribably tender movements, this all made Han Shuo's face flush and heart race.

After Phoebe had helped Han Shuo into all pieces of his evening wear and helped him tie his tie, Phoebe took a small step backwards and focused her sparkling, beautiful eyes on Han Shuo, taking a deep look.

“I hadn’t thought that you were so fit. This set of formal wear appears to be quite form fitting on you.” Phoebe breathed softly with some surprise as she looked attentively at Han Shuo.

“Then, did you finish what I asked you to do?” Han Shuo finally couldn’t help but ask what he cared most about after holding in his words until now.

She rolled her eyes ill temperedly at Han Shuo, saying unhappily, “Can we not talk about your business for now, and talk about them after the banquet ends?”

Han Shuo hadn’t thought that his careless question would incur Phoebe’s unhappiness. He thought privately that a woman’s heart is difficult to guess alright. He was asking someone else for a favor and so could only nod his head with a rueful smile.

“Alright, alright. Don’t give me that unwilling and reluctant look. I promise you that as long as you accompany me to the banquet and back, you’ll leave the Guild satisfied.” Phoebe said when she saw that Han Shuo was sporting a wry grin.

She then told him to wait for her for a bit and turned to walk into her room. After the sounds of rifling through clothing, a stunning Phoebe dressed in a simple, elegant pale-blue dress with faint powder on appeared in front of Han Shuo.

The unadorned, elegant pale-blue dress tapered into a thin waist from the torso, fully offsetting the perfect curves of her chest and thin waist. The skirt that began around her lower body rippled like petals of beautiful flowers. It was as if waves were lapping when she walked. Her gorgeous cheeks were even more mesmerizing due to the presence of light makeup. Han Shuo was flabbergasted in the moment he saw her.

“What’s wrong, why are you looking at me in such a silly fashion?” Phoebe appeared a bit proud as she threw back her head a little arrogantly and asked Han Shuo.

“No, nothing.” Han Shuo’s lips were a bit dry and responded after swallowing some saliva.

Laughing lightly, Phoebe lifted her head and walked outside. A faint fragrance drifted around Han Shuo when she passed him. She opened her mouth after arriving in front of the door, "Let's go and attend the banquet now."

Following behind Phoebe, Han Shuo got into a carriage that had long since been prepared. Two journeyman swordsmen were acting as groomsmen and spurring the horses on into the distance.

"Where are we going?" Han Shuo couldn't help but open his mouth with a question when he saw that Phoebe was sitting in the carriage, seemingly thinking of something.

"The finance minister of the Empire is holding a banquet and has invited several notable businesspeople in the Empire. It's a meeting of the businesspeople and a good timing to discuss business." Phoebe looked at Han Shuo and opened her mouth to explain.

Starting, Han Shuo said, "Then isn't that Lawrence's father's banquet?"

"Eh? How do you know that Lawrence is the son of the finance minister of the Empire?" Phoebe was a bit surprised and asked Han Shuo with confusion.

"Lawrence and I have a good friendship, we're both from the Academy. We've also had a few transactions before, so of course I know a few things about him." Han Shuo didn't tell Phoebe that Lisa had been the one to tell him about Lawrence. He spoke matter-of-factly, making it seem that the two of them had close relations.

Phoebe didn't suspect a thing as she nodded, "So this is the case. I hadn't known that you were close to my senior brother. This rather surprises me."

The two of them chatted about about Lawrence afterwards. It was mostly Han Shuo taking the chance to ask questions and Phoebe responding. Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Phoebe didn't know much about Lawrence. She only knew that he was the son of the Empire's finance minister, and although they had the same master, the two of them didn't meet much.



According to Phoebe's words, Lawrence didn't seem to be one who focused on training martial techniques. He spent more time studying random things with their teacher than martial techniques, so it was no wonder that Lawrence's martial skill wasn't that extraordinary.

Phoebe was unsure about more of Lawrence's matters. She only knew that he dealt with people well and had a good relationship with their teacher. Lawrence was also a bit resourceful and seemed to have many secrets about him, but Phoebe was uncertain of that as well.

The two of them had unknowingly arrived at their destination as they chatted. It wasn't until when Han Shuo got off from the carriage that he discovered they weren't too far away from the palace.

Alighting from the carriage with Phoebe and walking to the door of a luxurious, opulent manor, there was a well mannered butler long since awaiting to welcome Han Shuo and Phoebe inside. They made their way through a corridor and arrived in a courtyard surrounded by artificial mountains and rivers. They discovered that all sorts of soft and comfortable chairs had been placed in the surroundings, with many exquisite sweet delicacies and fine wine set up in the plains around the artificial mountains.

People dressed in extravagant clothing were scattered in all areas, grasping wine glasses in their hands and conversing with a smile on their faces. When Han Shuo and Phoebe walked in, the stunning Phoebe immediately drew hot eyed stares from many gentlemen within the area as well as some envious glances from some noble ladies.

"Hello Phoebe, I'm very happy that you could come and participate in this time's banquet." An ordinary looking middle aged man with normal features called out softly from the grass next to the flowing waters, walking over with a smile.

"Uncle Eevee, how would Phoebe not dare attend an event that you've issued an invitation for?" Phoebe tugged on Han Shuo and walked in the direction of finance minister Eevee of the Lancelot Empire.

Eevee Egadi was the father of Lawrence Egadi. Han Shuo stared at Eevee,

observing him closely and marveling at how Eevee could sire such a handsome son as Lawrence, given his own ordinary features. He felt it truly incredible.

“Is this handsome young fellow your boyfriend?” Eevee looked at Han Shuo with a smile and asked in surprise when he saw Han Shuo standing by her side.

“Yes, Uncle Eevee, he’s called Bryan and he’s also quite close with senior brother Lawrence.” Phoebe nodded and responded with a smile. She purposefully drew close to Han Shuo as they talked and reached out a hand to take his wrist, speaking with a look of happy contentment.

Although he knew that Phoebe was doing so to purposefully prove their relationship to Eevee, Han Shuo still felt something odd in his heart when Phoebe held onto him so intimately.

“Oh, so this is the case. Heh heh, Lawrence has returned from school today as well and is changing into his evening wear. I think he’ll be out in a bit. You can have a nice chat later.” Eevee spoke with surprise and then smiled at Han Shuo and Phoebe. “I’m a bit busy today and need to attend to other guests, I’m afraid I’ll have to leave you for now.”

“No worries Uncle Eevee, go attend to what you need to do!” Phoebe said graciously with politeness.

Eevee had just left when a middle aged man with a protruding belly walked towards Phoebe with a glass of wine in his hand. The man suddenly saw Han Shuo standing next to Phoebe before he’d reached her and his face immediately darkened, but he covered it quite well.

“It’s been a few days, but Miss Phoebe is as beautiful and enchanting as ever. I don’t know if you’ve considered the matter that I brought up to you last time?” When the person reached Phoebe, his ardent gaze stared at Phoebe without abandon as he spoke in question.

“Apologies Mister Cameron, our Boozt Merchant Guild is not willing to join your merchant guild.” Phoebe’s face resumed its cold expression as she flicked a glance at Cameron, speaking diffidently.

Cameron's face changed as he stared deeply at Phoebe, saying, "Our merchant guild exists to oppose the Brut Merchant Alliance. As members of the Brut Merchant Alliance, the McGrady Guild seems to pose quite a threat to your Boozt Merchant Guild. I hope you can seriously consider my proposal."

"Hello Mister Cameron! Who are you talking to?" A familiar voice suddenly sounded from behind as a curvacious and alluring Emily, all dressed up, suddenly appeared behind Han Shuo.

Her facial expression had been relaxed and carefree when it suddenly changed after she caught sight of Han Shuo when her body was turned. When her gaze landed on Phoebe holding onto Han Shuo's arm, her eyes danced even more as a weird look focused fixedly on Han Shuo.

# Chapter 135: Giving tit for tat

Han Shuo received even more of a fright. He never thought that he'd run into Emily here. There was no way he could explain the fact that Phoebe's hand was wrapped around his arm.

"This beautiful lady is the master of the Boozt Merchant Guild." Cameron's expression grew a bit reserved when he saw Emily appear and he spoke up politely.

Emily's gaze was still focused on Han Shuo at this moment, and she only recollected herself after Cameron started speaking. She flicked a glance at Phoebe who stood to the side, saying faintly, "So you're Miss Phoebe."

"This is Madame Emily, she's of the Empire's Betteridge family. Her husband is the second son of the head of the Betteridge family, Mister Hahn." Cameron looked at Phoebe and cast some light on Emily's identity for her.

The Betteridge family was a large family in the Empire, renowned for producing famous generals for the Empire. The Betteridge family had achieved many distinguished accomplishments for the Empire over the years, with Master Hahn now retired at home due to his advanced age. However, no one dared question his influence in the military.

When she heard that Emily was of the Betteridge family, Phoebe's eyes lit up and she gave a friendly bow, "Greetings to Madame Emily."

"Hehe, you're too polite. Eh, this young fellow is quite handsome, is he your boyfriend?" Emily had lost her composure earlier, but had fully recovered by now. She chuckled and stared at Han Shuo in inquiry.

Phoebe had felt that Emily seemed to keep flicking glances at Han Shuo, but she didn't think much of it when she heard that Emily was already married. Now that she heard Emily's question, she immediately tightened her grasp on Han Shuo's arm and smiled, "That's right, his name is Bryan."

"Hello, beautiful Madame Emily, pleased to meet you." Han Shuo

reached out a hand politely and wanted to shake hands with Emily.

“It’s very nice to meet you, you’re very much like one of my friends!” An odd smile clung to the corners of Emily’s mouth. She stretched out her hand and clasped Han Shuo’s, but suddenly exerted pressure when their hands met as her fingers dug fiercely into the back of Han Shuo’s hand that was facing the ground.

A wry smile suddenly appearing on his face, Han Shuo knew that Emily was definitely doing this on purpose. He grimaced and revealed a pained expression. Emily’s expression didn’t change, but was obviously in a better mood after getting her revenge. She relaxed her hand and flicked a glance at Han Shuo and Phoebe, saying diffidently, “I need to go somewhere else for now, can I chat with you later?”

“Of course!” Phoebe agreed happily.

Nodding, Emily sashayed away. She suddenly turned her head back halfway and viciously threw a look at Han Shuo when Phoebe and the others weren’t paying attention. She made a subtle ‘come hither’ motion behind her back.

“Mm. I’m going to the restroom.” Han Shuo understood Emily’s meaning and leaned against Phoebe, whispering in her ear. He then extracted his arm from Phoebe’s and left.

He made a circle first and then walked past a corridor, sneaking towards a pavilion. Han Shuo’s vision could clearly pick up traces of Emily’s path, even without use of the original demons. He avoided some people along the way and made for an artificial mountain that was a bit out of the way.

He’d just entered the artificial mountain when a shadow suddenly walked out from the gloom, giving Han Shuo’s waist a firm pinch. The person spoke angrily next to Han Shuo’s ear in a low voice, “How come you never told me that you actually have a girlfriend?”

Han Shuo didn’t even need to think to know that it was Emily. He turned the hand back on her and held her tightly, pushing her flush against the artificial mountain and running his hand over her pert bottom. His other hand clasped around her waist and kissed down on her brilliantly red lips.

“Eh... ooh...” Emily struggled twice and pounded furiously on Han Shuo’s chest. She couldn’t stop his invasion however, and her own body slowly began to grow hot and go limp.

Emily was wearing a brown evening dress today. The long, tapering dress clung tightly to her mesmerizing body figure. The curvaceous evening dress was tight on the bottom as it enclosed around Emily’s long, slender legs. It looked like the bottom half of a mermaid, further enhancing the body’s slenderness.

Breasts that looked like they were about to burst out of their fabric and a well rounded, pert bottom were firm and toned. They were also completely accessible beneath the dress and left nothing to one’s imagination, sending out a strong allure. When she sashayed, Emily sent alluring beams of beauty all over, appearing to be an incomparably beautiful woman. Han Shuo had noticed that many men present were looking at Emily with a completely distracted look, staring so hard that it seemed their eyes were about to fall out.

“Speak, what’s with that Phoebe?” After they were done, Emily bit off her words while she helped Han Shuo clean up.

Basking in his freedom from inhibitions and lying back comfortably with closed eyes, Han Shuo leaned on the artificial mountain and explained about the matters between him and Phoebe. Emily’s face warmed a little afterwards, but didn’t let Han Shuo entirely off the hook. She suddenly naughtily grabbed Han Shuo lower body and said huffily, “Phoebe that little chit looked so natural with her hand around your arm just now, she didn’t look like she was pretending at all. I think things aren’t that simple between the two of you.”

His little brother having been caught, Han Shuo exclaimed in surprise. He hastily straightened his pants and breathed a sigh of relief, explaining mischievously, “Alright, alright, don’t be jealous. We really don’t have that kind of relationship.”

“Bryan, are you here? I’m looking for you!” The original demons detected Lawrence calling out loudly and approaching this area at this time.

“Damn it, what’s he doing here?” Han Shuo felt a shiver of horror as he and Emily hastily adjusted their clothing, anxiety written over their faces.

Lawrence seemed to know that Han Shuo was here as he yelled and walked in this direction. When Lawrence was almost where they were, Han Shuo pointed in another direction and said to Emily, “Leave in that direction, now!”

Emily was also in complete disarray right now as she hiked up her dress and stumbled into a run out of there. When Lawrence finally showed himself, he laughed merrily, “I was asking people where you were and the butler said he saw you walk in this direction. You were indeed here. Eh, who’s that?”

Lawrence spoke with a smile when he saw Han Shuo and then suddenly caught a glimpse of Emily’s back disappearing in another direction. He immediately exclaimed softly in surprise and looked at Han Shuo with a look of confusion.

“No, nothing. Eh, no, I don’t know.” Han Shuo had finally gotten everything in order and was privately cursing Lawrence as a bastard. He stammered a bit incoherently when he opened his mouth.

Lawrence’s facial expression was a bit odd as he took a few glances at Han Shuo, suddenly saying, “I just heard Phoebe say that you’re her boyfriend and was about to come find you for a good chatting. I happened to see a woman leave, are you going behind my junior sister’s back and coming here to rendezvous with another woman?”

“Haha, how is that possible, you must’ve seen incorrectly, or someone happened to walk by.” Han Shuo glossed things over and then changed the topic with a solemn face, saying to Lawrence, “How do you plan on proceeding with regards to Clark?”

Seeming to see through Han Shuo’s purposeful attempt to change the subject, Lawrence looked oddly at Han Shuo and didn’t continue asking him. He said with a smile, “My father is holding the banquet today and you’re attending as a guest. You should thoroughly enjoy yourself. Let’s not talk about such dirty tasks.”

Lawrence's words happened to fall in line with Han Shuo's thoughts. He walked out with a faint smile, "Alright, then let's go back to the banquet hall."

Nodding, Lawrence didn't say much else as he left the area with Han Shuo, walking back to the banquet hall.

A melodious song had started sounding at some point as many of the guests outside had entered a large lobby. Some of these people started dancing gracefully in the rises and falls of the music. Those without partners or without interest stood around the outskirts by themselves.

Off in the distance, Phoebe's expression appeared quite irritated as she impatiently dealt with Cameron's conversation. There was another madame standing next to Cameron wearing a disdainful cold smile on her face. She seemed to be saying something to Phoebe that made her facial expression become uglier and uglier.

"What's going on?" Han Shuo asked Phoebe with a frown when he and Lawrence walked over.

"Oh, this little thing is your boyfriend? Heh heh, he's just an ordinary student at the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. How would he measure up to Mister Cameron's wealth? Oh, are you paying for this little thing's tuition? It'd be very interesting that way!" This older lady was wearing luxurious clothing and adorned in brilliant jewels, seemingly deathly afraid that people wouldn't know that she had money. Her features were middling, but her body was curvy to the point of being over the top. She rather appeared a bit bloated.

"Eh? Who's this old granny?" Han Shuo flicked a surprise glance at this older lady when he walked over and exclaimed to Phoebe.

"Pfft." Phoebe covered her mouth and couldn't help but laugh. Her face then regained its composure as she said, "She's Madame Valerie of Lielan Garments."

"Impudent thing, with which eye did you see an old granny?" Valerie was beyond incensed as she placed her hands on her hips and glared at Han Shuo.



Pointing at his left eye, Han Shuo said, "This left eye." He then pointed at his other eye and continued, "This right eye."

A trace of a delighted smile curved Phoebe's eyes as she came over to tenderly hug Han Shuo's arm, saying to Valerie, "He's just this blunt, I'm truly sorry!"

As a swordmaster, Phoebe's own strength was unquestionable. However, she wasn't adept at verbally sparring with others and couldn't bear to let go of her face to do so. With Han Shuo at her side kicking things off however, she didn't mind going with the flow and adding fuel to the fire.

"Old granny, you're already at an advanced age. You should be staying at home and enjoying the little bit of time you have left. What are you doing in the outside world putting your face out there? In addition, the difference in our ages is simply too great to the point of being unable to communicate. If you're truly that lonely, you should find someone similar to your age to communicate with!" Han Shuo ignored Valerie's anger and mocked viciously. He then pointed at someone in front and said, "There, you should communicate with that old gentlemen over there. You can flirt with him and maybe experience some old love!"

There was an elder man with white hair, holding a cane, in the direction that Han Shuo was pointing in. He was sitting on a chair not too far away and slowly drinking wine.

Valerie took a look at the old man and was so angry that her cheeks were red. The two meatballs in front of her chest swayed back and forth as she turned to stare at Han Shuo angrily, unsure of what to say.

Following Han Shuo's gaze, Cameron, Phoebe, and Lawrence looked at the old man at the same time. Phoebe laughed lightly and pinched Han Shuo covertly, seeming to admonish him for making fun of the elderly. Cameron looked at the old man and turned his head, telling Valerie in a low voice to not be angry.

However, when Lawrence looked at the old man, his facial expression suddenly changed as he was a bit shocked and taken aback. He finally revealed an odd, wry smile.

“Little fellow, I heard you were talking crap about me from afar.” The old man suddenly turned at this moment and looked at Han Shuo with bright, piercing eyes, speaking with a resonant, carrying voice.

# Chapter 136: Difference in position

Han Shuo was flabbergasted when he saw the old man get to his feet and walk over. He hadn't discovered it when the old man was sitting, but when the old man drew himself up straight, he immediately appeared extraordinarily awe inspiring. His body was tall and fit, and didn't appear old and clumsy in the slightest.

Phoebe pinched Han Shuo covertly, wanting him to hurry and apologize. Lawrence, on the other side, kept throwing glances at Han Shuo, seeming to urge him into an apology to the old man.

When he saw the old man walk over, Han Shuo said with a rueful smile, "Your ears are truly sensitive, but I didn't say anything bad about you, just wanted to introduce a good companion to you in your old age."

"Oh? Now this is a bit interesting. I didn't think you'd be so kindhearted." The old man walked over and flicked a glance at Han Shuo, one that sent chills running through his heart. He then pointed at Phoebe and smiled, "Do you mean this beautiful lady? If it's her, I'd be very happy to, heh heh!"

Han Shuo was immediately gobsmacked by these words as Phoebe's face turned bright red. She flung a vicious glance at Han Shuo, seeming to blame him for playing with fire.

"No, this lady is noticeably unsuitable for your age. I was thinking that this old granny is more suitable for you." Han Shuo felt that his aura was a bit blocked when he faced this old man. He opened his mouth and continued spouting off random nonsense in an effort to shake off that oppressing feeling.

On the other side, Lawrence appeared a bit anxious and continued sending certain looks at Han Shuo. However, he was still a bit too late as Han Shuo spoke his mind.

"Such a rude thing lacking breeding and vision. In what way am I a good match for this old thing? Are you seeking death?!" Valerie was exceedingly angry as she bawled out at Han Shuo with a violent look. She also glared at

the elder as well for good measure.

“Little fellow, you must be joking. Although I’m not young, I’m noticeably younger than this madame. I think she’d be more suited for my late grandfather.” When the elder heard Valerie also curse at him, he actually merrily riposted in the same manner.

Although his age was advanced, his words made Valerie out to be completely worthless. Valerie was so incensed, that smoke was almost rising from her seven orifices. She immediately stared at the old man angrily and shouted, “Damned decrepit thing, how dare you say that about me.”

A slap rang out as Lawrence suddenly made his move and flung a slap at the rich madame. He said with a cold face to Cameron off on the side, “Uncle Cameron, your friend is simply too rude. We don’t welcome people like her. Please have her leave immediately.”

Cameron’s face changed slightly as he couldn’t quite understand why Lawrence would do so. The madame almost wanted to go on a rampage. She covered her mouth as a few traces of blood could be seen. It looked like Lawrence hadn’t held back with this slap.

Cameron began to subtly feel that something was amiss and was about to ask what Lawrence meant when Finance Minister Eevee walked over from the distance. He immediately cried out with surprise when he came over and gave a bow, “Master Hahn, what brings you here?”

Han Shuo’s heart jumped with surprise as he suddenly remembered Mister Cameron’s talk of Emily’s identity earlier. The current head of the Betteridge family was called Hahn. As he thought of this and once again looked at the elder, he vaguely guessed at his identity.

Cameron’s face also changed as he shouted coldly at Valerie in a low voice. “Shut up!” He restrained Valerie, who’d been about to continue making a fuss. He then spoke fearfully to the elder, “My apologies Master Hahn, we’ve been most impolite. I will take her away now and personally visit in a few days to offer my apologies.”

Valerie had finally recovered herself in this moment and her expression

was filled with awe and fear as well. She stood there in a dumb haze, not sure of what to say. It was obvious that she was stunned by Hahn's identity.

"No need, our Betteridge clan cannot accommodate such characters like you." Hahn on the other hand, maintained his usual expression and cast a cold look at the two of them as he spoke faintly.

Cameron's expression was still humble as he continued to express his apologies and kept tugging the dazed Valerie, quickly walking outside. He kept bowing and offering his apologies before he left, until his figure vanished into the distance.

In this world, even with all the many gold coins that merchants could earn, their status in society would never be on par with nobles such as Hahn, particularly when Hahn's clansmen were senior officials in the military. They wouldn't dare offend Hahn no matter what.

"Little fellow, you've got some guts." Seeing that Han Shuo still had the same expression on his face after Cameron had left with clear explanations from Lawrence and Eevee, Hahn was a bit surprised to see that Han Shuo didn't offer an apology or appear that frightened. He snorted softly at Han Shuo.

Actually, when he found out Hahn's identity, Han Shuo was also a bit shocked. However, he hadn't said anything that was too offensive just now so he wasn't that afraid of Hahn. When he heard Hahn's words, Han Shuo said with a conciliatory smile, "I was just joking with you earlier, I think you surely wouldn't mind with your magnanimity."

"Heh heh, I'm a very narrow minded person. Everyone knows that." Hahn laughed oddly and responded with something outside of Han Shuo's expectations.

This made Han Shuo feel a bit taken aback as he stood there, at a loss for appropriate words.

"Eh, honored father, what are you guys standing here chatting about?" Emily had changed into a new set of clothes at this time and first flicked a glance at Han Shuo, then looking at Hahn in surprise.

Emily had married Hahn's second son, but that unlucky fellow hadn't had time to consummate the marriage before Hahn had sent him onto the battlefield. He hadn't returned in the end and had left Emily a widow. Therefore, after Emily had become a Betteridge daughter-in-law, old Hahn kept reprimanding himself and felt that he owed something to his son and daughter-in-law. It was said that he dearly loved Emily and was even closer to her than his own son.

"Nothing much, just that I've met an interesting little fellow. Mm, let's go, let's go. I'll go dance with you. I don't understand you at all. You used to never bring a date to these banquets, but wanted to drag me along this time. You'll be the death of me sooner or later." Old Hahn first responded carelessly and then complained merrily as he walked towards the dance hall.

Emily had wanted to speak more, but she could only quickly follow after old Hahn. When she left however, Emily still raked Han Shuo with a subtle glance.

Old Hahn's words seemed to subtly indicate something. He thought about it briefly and understood that it might have been because of him to make Emily change. He was quite touched internally.

"Eh, so she's Madame Emily. It should be my first time meeting her today, but why does her back look a bit familiar?" Lawrence looked in the direction that Emily had disappeared in and flicked a glance at Han Shuo, questioning in a low voice.

Lawrence's words seemed to point at something, particularly that last glance at Han Shuo. This made Han Shuo feel that Lawrence seemed to have discovered something, but to Han Shuo, his relationship with Phoebe was the fake one, and thus he wasn't afraid of Lawrence telling Phoebe about his relationship with Emily. He felt that he was on firm ground at heart and wasn't panicked.

"Little Phoebe, you didn't offend old Hahn, did you?" Finance Minister Eevee looked at Phoebe and spoke with a bit of worry after Hahn and Emily had left.

“Never mind Phoebe’s matters, heh heh. Go back to whatever you were busy with and don’t worry. I’ll take care of things here.” Lawrence stood by the side and suddenly spoke up.

Eevee seemed to listen very much to Lawrence as he nodded and didn’t say much else after Lawrence had opened his mouth. He left with a slight smile.

“Don’t worry, Master Hahn isn’t someone who confuses right from wrong. He won’t make trouble for you, I can promise that. The ball has already started, the two of you can go enjoy yourselves.” Lawrence spoke with a small smile at Han Shuo and Phoebe after Eevee had left.

“Mm, understood senior brother.” Phoebe smiled and pulled on Han Shuo’s arm, seeming to say randomly, “Come, dance with me.”

Han Shuo started and said a bit frantically, “Forget it, I don’t know how to dance, not at all!”

Phoebe started and hesitated. Just as she was about to give up, her eyebrow suddenly lifted and she said a bit mischievously, “No problem, I can teach you. It’s really simple.”

“Forget it, I’m really stupid. It won’t be good for me to embarrass you in front of everyone.” Han Shuo shook his head and declined with a wry smile.

Her slender, white neck rising up, Phoebe said with a bit of a pout, “What did you promise me before? Don’t try to change the subject.”

Phoebe wrapped her hands firmly around Han Shuo’s arm after she’d spoken, with no thought of whether or not Han Shuo had agreed. She tugged him in the direction of dance floor, not giving him the chance to decline.

# Chapter 137: Strange happenings at the ball

Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He was resigned as he allowed Phoebe to drag him over to the dance floor.

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When he reached the dance floor, he noticed that a few merchants and other nobles were holding onto the waists of their ladies and dancing gracefully in the center of the floor. Han Shuo stood dumbly in a corner after being led there by Phoebe, watching the others dance with narrowed eyes and praying that he wouldn't be too embarrassing later.

"Here, place your arm around my waist." Phoebe's body twisted as she stood across from Han Shuo. Her slender jade hands rose as she placed one into Han Shuo's right hand, guiding Han Shuo's left hand to her waist with her right hand.

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When Phoebe's small hand landed in Han Shuo's large hand, Han Shuo's heart lurched slightly as it never had before. A smooth, warm, and boneless small hand felt quite comfortable to the touch. Han Shuo couldn't help but squeeze her hand, which caused Phoebe's body to tremble all over, her cheeks reddening unknowingly.

She glared at Han Shuo and said softly, "No monkey business allowed!"

When Han Shuo's large hand landed on Phoebe's waist and the two of their bodies were flush against each other. They could smell the scent on each other, and their breaths would even waft into each other's mouths and nose when they spoke.

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"Come, I'll lead you in dancing, just follow my rhythm." Phoebe was a bit



scared to look directly at Han Shuo as she lowered her head and said that. She took a deep breath in, placing her empty hand on his shoulder and slowly walked towards the dance floor.

Phoebe appeared to let go of her reservations with the elegant and wonderful music. She didn't continue looking down at the floor, but stared soulfully at Han Shuo with her beautiful eyes. She explained the main tenets of dancing to Han Shuo in a low voice.

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With Han Shuo's current intelligence and observation skills, he'd already grasped the main principles of dancing after a round of observation. When he listened to Phoebe's detailed explanations and was lead forward by her, he immediately grasped the knack of dancing and slowly became familiar with dancing after his initial unfamiliarity.

Phoebe was a swordmaster, and thus her strength, flexibility, and agility was naturally extraordinary. After enduring the reforging from the magical yuan, all the various functions of Han Shuo's body were even more outstanding than an ordinary person's. When their two bodies leaned close to each other and settled into the same rhythm, their dancing style was very much in sync and quite mesmerizing.

Their bodies leveraged the fact that their hands were clasped together to move in incredibly harmony. Han Shuo would understand what Phoebe meant when she sent a glance over, and his footsteps would move with Phoebe's, in moving slowly, quickly, or turning. This kind of wondrous sensation caused ripples of odd emotion in both Phoebe and Han Shuo's heart.

When the song was over, both of them felt that they hadn't given full expression to their thoughts, so when the next song sounded, Phoebe pulled Han Shuo into a dancing form again. Their strong accordance perfectly demonstrated another dance to perfection, and their handsome and beautiful forms attracted much attention from the many eyes within the dance floor.

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Just as he was feeling greatly content, Han Shuo's eyes swept the area and suddenly noticed Emily dancing with old Hahn not too far away. A pair of eyes full of the light of jealousy were fixed intently on him. This made Han Shuo's heart jump and flash a rueful smile at Emily from afar.

When she saw that Han Shuo had only just now noticed her gaze, Emily was a bit angry as she viciously rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, telling him that she was truly jealous.

There was really no way that Han Shuo could explain anything at this moment, and could only smile wryly at Emily in the distance. Several waiters appeared from three directions at this time. Their gazes were flitting back and forth and their steps light and slow, as if trying to hide something.

Han Shuo hadn't paid them much attention at first, but his sensitive ears seemed to filter out the wondrous music and heard a very, very faint tinkling sound. This seemed to be the sound that jade and jewels would make after hitting metal.

Do the right thing, don't support theft.

His thoughts racing slightly, Han Shuo's expression tightened as he began to involuntarily closely observe the waiters who had just appeared. As everyone was mesmerized in romantic dance steps, the appearance of several waiters holding trays with wine glasses on them was a bit jarring. In addition, although the waiters' gazes were calm, they would involuntarily travel to old Hahn in the middle of the dance floor, with a cold light subtly appearing when their eyes landed on him.

As Han Shuo continued his observations, he noticed that the waiters were slowly converging on one area. He also judged that Emily's and old Hahn's footsteps would travel to where the waiters were in another few breaths. Han Shuo vaguely felt uneasy as he noted the waiters' gazes.

His mind racing now, Han Shuo tilted his forehead forward and brought his lips up to Phoebe's ears. Lost in the dance, Phoebe suddenly sensed Han Shuo's movements and her heart was thrown into disarray. The

redness of her cheeks spread out to her nape.

She moved her neck slightly to the left, seeming to want to put some distance between Han Shuo's lips and her neck. She then quickly lifted her head and snuck a glance at Han Shuo after moving her head like that, noticing that Han Shuo had furrowed his brow. This made her heart panic even more.

She hesitated a bit and seemed to decide on something, rolling her eyes at Han Shuo inwardly. Her neck didn't continue to dodge and stayed there as she seemed to be waiting for something with reddened cheeks.

"Those waiters seem to want to take action against old Hahn and Madame Emily. I made a joke out of old Hahn just now earlier. Move there with me now and I'll go and repay him for his favor." Han Shuo finally placed his lips next to Phoebe's ears and said softly.

Her body had first trembled in anticipation, Phoebe's body had then changed from soft and pliable to quite stiff after Han Shuo had spoken his words. A trace of disappointment flashed through her heart, after which she widened the distance between her and Han Shuo to use her eyes to indicate that she understood.

Looking at Phoebe's gaze, Han Shuo knew that Phoebe had fully understood his intentions, given how in sync he was with her. He nodded and didn't say much else, covertly changing their dance moves together. The two of them exchanged positions with another couple at an unknown moment and swiftly danced towards old Hahn and Emily.

To Han Shuo, he wasn't doing so in order to pay back old Hahn any sort of favor. He was doing so because Emily was there. Emily was dancing with old Hahn and when she saw Han Shuo winking incessantly at her, she thought that Han Shuo was feeling guilty and wanted to explain something. She glared huffily at Han Shuo and turned her head to no longer look at him again, seeming to still be greatly angry.

Seeing danger approach, Han Shuo's heart became more and more calm. His gaze focused on the bodies of the waiters and mentally charted out their plan of action and timing. He measured it all up clearly and

accurately calculated when they would make their move.

When Emily and old Hahn finally started moving towards a corner, Han Shuo's large hand on Phoebe's waist suddenly abruptly exerted force and they took two quick steps towards Emily.

At the same time, the gazes and demeanors of the waiters, who'd waited for quite a while suddenly made a drastic change from their peaceful looks. A cold and severe presence emanated from their bodies. The waiter, with the tray of wine glasses in his hand, suddenly flung it forward, sending the tray and its contents flying towards Emily and old Hahn. Their bodies moved at the same time as a dagger, sparkling with cold light stabbed towards old Hahn and Emily like lightning.

Emily and old Hahn had been dancing to the graceful music when their faces suddenly changed drastically, but when they reacted, the fatal attack was already close at hand. One dagger stabbed towards Emily as another four stabbed towards old Hahn. The five assassins moved quickly and cleanly. It was obvious to see that they were old hats with lots of tough training under their belts.

A sharp and severe whistling suddenly sounded, appearing all the more ear-piercing in the midst of the melodious music. The Demonslayer Edge shot out of Han Shuo's sleeve like lightning in accordance to his thoughts, aiming for the dagger making straight for Emily.

Han Shuo and Phoebe had swiftly whirled to old Hahn's side at this time and surged into the other four assassins attacking old Hahn before they'd had a chance to react.

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Having long since made their preparations, Han Shuo and Phoebe acted to defend at the same time. Han Shuo used a dwarf-forged dagger to block a hit, Phoebe's longsword twirled fiercely and strongly deflected two daggers into the sky. Making use of this opening, Han Shuo shoved fiercely with his back and tried to push old Hahn away from the danger zone.

To his surprise, old Hahn wasn't pushed out of the way after his strong shove. Old Hahn's upper body swayed slightly as he reached through the air to snatch out a flying tray. Old Hahn hauled it behind him and blocked the last dagger with a loud clang.

The suddenly appearing Han Shuo and Phoebe had blocked three of the daggers that'd been for old Hahn, completely throwing the assassins plans into disarray. The five waiters looked at each other and didn't make another move. They retreated quickly towards the outside as screams and panic ensued on the dance floor, with everyone trying to flee and hide.

Old Hahn and Phoebe both set their sights on different assassins and immediately ran off in pursuit. As the two of them were taking action, Han Shuo quickly ran to Emily's side and grabbed her hand, saying lowly, "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine, go after the assassins!" Emily was a senior executive of the Dark Mantle alright, she didn't display any panic and immediately admonished Han Shuo lightly.

"It's none of my business. it's good as long as you're alright. Everything else has nothing to do with me!" Han Shuo shook his head and picked up a wine glass from beside him at random, staying where he was and slowly sipped at wine as he looked at Emily, having not the slightest intention to rise.

"You, you darned brat!" The meaning behind Han Shuo's words was obviously placing Emily's safety first and being too lazy to care about anything else. When Emily heard his words, she was both angry at Han Shuo not listening to her and touched by his concern. She pouted and rebuked him.

The dance floor was in complete chaos at this moment as the merchants reacted to the sudden developments. They were all fleeing in mass panic to the courtyard beyond the dance floor. No one was paying any attention to the conversation between Han Shuo and Emily.

Seeing that there were fewer and fewer people on the dance floor, Han Shuo and Emily finally walked outside. A grave, sharp sound sounded

when they reached the door as the Demonslayer Edge threaded through the frantically fleeing crowd and suddenly landed in Han Shuo's palm, vanishing without a trace in the blink of an eye.

"The person who attacked you is dead!" Han Shuo said faintly to Emily when he put the Demonslayer Edge away.

When the Demonslayer Edge had flown back just now, it had been flying close to the ground. The people panicking around it naturally hadn't noticed, but Emily had been walking with Han Shuo and had seen the Demonslayer's miraculous, automatic flight with her own eyes. It'd then concealed itself within Han Shuo's sleeve, making Emily flabbergasted.

"What's the weapon that you're using?" Emily's voice trembled as she looked in disbelief at Han Shuo.

The Demonslayer Edge that could fly according to his own will naturally appeared mysterious and unpredictable in this world. It was understandable that Emily was so shocked.

Smiling mysteriously, Han Shuo explained with a dashing air, "This has to do with the martial arts technique that I'm training, I'm not at liberty to explain. All you have to know is that my weapon is indeed a bit different."

"You wicked brat, just how many secrets are hidden amongst yourself?" Strange lights danced in Emily's eyes as they focused on Han Shuo, asking with extreme curiosity.

Shrugging, Han Shuo smiled without responding and gave off the air of unfathomable mysteriousness. This made Emily's teeth itch to throw all decorum to the winds and bite him where they stood.

Just as Han Shuo and Emily were conversing quietly, the chaotic scene slowly came under control as Phoebe, old Hahn, a slightly frantic Finance Minister Eevee, and Lawrence, with a darkened expression, returned from all directions.

"One made it out and the others committed suicide. There was nothing to be gleaned from their bodies." Phoebe first looked in surprise at Han Shuo and Emily and spoke lowly to Han Shuo when she returned.

Han Shuo and Emily had already put some distance between themselves before Phoebe and the others had returned, and their expressions had gone back to normal and didn't express anything special in particular. Therefore, although Phoebe was curious why Han Shuo hadn't gone after the killers and stayed with Emily, she didn't ask anything.

"Little fellow, thank you for your aid in saving me and Emily." Old Hahn said approvingly to Han Shuo with a smile after he walked over.

"Not at all, treat it as me returning the favor after making a joke out of you earlier. Heh heh, this way even if you really were narrow minded, you likely wouldn't be able to find it within yourself to make trouble for me." Han Shuo winded at old Hahn and said teasingly.

Old Hahn laughed heartily when these words were uttered, "Fascinating, what a fascinating little fellow!"

# Chapter 138: We can be together

“I’m so sorry, it was because our defensive precautions weren’t good enough that it caused you to be frightened!” Finance Minister Eevee spoke with a look of worry to Hahn.

Waving his hands, Hahn’s face was grave as he said seriously, “Don’t apologize Eevee, I won’t hold you responsible. Don’t investigate this matter further, I’ll handle it myself.”

Eevee first heaved a sigh of relief when Hahn said so and then asked askance, “Why?”

“Honored father, since grandpa Hahn has already spoken, don’t think too much about it.” Lawrence’s face was a bit dark as he spoke to Eevee.

“Mm. Lawrence, don’t you worry either. I know who did this.” Hahn flicked a glance at Lawrence and seemed to know something as he spoke.

Lawrence nodded his head remotely and looked towards Han Shuo and Phoebe. He hesitated for a moment, then asked Phoebe, “Did Cameron try to force you to join his organization’s merchant alliance?”

“Yes, but I’ve already turned him down.” Phoebe responded.

“Very good, don’t give in at any cost, otherwise your Boozt Merchant Guild will face incredible danger.” Lawrence who contemplated silently gave this piece of advice to Phoebe.

Taking in their conversation, Han Shuo made his observations. He seemed to notice something from Lawrence and Hahn’s discussion, but since the two of them didn’t talk about anything tangible and so he didn’t inquire further.

As for the other matters, Han Shuo wasn’t that curious about them. Since this assassination attempt had taken place, it was difficult for the banquet to continue. Han Shuo lazily stretched his waist and said to Phoebe, “I believe the banquet is already over. Can we leave now?”

Rolling her eyes at Han Shuo, Phoebe bowed slightly to Eevee and old Hahn. Then, with a slight smile, she said, “We still have matters to attend



to, so we'll be taking our leave now.

Eevee couldn't very well keep them now that such a matter had occurred. He sighed and said lowly, "Alright, be careful on your way back."

"Bryan, remember what we said, I'll come find you tomorrow. Don't disappear for another few days now!" When he saw that Phoebe and Han Shuo were about to leave, Lawrence suddenly reminded Han Shuo not to forget their arranged appointment.

Han Shuo nodded in understanding. Just as he was about to leave, Hahn opened his mouth again, "So you're Bryan, heh heh. I'll remember you."

Smiling and not responding, Han Shuo and Phoebe left the banquet along with some other merchants who were leaving in a hurry. Everyone boarded their carriages and traveled back along their original routes.

"Just who wants to kill that old Hahn? Even I know of Master Hahn's accomplishments for the Empire. Many of the current officers in the military are Master Hahn's former men. With his status, there shouldn't be that many within the Empire who dare make a move against him." Phoebe's beautiful eyebrows creased slightly after they entered the carriage and she spoke with a distant voice.

To remain vigilant, the three original demons had been deposited nearby and were continuously keeping an eye on the surroundings. When Phoebe had voiced her thoughts, Han Shuo thought briefly and said, "We helped old Hahn today, but that may bring great trouble to us. But for your merchant guild, the advantages of having a good relationship with old Hahn definitely outweigh its disadvantages. Mm, however, this matter doesn't have much to do with me as I'm not afraid of anything. But you, you should be careful."

Phoebe flashed her teeth in a smile, "Don't you worry, I know my limits."

"Then I won't speak further. Can you now fully detail the items you promised me?" Han Shuo nodded and then drew himself up slightly, staring straight at Phoebe as he asked this question.

"Alright alright, just look at you. I found someone to professionally

assess the wealth that you obtained from that unknown source. It's worth roughly forty thousand gold and can fully cover those random items you purchased. In addition, I've thoroughly prepared large amounts of rations for you. However, the space ring with a larger capacity that you want will take some time. There's temporarily no supply of that in the market." Phoebe's spirits hadn't been dampened with running into an attack on the banquet, as she spoke quite lightheartedly at this moment.

When Phoebe spoke thus, Han Shuo finally breathed a sigh of relief in his heart and revealed a very gratified expression. He spoke with a laugh, "I'm at ease with you at the helm. Forget about the space ring, I've just gotten one with an even bigger storage space."

"When we arrive at the Guild, you can take what you need. I've already taken the risk of gathering all of it earlier when I didn't know if you'd have enough gold coins to pay for it all. Be at ease, there won't be any troubles." Phoebe threw her head back proudly and said softly.

Han Shuo was a bit touched by Phoebe's words. He knew that Phoebe had taken the risk to do so purely based on their friendship. Phoebe had even thought of paying for some of it herself. From this point alone, he could conclude that Phoebe was a friend worth having.

Just as Han Shuo was feeling gratitude, Phoebe reached out and pinched Han Shuo's cheek while glaring at Han Shuo. "Also, you lied to me that you didn't know how to dance. You were so well practiced! You're the worst."

In all honesty, Han Shuo wouldn't have known how to dance if it wasn't for this time's banquet. He'd learned on the spot and muddled his way through. It was only because his brain had been developed so much that his ability to pick things up was incredible. This was why Phoebe had the misconception that Han Shuo was pretending that he didn't know how to dance.

"I'm innocent! I really didn't know how to dance before, you were a good teacher!" Han Shuo complained with an aggrieved air.

"Do, do you like dancing with me?" Phoebe suddenly lowered her head to

ask softly, and she looked a bit bashful.

Nodding, Han Shuo responded carelessly, “Yes, it feels rather nice.”

“Then, I want you to promise me that you will dance with me again next time, or I won’t help you with your matters in the future.” Phoebe’s face lit up as she spoke happily.

“Alright alright, I promise you. As long as you help me seriously, I’ll promise you anything you want. I have no problem killing or setting fires for you, not to mention dancing.” As there were plenty of annoying matters that he’d have to bother Phoebe with in the future, Han Shuo agreed without any hesitation.

The two of them didn’t run into any troubles along the way as they returned amidst happy chatter. When they arrived at the Boozt Merchant Guild, Phoebe took out the materials that Han Shuo needed, including a few warehouses full of rations and daily necessities, almost filling up Han Shuo’s current space ring.

“Keep the other gold coins for me for now. In addition, these are the other materials that I need you to purchase, please continue collecting them for me.” The wood elite zombies and yin demons all needed to be refined. Han Shuo had therefore prepared another list and gave it to Phoebe after taking care of everything that needed his attention.

Looking over the list that Han Shuo handed over, Phoebe looked at Han Shuo with surprise, saying, “Rations for hundreds of people and all sorts of bizarre materials, just what are you planning on doing?”

“Heh heh, nothing much nothing much. Just take care of it for me and I’ll make up for the insufficient gold to you next time I visit.” Han Shuo didn’t explain much as he uttered this sentence and left the Boozt Merchant Guild, returning to the Academy alone.

When Han Shuo returned to the necromancy major, it was already pitch black outside. The chilly wind of winter howled through the night and it was so bone achingly cold that no one wanted to venture outside.

However, there was a figure standing not too far outside the entrance to

the dorms. It was so cold that the figure's small face was beet red as it continued to circle around a stone statue not too far away.

"What are you doing here?" Han Shuo couldn't help but ask when he saw that the figure was Lisa.

"I'm waiting for you!" Lisa's eyes displayed happiness when she saw Han Shuo appear and she quickly walked towards Han Shuo, speaking urgently.

His brow furrowing, Han Shuo took off the coat on his body and covered Lisa with it. He asked in bewilderment, "Why are you waiting here for me on such a cold night?"

Han Shuo's movements made Lisa overjoyed, but she then spoke with a worried face, "My mother is sick and so I need to make a trip home. I may not come back for a while, so I wanted to say goodbye to you."

"If it's just a goodbye, you can tell me tomorrow. Why must you wait for me in the middle of the night?" Han Shuo hesitated when he saw that Lisa was still shaking, then activated the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire", his right hand swayed slowly as waves of warmth came forth, warming Lisa's trembling body.

"You often disappear mysteriously. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to see you because I'm leaving tomorrow, which is why I waited for you here. I didn't know if you'd come back, but in the end you did." Lisa breathed out softly in comfort when her body warmed up and then spoke softly to Han Shuo.

"Eh, you don't have to go out of your way to come say goodbye to me." Han Shuo felt that the atmosphere was a bit odd and was silent for a while before responding.

Lisa remained silent for a while, her gaze was fixed onto Han Shuo. She suddenly said, "Bryan, you said that you like me. You're no longer a slave or an errand boy now. Come home with me, let's be together."

Han Shuo was greatly astonished by her words as he faced her, and he stood there, dumbfounded. He didn't know what to say when he saw Lisa rigidly standing there with a solemn expression.

# Chapter 139: The fate of the original demons

“Eh, I have a buttload of things to do right now. I’m afraid I don’t have time to spend with you.” Han Shuo thought for a moment and then responded to Lisa.

With regards to Lisa, Han Shuo had rather disliked her in the beginning, but with his later interactions with her, he realized that Lisa wasn’t a vile person. She was just a bit too naive. Particularly towards the end of their interactions, Lisa had protected him in many ways. This made it difficult for Han Shuo to maintain his heart of revenge towards her like he had before.

However, as much as he didn’t dislike Lisa, he still didn’t have any feelings from her. Therefore, when Lisa made her suggestion, Han Shuo could only fob her off with a careless excuse.

When Han Shuo spoke thus, Lisa remained silent for a bit and then nodded. “Alright, I’ll return home tomorrow. I hope you’ll be stronger the next time we meet.”

Lisa was noticeably distracted when she said this, and she smiled after her words concluded. She walked back to the girls’ dormitory alone, her back shaking slightly as she did so.

Shaking his head and sighing lightly, Han Shuo only returned to his room when he saw Lisa disappear into the distance.

When he arrived in front of the dorm, Han Shuo had just pushed open the door when a longsword came stabbing towards his chest. His face changed drastically, and he tried to back out of the doorway without even thinking about it.

However, the sword’s movement was like lightning, as it’d already arrived at Han Shuo’s chest after the cold light had flashed. Han Shuo’s rapidly retreating body tilted sideways as he quickly fell to the side.

Pfft, the longsword stabbed deeply into Han Shuo’s body through the

ribs, injuring him in that instant. The ambusher then quickly retracted the longsword with ease.

Although pain wracked his body, Han Shuo didn't make a sound as the Demonslayer Edge flew out from his right sleeve. It pierced through the door and stabbed directly towards his attacker.

Dark green fighting aura suddenly exploded as the door turned into splinters. A figure, with its face covered, suddenly appeared in front of Han Shuo with the accompaniment of metallic clashes.

With Han Shuo's current powers of vision, all concealment would basically be useless as long as he'd gotten a glimpse of a certain person once. Han Shuo hadn't thought that Clark would be so scarily dogged. He'd retreated with all due haste when he hadn't discovered anything last night, but he'd laid in wait tonight to make a move against Han Shuo.

Because he'd felt a bit apologetic towards Lisa, Han Shuo hadn't been on guard this late at night and thus he'd been less cautious. He hadn't thought that Clark would actually ambush him and so had been injured when the ambush started.

As an earth rider, Clark's fighting aura should've been milky white. However, it looked like he finally understood that Han Shuo wasn't an easy target after last night's failure and was being much more careful this time.

These thoughts flashed through Han Shuo's mind like lightning. Before the only partially hidden Clark sent another stroke his way, Han Shuo looked at Clark as his legs suddenly exerted power and he madly retreated outside, crying out loudly, "Assassin!"

Bam! Han Shuo's back suddenly ran into a sturdy and chilly wall. When he turned back for a look, he discovered that there was only air behind him. His heart immediately tightened as he understood that Clark had come prepared this time.

Han Shuo had concentrated all his attention after Clark had appeared and could sense that there was no one else around. As an earth rider, for Clark to have set up the water magic in the surroundings that was this

sturdy ice wall meant that he must've used a costly magic scroll that didn't need magic as a catalyst. This was why he could release the sturdy ice wall in the surroundings, completely blocking off Han Shuo's escape path and all sound from traveling.

Indeed, the sturdy ice wall didn't break when his back hit it. Han Shuo patently saw a jeering look flash through Clark's eyes, his entire face so muffled that only his eyes showed. Another ball of dark green fighting aura then flared out, forming the appearance of rolling waves and churned towards Han Shuo.

His mind racing, the Demonslayer Edge, that'd just returned to his hand, suddenly howled as magical yuan infused it. It danced with exceedingly hot flames to counter Clark's wave of fighting aura attack.

It was a pity that Clark felt a strange power suddenly appear when he sensed the magical yuan infused Demonslayer Edge, halfway through his attack. His eyes flashed and Han Shuo discovered that the roiling fighting aura attack was dark green in the front, yet milky white in the back.

He didn't even need to think that Clarke was afraid of failing when he sensed the unknown power. He finally exposed his hidden strength and fully displayed the ferocity of an earth rider.

Although his magical yuan was limitless in power, Han Shuo had only been training it for a few months. He knew that it would be difficult for him to defend against this all out attack. He weighed his options with extreme speed in his mind, and the three original demons circling Clark instantly melded into Clark's body and ate away at his essence with reckless abandon.

"Agh!" The silent Clark immediately screamed hoarsely in agony when the original demons started eating away at him. The milky white fighting aura, that he'd just released, was partially pulled back into his body in an attempt to destroy the three rampaging original demons.

Bam! sounded out as Han Shuo's magical yuan and Clark's fighting aura finally clashed. Han Shuo staggered backwards, his mind a bit woozy.

Suddenly, three pricks of pain reflected in Han Shuo's nerves, and his

somewhat foggy mind instantly cleared. He understood that this meant that the three original demons had already been destroyed in Clark's body. He focused his concentration and looked at Clark, noticing that Clark was looking at his body with panic as a strand of blood slowly seeped out from the corners of his mouth.

Because of the three original demons eating away at his essence, Clark's body was surely injured as well now. Otherwise, he wouldn't be looking at himself with such horrified eyes. After all, to the people of this world, having an unknown entity enter their body and devour their essence would be something that they would remember for the rest of their lives.

The Demonslayer Edge, newly infused with magical yuan, carried with it a burning, flaming momentum as it struck into the back of the sturdy ice wall with a howl. A sharp ping sounded as Han Shuo charged towards the hallway with a look of joy.

Just as Han Shuo threw back his head and was about to cry for help, Clark suddenly jumped out Han Shuo's window and quickly made his escape, as he'd felt the boundary collapse. He looked a bit bedraggled. It looked like he knew that with the collapse of the boundary, the plan to kill Han Shuo this time had failed and thus he immediately decided to retreat.

Opening his mouth, Han Shuo didn't call out. Given that Clark had left, there was no point in him calling for help.

Because of the sound isolation effect, although there'd been an extremely harrowing fight in Han Shuo's dorm and the hallway, it hadn't wakened any of the other students. Han Shuo's heart still pounded in fright as he looked at the shattered door and walked in silently.

The three painstakingly refined original demons had been destroyed by the fighting aura within Clark's body due to the need to contain him. However, it'd been because of the effect of the three original demons that saved Han Shuo's life. Although the three had been destroyed, Clark's body had also been injured because his essence had been eaten away by the original demons. He'd have to rest for the immediate future and it'd be tough to prepare a second attack.



“It’s alright, the new will replace the old. It looks like I can begin refining an even higher level of the yin demons. When I make it to the true demon stage and bring forth the elite wood zombie and yin demons, it’ll be your death sentence then Clark.” Han Shuo murmured to himself.

The next day, morning.

Lawrence came looking for Han Shuo according to their agreement, and the two sat down in Han Shuo’s room.

“Clark came by last night, I was almost unable to see you again.” The door was still shattered and there were noticeable traces of a fight around it. Han Shuo didn’t hide anything and spoke frankly to Lawrence.

Giving a start of shock, Lawrence was astonished, “So soon?”

Nodding, Han Shuo said again. “Yes, I didn’t think that would happen either. However, Clark’s body has also been injured and I don’t think he’ll make another attempt any time soon. You don’t need to worry about anything.”

“You, you harmed Clark?” Lawrence looked at Han Shuo with disbelief as he asked in shock.

“Yes, but if you think that means my strength is greater than Clark’s, you’d be dead wrong. I harmed him through a fluke, and if it wasn’t for me evading in time, I would’ve definitely been killed by him. This person is really difficult to shake off.” Han Shuo’s face was grave as he spoke lowly.

Even without Han Shuo’s reminder, Lawrence knew of how thorny Clark was, given his greater familiarity with the latter. Although Han Shuo didn’t speak of how the battle unfolded last night, Lawrence could tell from his expressions that it must’ve been very heated indeed. No matter what methods he’d used, that Han Shuo could injure Clark meant that Han Shuo wasn’t a simple man either. Thus, when he heard Han Shuo’s words, Lawrence’s opinion of Han Shuo raised another few notches.

“With my understanding of Clark, it will be difficult for us to find him now that he’s injured. He must’ve returned to a safe place to rest and recover. Our plan to kill him can only be delayed.” Lawrence thought

briefly and spoke slowly.

“Alright, I happen to have to take care of some matters as well. Let’s end matters here for today and I’ll come find you after another ten days. We’ll chat then.”

Lawrence also nodded in agreement after Han Shuo spoke, then looked at him deeply before taking his leave. Han Shuo also proceeded cautiously to the mountains in the back, planning on starting the earth elite zombie first in the cemetery of death and then finishing the matter with the forest trolls.

# Chapter 140: Advancing to true demon

After arriving at the cemetery of death, Han Shuo immediately placed all the materials needed to refine the earth elite zombie in the place of extreme earth.

He was in no hurry to immediately take action as he first refreshed the refining method for the earth elite zombie in his mind. He only started after he thoroughly considered the various steps in the procedures and places that he'd need to keep an eye out for.

He first found the place in which the earth qi was thickest in the place of extreme earth. Han Shuo took out the Demonslayer Edge and dug a hole, turning it into the place where he'd be putting the zombies. All sorts of materials landed exactly where they should be placed according to the setup of the formation. He coalesced all of his mental strength in his mind and went over everything clearly and cleanly. Han Shuo acted without hesitation and completed all preparations with extremely high efficiency.

When a ball of oozing, black dirt was embedded in a natural dip in the place of extreme earth, a small, weak wind seemed to start blowing in this location of extreme earth. However, upon taking a close look, one would discover that it wasn't a weak breeze blowing, but that some grey colored matter was slowly converging in the center of the pit from all sorts of directions in the place of extreme earth.

The concentration of the essence of earth qi was a indicator that the formation was complete. Han Shuo broke out in a grin when he saw this situation take place, and then immediately used necromancy magic to summon zombie warriors.

Three zombie warriors suddenly appeared in front of Han Shuo. Theoretically speaking, any zombie warrior would have the chance to become an immensely powerful earth elite zombie with the particular preparation in the place of extreme earth. However, if the conditions of the main ingredient, the zombie warriors, was better all around, it would naturally have a greater chance of becoming an earth elite zombie.

Taking in a deep breath, Han Shuo once again summoned three zombie warriors. When six zombie warriors appeared, Han Shuo gave them the order to attack each other. He wasn't sure which zombie warrior was better, thus the order for them to attack each other was the simplest and most effective method.

His brow furrowed in concentration, Han Shuo watched the struggle between the six zombie warriors with with glittering eyes. He immediately ordered them to stop after a few minutes because his eyes had lit upon one of the zombie warriors with the bulkiest build. His battle strength seemed to be a bit stronger. If he allowed them to continue fighting, this zombie would undoubtedly be in tattered pieces afterwards. This would obviously impact the refinement of the earth zombie afterwards.

All was in readiness now as Han Shuo once again ran over everything that he needed to pay particular attention to in his mind. He cast his eye over everything in the place of extreme earth with his astounding powers of observation. He gave the order to the zombie warrior after he was certain that he hadn't missed any details. The zombie warrior slowly shuffled into the pit in the place of extreme earth.

When the zombie entered the pit, its body was covered by the coalesced essence of earth qi. That grey essence of earth qi slowly seeped into every drop of the zombie warrior's bone marrow according to a profound way of circulation. The zombie warrior was a bit uncomfortable in the beginning as his body shivered slightly. A while after all the earth qi essence had been absorbed, the zombie warrior appeared to enjoy things quite a bit.

Smiling slightly, Han Shuo suddenly waved his hand and all sorts of strange, colored dirt suddenly landed within the pit, covering it in the span of an instant. The pit was also filled in by the strange dirt, but the essence of earth qi continued its slow collection and percolated through the dirt and continued drilling into the zombie warrior's body.

Having done all that he needed to do, what Han Shuo needed to do now was wait. He knew that the zombie warrior would only turn into a earth elite zombie after all the earth essence qi in this place of extreme earth had been fully absorbed by the zombie warrior. He wasn't sure how long

the entire process would take either, but now that everything was proceeding according to plan, Han Shuo felt that he had no reason to remain.

Walking out of the cemetery of death, Han Shuo continuously trained and practiced his magical yuan and magic along the way as he headed further south in the Dark Forest. It was indeed a bit inconvenient without the surveillance of the original demons along the way. It was a good thing that Han Shuo's senses were extraordinary. He didn't run into any particular danger along the way.

In the dead of the night, the snow covered, chilly Dark Forest seemed to be shrouded with a silver veil. Beneath the rays of the quiet moon, the entire Dark Forest was surrounded in a still and peaceful atmosphere.

Han Shuo sat cross legged on top of a single, towering tree with thick branches. His entire body trembled as thick, viscous clouds of demonic power wreathed around Han Shuo's body. The bright moonlight couldn't pierce through this layer of darkness at all.

When the last of the Divine Brain Fruit had been consumed by Han Shuo, and he'd suffered through the painful effects of the fruit, he was finally breaking through the molded spirit stage. As essence blood slowly gathered in his mind and abdomen, a baby demon slowly started forming, interspersed with magical power and Han Shuo's thoughts.

Clouds of demonic power traveled out from Han Shuo's pores. The baby demon was a symbol of the true demon stage, indicating that Han Shuo had broken through the molded spirit stage. This stage was a line of demarcation in demonic magic. Only when the baby demon was truly formed would a practitioner really counted as having become a demon. Therefore, this was the most dangerous and risky moment.

He kept this position as the magical yuan within Han Shuo's body furiously flowed into the baby demon. The baby demon had originally only been the size of a thumb as it continued to absorb Han Shuo's magical yuan and blood essence. It slowly grew bigger and even sparkled with a faint halo.

He experienced this for seven straight days as the baby demon grew to the size of a fist. As Han Shuo's magical yuan ran dry and he grew a bit dizzy, his body trembled as he suddenly fell from the large tree in a moment of weakness.

Crying out with pain, just as Han Shuo was panicking, he suddenly sensed that the baby demon that had been continually absorbing blood essence and magical yuan seemed to suddenly form a mysterious connection with him. The magical yuan, that had been continuously taken in by the baby demon, suddenly surged back into his limbs and bones with the force of an exploding volcano. The magical yuan seemed to have fundamentally changed due to its association with the baby demon, and Han Shuo himself seemed to feel that he'd been reborn.

A thought striking him, he activated the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" and a red and purple flame roared to life after magical yuan was infused. It felt like he was holding two lamps in his hands, appearing all the more wondrous and magical.

Waving his left and right hand around, the red and purple balls of flame suddenly flew out, landing on two different small trees. One of them was charred to cinders and gave off thick smoke, while the other instantly froze and multiple branches fell down with sharp cracks.

Now in the true demon realm, Han Shuo could adeptly control the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire". He could form the purple and red spellfire in the palms of his hands and cast them from his hands as an attack. This was the wondrous effect after his magical yuan had transformed.

The Demonslayer Edge flew out from thin air, howling in a way that would possess souls and steal spirits. The surrounding trees and hills all broke apart or exploded as the Demonslayer Edge pierced through them. When the Demonslayer Edge had circled the premises in its flight and returned to his hand, the surroundings were devastated, as if a great battle had taken place.

Now, he could finally refine the yin demons that were a level even higher than the original demons. With the effect from the baby demon, Han Shuo

would be able to truly fly through the air after he practiced the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens” as listed in the magical tome. Traveling thousands of li in a day would be a piece of cake.

When he had previously faced off against Clark, Han Shuo had been extremely passive throughout the entire encounter. However, now that he’d reached the true demon stage, Han Shuo was confident that he could fight with Clark on equal footing were he to encounter Clark again. He wouldn’t just duck and weave like he had last time.

As Han Shuo practiced the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens” and made his way further into the southern part of the Dark Forest, he finally appeared outside the forest troll residence after two days.

Casting a glance in the distance, Han Shuo saw traces of battle outside the forest trolls’ village. Some large trees had been toppled as fired arrows and some broken weapons indicated that the forest trolls must have experienced a battle.

It went without thinking that the battle between the forest trolls and elves had already started. Han Shuo surveilled the surroundings but didn’t find traces of the elves. He didn’t know whether or not the two sides had finished their battle.

Summoning the little skeleton, Han Shuo made his way slowly towards the village where the forest trolls lived. Several forest trolls walked out in full battle gear when they reached the outskirts. When the forest trolls saw Han Shuo and the little skeleton, they all cheered in unison and cried out, “Datara!”, welcoming Han Shuo and the little skeleton into the village with great fanfare.

When he walked over, Han Shuo saw that the forest trolls around them were all holding weapons, ready to fight at a moment’s notice. Even the forest troll women and elders in the distance were holding weapons as they prepared food.

When he paid attention, he noticed that the numbers of forest trolls within the village were more than the amount that had been present when he left last time. He made a rough estimation and determined that there

were at least eight hundred adult forest trolls that could wage war. That was three hundred more than the amount that had been present when Han Shuo had come last time.

However, it was obvious that the forest troll didn't have enough weapons and equipment to use. Some of the forest trolls in the back were holding only crude clubs or even rocks, with some metallic weapons spotted with rust dotting the crowd. Some were even starting to munch on tree bark and weeds. It looks like they were also short on rations.



# Chapter 141: Worshipping the oracle

Han Shuo's arrival resulted in a round of cheering from the forest trolls. The old priest trembled and knelt on the ground, crying out with hot tears in his eyes, "The mighty Datara and liaison, you've finally returned!"

Taking in the sights around him, the Han Shuo felt odd emotions in his heart. Logically speaking, these forest trolls were the greediest of robbers. Han Shuo should've had a distaste for them, but when he saw the forest trolls treat him like an oracle from the gods and listen to all his commands, Han Shuo suddenly felt that they weren't that evil.

Raiding and looting was this race's innate nature. Their actions were acceptable according to the rules of survival in the Dark Forest. Just like how some of the larger magical creatures would naturally hunt some of the lower level magical creatures, this was what the forest trolls did as well.

As he looked out over them, all the forest trolls, whether elderly or young, were all looking him with great expectation and yearning. It was the most pious and reverent sort of faith a religious follower would have that was present in their eyes. It was as if one of his commands would cause them to rush headlong into death without a second thought. This kind of feeling made Han Shuo feel a bit odd.

"Don't worry, your mighty Datara would never abandon you." After surveying the surroundings, Han Shuo opened his mouth gravely after remaining silent for a moment.

The old priest translated this sentence in a shout of celebration as hot tears filled his eyes. All the forest trolls raised up empty pockets and cheered loudly, as if a guarantee from Han Shuo was enough for them to forget their current difficult straits.

Han Shuo took out hemp sack after hemp sack of rations from the space ring, piling them on the stone floor that had been cleared of snow. All sorts of thick blankets and daily necessities filled the space in front of the forest trolls, dazzling their eyes. This caused the forest trolls suffering

through the harshness of winter to all caper with joy.

“These items were prepared for you to make it through this winter. The several warehouses full of rations are enough for you to smoothly make it through this winter without having to go out and raid. The mighty Datara made this trip in order to ready these items for his people.” Han Shuo’s low voice carried out smoothly over the forest trolls’ village.

As the old priest led the way with tears of gratitude bursting from him, all the forest trolls knelt in homage. The old priest then gave orders and the chief of the forest trolls led the way in lifting up the rations and daily necessities, storing them in a cave towards the back of the village.

Han Shuo followed behind the old priest and arrived at the newly redecorated temple within the village. Not only had a small sculpture of the little skeleton been erected, but there was even one of Han Shuo. This made Han Shuo feel even more odd, as if he’d unknowingly truly become their protector.

“When I arrived just now, I saw the traces of battle outside the village. Did those annoying elves start a war again?” After he walked in with the small skeleton, he gave an order and the little skeleton flopped down into the head seat. Han Shuo sat down next to the little skeleton and looked at the old priest with inquiry.

“In response to the oracle, it was indeed those pesky elves who have once again come to start a war, but be at peace oracle, your brave people will never allow the elves to win. Beneath the splendor of the mighty Datara, the elves will surely retreat in great defeat again.” Light shone from the old priest’s face as he spoke with great confidence.

Waving his hand, Han Shuo halted the old priest’s continued boasting and thought for a bit before instructing, “The rations and daily necessities that I’ve brought should be enough to last all of you the entire winter. If any more merchants want to trade for the weird items in your possession, you can trade with them.”

“In addition, don’t go out raiding this winter without my instructions. If we’re going to rob anyone, we’ll do a big heist and none of those small

jobs. The mighty Datara will inform you when he's found a suitable target. You don't need to worry that you'll have nothing to do. How many did the elves bring this time and when did you start fighting? Tell me all the details."

The old priest didn't ask why after receiving Han Shuo's instructions and agreed to his request. He immediately told the forest troll warrior beside him to convey Han Shuo's two points to the chief.

The old priest then thoroughly detailed the entire battle with the elves to Han Shuo. From the old priest's explanation, Han Shuo understood that the elves would always have a big battle with the forest trolls every winter. This was because it was only then that the forest trolls were likely to be short on rations, daily necessities, and weapons, and this was when the forest trolls' fighting strength was at their weakest.

The elves had followed the same actions as last year and taken advantage of the fact that the forest trolls couldn't raid in winter to make an attack. However, their numbers weren't as great as the forest trolls' and thus they couldn't occupy at absolute advantage. They'd only just made a feint when they retreated to discuss next steps again.

From the old priest, Han Shuo knew that the forest trolls had many large and small tribes within the Dark Forest. Because this tribe had the duty of protecting the mighty Datara's sacred ground and the fact that it had around five hundred forest troll warriors, the old priest's tribe had a certain authority over the other forest troll tribes in the Dark Forest.

Because of the little skeleton and Han Shuo's appearance, the old priest had used their name to issue an order and command all the forest trolls, scattered throughout the forest, to gather, intent on giving the elves a painful lesson.

Because the mighty Datara was the god of the forest trolls, the impact of the little skeleton's appearance was immeasurable. More than three hundred forest troll warriors from four small tribes had rushed over in ten days, wanting to bask in the little skeleton's presence.

According to the old priest, the forest trolls from various tribes within

the Dark Forest would gather together within a short period of time. By that time, not only would the elves' attack not have the anticipated effect, but rather they would even suffer heavy losses.

Han Shuo had been worried that the elves would kill a great number of forest trolls, but hadn't thought that because of the little skeleton's charisma, forest trolls that had been scattered throughout the Dark Forest, who normally had no relation with each other, were all rushing here as if for a pilgrimage. From the old priest's words, Han Shuo understood that when all the forest trolls gathered, they would number more than two thousand.

As for the elves within the Dark Forest, there seemed to be only a few hundred of them. Although they had a few divine archers and mages, it was very possible that they would suffer such a thorough setback that they'd lose the shirt off their own backs.

Rubbing his head, Han Shuo had a bit of a headache. He thought for a moment and then opened his mouth, "It looks like it should be the elves who should be worried this time. Mm. It's said that the elves are very rich, I think we should rob them all."

"The liaison's meaning is...?" The old priest started and asked, perplexed.

"Do you know where the elves live within the Dark Forest?" Han Shuo thought for a bit and then asked.

The old priest was stunned and then thought with a furrowed brow before finally saying, "We're aware of the general location, but have never been inside."

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, "Alright, then when the forest trolls from the other tribes arrive, have them stay and keep the elves in check. Our tribe can travel to where the elves live and make use of this time to rob their homes."

"But liaison, why don't we stay and meet up with the brothers from other tribes and kill all of the elves' warriors? These elves are truly wicked. They always make mischief and sabotage our operations. They also fight with us every winter and have killed many of our tribe over the years." The

old priest blanked momentarily and asked in confusion, not blindly following Han Shuo's suggestions for the first time.

"The nature of us forest trolls is raiding and not killing. In addition, the elves within the Dark Forest aren't the whole of their tribe. If we kill all the elves here, it will bring further trouble for us. There's no need for that." To Han Shuo, there really was no point in having the forest trolls and elves fight each other to the death. In addition, he didn't actually want all the elves to be killed. What he needed now was wealth. He needed large amounts of gold coins to support his demonic magic and practice of magic. This was why he made this suggestion.

Although he still didn't fully understand, the old priest didn't continue his questioning. After a few more days in which more forest trolls gathered from all areas, Han Shuo and the little skeleton received a tsunami of cheers and pious worship before leaving a portion of the forest trolls behind to contend with the elves. Han Shuo, the little skeleton, and the five hundred forest troll warriors from the old priest's tribe left to visit the elves' village.

On this chilly winter day, the five hundred forest troll warriors brought with them sufficient rations, thick blankets, and sharp weapons as they made for the deeper reaches of the Dark Forest.

# Chapter 142: The suggestion to slaughter the dragon

Winter had arrived. The chilly wind howled ferociously as large snowflakes floated through the air like goose down, causing even the long term residents of the Dark Forest, the forest trolls, to shiver with cold and feel frostbitten. It was a good thing that Han Shuo had brought enough rations and thick clothes upon visiting this time, otherwise this cruel winter would've been a disaster for the forest trolls.

Han Shuo and the forest trolls ventured deeper into the Dark Forest over the next couple of days. Their progression this time didn't take them directly into the depths towards the south. They veered towards the west from the very beginning.

Over the past couple of days, Han Shuo also had the forest trolls craft a crude carriage for himself and he silently practiced the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens". This Art needed to infuse the meridians of the hands and legs with magical yuan, and then circulate magical yuan according to a particular circulation route before being able to fly through the air.

After experiencing the foundational training of the solid realm, open passages, and molded spirit realms, now that he'd reached the true demon realm, Han Shuo's speed in practicing the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" was much faster than when he'd initially trained in the "Glacial Mystical Spellfire". Because the meridians had already been opened and reinforced, Han Shuo didn't feel the slightest bit of obstruction as he circulated his magical yuan according to the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens".

Over the last few days, Han Shuo didn't continue to remain within the carriage. He came up with random excuses and secretly tried to fly through the air with the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens". Once he understood how to deploy it, a bit of practice and mastering its knacks was still needed in order to truly fly. Han Shuo tried many times and could only

hover. Because he still wasn't adept at controlling direction, he fell from high heights multiple times.

On this particular day, the blizzard stopped its ravaging of the land. The forest trolls also stopped in front of a mountain valley. Han Shuo was in the back, still attempting to quickly master the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens". When he discovered that the forest trolls suddenly stopped, he immediately stopped practicing and quickly rushed to the front from the back.

"Liaison, the mountain valley ahead should be where the elves live. Two of our children saw a large amount of elves appear near this area a long time ago." When Han Shuo walked to the old priest, he pointed at the snow covered mountain valley and explained respectfully to Han Shuo.

He took a deep breath in and narrowed his eyes, looking into the distance. It was a pity that due to the cover of the accumulated snow, the trees and ground were all covered and thus Han Shuo couldn't actually make out anything in the distance.

A string of mysterious incantation chanted out lowly from Han Shuo's mouth as an oily green ring of light flew out in front of him, making for the snow covered mountain valley.

"Life Reconnaissance" was a journeyman magic of the necromancy major, and something that Han Shuo had just started to grasp recently. "Life Reconnaissance" had no use in attacking, it was as its name indicated, a spell that probed for life. It was useful in unfamiliar environments and unknown surroundings.

Han Shuo narrowed his eyes to sense things as soon as this magic had been deployed. He didn't sense any traces of life wherever the "Life Reconnaissance" spell flew over. When the magic had circled the mountain valley, it vanished without a trace due to a lack of mental strength.

"There are no signs of life within the mountain valley. However, we can still take a look. If the elves do live here, they must've left signs on the trees. It'd be best if we can discover the elves' homes here." Han Shou

thought for a bit and instructed the old priest.

Han Shuo then took the lead with the forest troll warriors, with the hunters and priests bringing up the rear. They slowly moved alertly towards the depths of the mountain valley. As their feet creaked through the packed down snow, the forest troll warriors waved the weapons in their hands and knocked the snow off the top of the trees, kicking vigorously at the snow that had accumulated on the ground, trying to see if there were any clues.

A shout of astonishment came from a young forest troll. Han Shuo's ears captured this exclamation as his body flashed like lightning towards that location, but when he stood at the source of the sound, he discovered that the forest troll who'd cried out had already vanished without a trace.

His brow furrowing, Han Shuo paid attention to the sounds of disturbance all around and then circled the accumulated snow a few times. He finally stood on top of the messy, snowy ground and suddenly stomped down hard.

Han Shuo's body suddenly freefell with a plonk and he landed in a pitch black cave within the span of a breath. The startled cries of the young forest troll were still sounding from a corner not too far in the distance. It was quite ear piercing in the pitch black darkness of the hole.

Han Shuo's body had now adjusted to the darkness as his eyes rolled around, discovering that the cave he was in continued on through to someplace beneath the ground. He looked carefully and discovered that the entrance to this cave was quite spacious. The ground leading downwards from the entrance was a bit messy as there were many traces of footprints.

Could it be that the elves who worshipped the goodness of nature and loved the forest all lived underground? Han Shuo was a bit confused. He activated the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" after looking around dumfounded for a bit. His body slowly floated upwards and he punched upwards where he'd landed through the ground, destroying the snow covering overhead.



The forest troll, who had accidentally fallen down just now, had only slowly grown accustomed to the darkness after flailing around in surprise for a bit. He felt his way around and slowly climbed out as well.

A weird whistling sound suddenly traveled from the depths of the ground. Han Shuo gave a start of surprise as he once again released the “Life Reconnaissance” magic and aimed it towards the source of the sounds from the depths.

When the “Life Reconnaissance” magic was released, Han Shuo discovered immense traces of life and gave a great start of fright. He abruptly rushed out from the cave, threw his head back and whistled sharply.

When the old priest heard Han Shuo’s cry, he came searching for Han Shuo from a far distance away. The forest troll, who’d fallen down, had also crawled out at this point. The forest troll warriors who were observing the situation in the surroundings all rushed over with their weapons, shoveling the snow away from the cave and revealing a deep cave that could contain three or four people walking abreast.

Several arrows whistled fiercely as they were shot from the mouth of the cave, scaring the forest trolls who had stuck their heads out to take a look. The old priest’s face grew angry and was about to give the order to attack the creatures within the cave, but Han Shuo reached out a hand and stopped him.

The elves greatly loved nature and naturally wouldn’t live in such a dark and gloomy place. Han Shuo understood this and thus he hadn’t had the forest trolls immediately make a move.

Several figures shot out from the mouth of the cave with a whoosh. Their sharp ears, handsome and beauty features were the unique trademarks of the elves, but these elves had black or darkly purpled colored skin and white hair, appearing all the more different.

“It’s the dark elves!” The old priest immediately exclaimed when he saw these strange elves appear.

Han Shuo finally reacted after the old priest’s cry. This tribe was also

made up of elves, but they'd forsaken peace, nature, and worship of the goddess of nature. They worshipped the queen of the night, Rose, instead. Living in the gloomy underground world for a long period of time had caused their skin to turn black and dark purple.

Their natures were evil as they burned and looted everywhere. Their society was a matriarchal one as females were mainly in positions of power. Within the underground world, they were like the forest trolls, an evil race full of villainy.

After the first couple of dark elves dashed out, even more of them slowly poured out. When they appeared, they first guarded the entrance to the cave as they stared in an unfriendly fashion at Han Shuo and the forest trolls, grasping weapons in their hands.

Han Shuo waved his hands and indicated for the old priest to not make any moves at the moment, and for everyone to slowly back up and spread out behind them. However, he also had everyone brandish their weapons against the dark elves, in case they suddenly made a move.

The beautiful female dark elves wore revealing outfits, displaying tantalizing bodies from all of them. Although it was the winter season, they still didn't seem to be willing to cover the skin on their bodies. Although the dark purple skin was bizarre, it had another sort of enthralling allure.

After a while, a beautiful, dark elf noblewoman, who looked quite stately and opulent, walked out from the cave. She was wearing a soft, leather jacket and was subtly revealing her beautiful legs with a fey air about her.

When the beautiful dark elf madame walked out from within the cave, she looked askance at the forest trolls in the surroundings and gave a coy laugh. She asked in the common tongue, "So it's our brave forest troll friends. What are you doing here?"

The old priest also knew that they'd come looking for the wrong people at this time. As the sage of the forest trolls, the old priest's experience was also quite broad. He naturally understood that the dark elves also weren't those of the light. He snorted lightly and responded, "Our children

recently discovered the traces of a large group of elves. Because us forest trolls hold deep hatred for the elves, we've come to destroy them."

The fey, beautiful madame had a much friendlier attitude after his words had been spoken. She nodded, "We also have a deep grudge with those who live on the ground. They enter the underground world every now and then to attack us. The large numbers of elves you discovered must have come to do battle with us. Hehe, we've long since heard the brave ferocity of your forest troll tribe on the ground. It looks like we have a common enemy."

The old priest was silent for a bit after she'd spoke and turned to ask Han Shuo respectfully, "Liaison, what should we do now?"

Han Shuo actually wanted to rob the dark elves, but he didn't know just how many they had in numbers or how strong their fighting capabilities were. Thus, he weighed things up privately.

The fey dark elf madame was very surprised by the old priest's inquiry towards Han Shuo. Although he wore a dark robe and had covered his entire body, his body was noticeably smaller than the forest trolls and it was obvious that he was of a different race. It naturally made the beautiful woman quite surprised to see the old priest's respectful attitude.

"Brave friend, our family is facing the attacks from a dark dragon at the moment. If you're willing to help us, we can offer you a cartload of gold and a cartload of jewels in thanks. If you can kill the dark dragon, everything on it will belong to you." The dark elf madame suddenly spoke up when she saw Han Shuo stand there without a word.

Han Shuo started. He hadn't expected that these dark elves would be facing the attacks of a dark dragon right now. Dark dragons were evil dragons and also liked to live beneath the surface. The dark elves were truly unlucky to run into a dark dragon.

Frowning, Han Shuo thought for a bit and felt that this dark elf's suggestion was a bit tempting. Although the dark dragon was likely incredibly strong, but the combination of this group of dark elves and five hundred forest trolls, there should be a chance to kill him.

There was extraordinary treasure on each dragon that would cause anyone to tremble. Therefore, the rewards in killing a dragon was a temptation that many couldn't resist.

"Let's go see the underground world first. If the addition of us means we can handle that dark dragon, we'll agree to your proposal." Han Shuo thought for a moment and opened his mouth to say.

"I can promise that with the aid of your five hundred brave forest troll friends, that dark dragon is dead without a doubt. My name is Dana, you're welcome to join us in the underground world." The dark elf madame said happily and then gave a word of instruction to the dark elves.

The dark elves who had just rushed out of the cave once again re-entered the cave under Dana's orders. Dana lifted her buttocks and walked in in the very end, waving a hand at Han Shuo and the old priest.

Following behind them meant that they could back out if anything went south. Therefore, when he saw that the dark elves went down first and Dana had stayed behind to look after them, Han Shuo felt that there should be no danger and he nodded at the old priest.

Han Shuo and the old priest was in front, the carriage holding the little skeleton was in the center. Five hundred forest trolls filtered in through the cave and started walking down into the underground world that the dark elves lived in.

The further they walked, the more spacious the cave became. There were even some red-brown rocks growing down in the depths, sending out a faint light and making so that it wasn't so dark inside.

# Chapter 143: Everyone with their own plans

The group walked downwards for quite a long period of time, with Han Shuo discovered that the cave was becoming wider and wider. All sorts of complex paths led in all directions.

At this time, Han Shuo concentrated and his eyes took in the surroundings, remembering the way they'd come in from in order to prevent them from being unable to find their way back.

When their footsteps downwards slowed down and Dana led Han Shuo and the others to walk on flat ground, Han Shuo lifted his head to look up and discovered that those red-brown glowing rocks were hung high overhead, appearing like the sunset that would appear on the ground.

As he looked out, he noticed that apart from the red-brown rocks covering the skies overhead, the sights all around weren't that much different from the world above. It just wasn't as cold as the outside world, and seemed to even be a bit warmer.

"Those who live below the ground also include gnomes and lizardmen, as well as super creatures like the dark dragon, apart from us dark elves. Although the world below and the world above are a bit different, it's not that much so." When Dana saw Han Shuo and the old priest look in all directions with great interest, she beamed and explained. Her mesmerizing eyes seemed to look at Han Shuo with great expression.

The dark elves were naturally lascivious, and their female elves even more so. As the matriarch of the dark elves, Dana was naturally no exception. Han Shuo only needed to take one look at her glance to understand the meaning within it.

"Why is the dark dragon attacking your tribe? Where does he live?" Han Shuo didn't pay any attention to Dana's attention as he frowned and asked her about important matters.

"We originally didn't have much conflict with this dark dragon, just that

the lizardmen seemed to use some methods to bribe it into attacking us. This is because our tribe has been fighting the lizardmen for a fertile piece of land recently. We've engaged in several battles, and the lizardmen turned up with this dark dragon after they were defeated." Dana was a bit glum and anxious when Han Shuo brought up this matter and spoke with a sigh.

"How many people did you send out to battle the dark dragon? What kind of attacks does it use, will we be of any effect if we join you?" Han Shuo continued to ask.

"Our tribe has more than three hundred dark elf warriors who have already engaged this dark dragon in combat. Its body is incredibly durable, with only its head and neck being slightly weaker. It can spit out a dragonbreath attack that will eat away at flesh. It can also spew out a hot flame that has lava mixed in."

"We used magic and arrows to attack it from afar and lost more than twenty dark elves during this time, but we also successfully harmed it. It's now hiding in the swamp, licking his wounds. If we add your five hundred forest troll warriors, I am certain that we can kill it." Dana answered confidently.

Han Shuo didn't open his mouth again. Many dark elves continuously gathered along the way. When they finally arrived at swamp with deeply dark sludge, the original ten dark elves had turned into more than three hundred.

"Give us our payment first. We've decided to help you." Han Shuo thought for a bit and suddenly said with a low voice.

Dana was quite forthright as she nodded with a smile. A few male dark elves in the distance pushed two carts to Han Shuo. They lifted the grey cloth covering the cart to reveal the gleaming cart of gold and a sparkling cart of jewels. Han Shuo's eyes lit up as he looked silently at the payment, appraising it privately. He was sure that this cart of gold and jewels was worth at least tens of thousands of gold coins.

To think that these dark elves were actually quite rich. Han Shuo

weighed things up privately and walked to the cart of gold and jewels, using the space ring to unceremoniously put the contents of the two carts away. As he did this, Han Shuo covertly observed Dana's reaction. From her eyes, Han Shuo suddenly detected a hint of coldness and disdain.

After ascending to the true demon realm, not only Han Shuo's five senses, but even his perceptions felt all the more mystical. He could miraculously detect many fine details, just like the expression that had just flashed through Dana's eyes. Han Shuo hadn't even purposefully paid attention to it, but still magically grasped this detail unconsciously.

A thought striking him, Han Shuo maintained his bent over posture and put away the items in the two carts. He silently debated the meaning of the coldness and disdain in Dana's eyes. A few more traces of wariness appeared in his heart as he began to secretly plot some things.

"Alright, I've accepted the items, what now?" Han Shuo lifted his head and kept an eye on the swamp as he spoke to Dana.

"Our tribe doesn't have any strong warriors and only has archers and mages to engage in long distance attacks. I think we should have your forest troll warriors lead the charge later, with our dark elves using arrows and magic to attack from behind." Dana spoke matter-of-factly.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo turned her down decisively. "No, the dark dragon also has a strong body. Our people will be going to our deaths if we take the lead. If you insist on doing this, then we can't continue this business deal."

If the forest trolls led the charge, they would face a dark dragon of unknown strength in front and the coldly scheming dark elves behind. Facing danger in this way would subject the forest trolls to danger from both sides, placing them in an exceedingly disadvantageous situation.

Even if Han Shuo hadn't discovered Dana's plotting, he would've never agreed to this suggestion. Not to mention that Han Shuo now felt that Dana had other plans, he naturally wouldn't allow such conditions to form.

Dana's smiling face darkened when Han Shuo turned her down, and she

then looked at Han Shuo with some anger. “Someone has to be in front at least, do you want my weak tribeswomen to go to their deaths? We’ve paid you two carts of gold and jewels.”

“Don’t worry, we just want cannon fodder don’t we? Leave it to me. As long as you can lure the dark dragon out, I can take care of the cannon fodder. Will this do?” Han Shuo’s voice had also descended as he responded.

When Han Shuo’s words finishing ringing out, he chanted a magical incantation and a zombie warrior appeared out of thin air. Han Shuo continued chanting as more zombie warriors and skeletal warriors appeared, including a few ghouls as well. They formed a meat shield in front of Dana.

“So you’re a necromancer.” Dana nodded, but her gaze at Han Shuo had turned slightly contemptuous because he had only summoned zombie and skeletal warriors.

He paid no heed to her look and said, “Well, can you make your moves now?”

“Yes. I’ll go make arrangements and lure that dark dragon so it leaves the swamp immediately. You’ll have to immediately send your summoned creatures forward and have your forest trolls attack with us from the distance. We can’t give the dark dragon any breathing space or chance to talk, otherwise we’ll be in grave trouble.” Dana nodded and then backed up to where the dark elves were. They chatted quietly in an exceedingly low voice as they looked in Han Shuo’s direction.

It was at this moment that Han Shuo’s extraordinary ears proved their use. He could clearly hear Dana’s conversation after he concentrated. When he discovered that Dana’s words were discussing on how to handle the forest trolls, he couldn’t help but continuously laugh coldly.

He waved the old priest over and bent his head to the old priest, giving a few instructions in a low voice. The old priest was first greatly startled and then recollected his wits. He listened carefully to Han Shuo’s words and then walked off to give some order to the forest troll chief, having him act



in accordance to Han Shuo's words.

A young, female dark elf walked naked to to the swamp, singing out with a clear voice as she walked. Her naked curves was tantalizing as her dark purple skin glistened and gleamed. Her buttocks from the back were full and pert, her spine smooth and alluring. She was full of a fey beauty.

The pure, desolate song emitted from her mouth, making even Han Shuo's heart caper and his mind race. When she walked to the end of the swamp, her cute feet sank into the soft, pitch black sludge as she cutely kicked at it, created not a small bit of sound.

The peaceful swamp suddenly sank in on itself, forming a huge whirlpool. The whirlpool sucked in all the sludge around it as the naked dark elf girl gave a start of surprise, evading it a bit frantically and dodging the pull of the whirlpool.

The whirlpool had been in the center when it slowly changed position, quickly moving to the little girl. Just as it was about to reach the end of the swamp, a huge wave of sound erupted from the the whirlpool as an inky black dark dragon stuck its head out. Its red eyes were like two lanterns. When its spine and sharp claws were also revealed, its body extended to tens of meters beyond into the swamp. Its body shape was huge, making Han Shuo flabbergasted as it was his first time seeing a dragon this close.

"Little wench, come play with me, don't run away." The dark dragon was full of lascivious teasing after it'd emerged. It shook its enormous body as it chased after the dark elf girl.

# Chapter 144: A step ahead

It was a depraved dragon alright. Han Shuo cursed under his breath and gave an order. The dark creatures he'd just summoned walked out from the cover on either side and looked at the dark elves, ready to make a move against the dark elves along with the dark dragon.

"Come on, come on!" The dark dragon leered as its over ten meter long body took flight with a thunderous rumble, sending sludge flying every which way in the swamp.

The naked dark elf girl had panic written all over her face as she desperately ran towards where Han Shuo and Dana were hiding. Her lofty melons swayed in tantalizing ripples as her slender legs furiously churned. Her allure only increased as mud adorned her lithe body..

When the dark elf girl finally made it to the zone that Han Shuo and the others had erected, Han Shuo gave an order to the dark creatures. More than ten zombie and skeletal warriors, as well as a few ghouls, broke out from concealment and brazenly charged towards that lustful dark dragon.

Han Shuo called out at the same time and the forest trolls readied their weapons. Aiming for the dark dragon trying to rise into the sky, the forest troll hunters threw out sharp spears and javelins. In the same breath, the dark elves covered the sky with a shower of arrows and dark elf magic.

"Damnit, it's you lowly races again." The dark dragon bellowed as he opened his mouth and shot out an awe inspiring jet of flame with bits of lava mixed in.

"Stand back and evade." Han Shuo roared out, as the forest trolls quickly hid towards the back when the old priest shouted out as well. The jet of flame seared where they'd just stood, setting fire to the dry weeds and grass that littered their surroundings.

Attacks from all sorts of spears and javelins, as well as arrows and magic from the dark elves, landed on the dark dragon's durable body. They had no effect at all. The ones aimed at the dark dragon's neck, eyes, and head were all sent flying in another direction with a wave of the dark dragon's

claws.

The dark dragon's enormous body soared through the air as it arrived above Han Shuo's summoned zombie and skeletal warriors. Its metal claws suddenly swiped downwards, crushing the skeletal warriors into bone fragments. The zombie warriors fared no better, their bodies falling to pieces with another swipe. They were indeed only good as cannon fodder.

The strength of the dark dragon was within Han Shuo's expectations. He didn't feel pained when he saw the dark creatures disappear into shards and fragments beneath the dark dragon's attacks. He sent a significant look at the old priest from afar.

The dark elves continued attacking as their archers, with magic bows in the back, started shooting icicle-like arrows. In addition, they also started using explosive arrows, which caused a huge disturbance and enraged the dragon even more.

"You lowly, pathetic lives will all die before the anger of I, the wondrous Gilbert!" The dark dragon Gilbert roared furiously and continued flying forward in the face of icicle and exploding arrows. As he flew close to the ground and churned the ground with his claws, it finished off the rest of the dark creatures that Han Shuo had summoned.

The dark elves, according to orders received from matriarch Dana, all swiftly dodged to the back after firing their attacks, attempting to continue handling the dark dragon from behind the forest trolls. It was a pity that Han Shuo had long since given his instructions that whenever the dark elves started moving, all the forest trolls should even forget attacking the dark dragons and race backwards in retreat with all due haste. They were even faster than the dark elves in escaping to the back.

"Bring down the stone wall!" Han Shuo roared furiously in the midst of the forest trolls after they'd arrived at a small mountain valley, not too far off in the distance.

The old priest gave his instructions and the forest trolls roared out his order. More than ten forest trolls stood at a high vantage point and threw

down boulders, instantly blockading off the mountain valley and blocking off the dark elves.

When Han Shuo eavesdropped on the dark elf matriarch Dana's words earlier, he knew that Dana had long since made preparations in the surrounding valley. She'd prepared large amounts of boulders and had intended on evacuating the dark elves to the area after enraging the dark dragon, leaving the forest trolls to face the dark dragon. They'd then emerge after the battle and eradicate the surviving side. In this way, whether it was the dark dragon or the forest trolls, neither of them would escape the dark elves' grasp.

If Dana's marvelous plan had been deployed according to her ideas, then Han Shuo and the forest trolls would likely not have left this place alive. It was a good thing that Han Shuo's hearing was extraordinary and caught every detail of Dana's vicious plan. This allowed the forest trolls to be one step ahead and hurry to the mountain valley before Dana and the others could react. They then used the stones that the dark elves had prepared to seal off the valley.

"What do you mean by this?" Dana finally revealed panic as she shrieked at Han Shuo and the old priest from the other side of the stone wall.

"Nothing much, just that I've discovered this dark dragon is simply too hard to handle. I'm canceling our deal earlier, we don't intend on continuing this battle. I'll be sure to return the two carts of gold and jewels after you take out the dark dragon, and I'll compensate you for your losses as well. My deepest apologies!" Han Shuo shrugged and spoke quite sincerely to Dana.

Dana had never thought that Han Shuo would deceive her at the most crucial moment. Although Han Shuo was apologizing with a sincere face, his eyes were sinister and cold, obviously bearing ill will towards her. How could Dana be blind to it? When she thought about what she'd planned earlier, she felt her hands and feet grow cold and a huge headache throb at her temples. She was so anxious that she didn't know what to do.

“Lowly, cowardly lives, receive the rage of the mighty Gilbert!” Dark dragon Gilbert roared and sprayed acidic poison from his mouth. More than ten dark elves couldn’t dodge in time and emitted hideous screams after being covered by the acidic liquid.

“To hell with him!” A handsome elf roared angrily as the exquisitely carved longbow in his hands suddenly expanded, as if sucking in something. His originally slender body seemed to be sucked in by the bow as he started shrinking rapidly.

“No!” Dana cried out loudly, her expression a bit frantic.

“Hurry and give the order, otherwise my sacrifice will have been in vain!” The male dark elf howled as his body became stick thin. His life surged into the strange bow as the bow flared out a faint, dark light, looking quite evil and strange.

Han Shuo looked at the bow with astonishment, revealing a very curious look. After the bow sucked in the dark elf’s life, an arrow, with inky black light circling around it, formed magically on the bow. As the dark elf’s body dried out, the arrow started emanating a dangerous aura.

Even the cocky dark dragon felt danger at this moment. He started his charge, sending out streams of blazing flame. The back of the mountain valley had been blocked off by Han Shuo’s orders, so the dark elves could only face the dark dragon’s attacks and had no avenue of retreat at all.

Since things had progressed to this point, Dana had no choice left available to her. She grit her teeth and gave the order. A few dark elves threw themselves in front of the elf with the bow without hesitation, rapidly deploying all sorts of elven magic to help him defend against Gilbert’s attacks. In the span of a moment, more than ten dark elves were engulfed by the dark dragon’s flames that had lava mixed in and turned into a crisp in the blink of an eye.

A ghastly wail sounded at this moment as the arrow finally swallowed all of the dark elf’s life and shot out towards the dark dragon. Unfathomably swift, Gilbert had no chance to evade the mysterious arrow.

The strange arrow formed by the black light abruptly metamorphosed

into a black cloud as it drew closer to Gilbert, eventually completely enveloping him. A string of crackles exploded from the cloud of black light, intermixed with Gilbert's pained screams. It looked like the dark dragon was enduring an inhumane amount of pain.

But as a super rank magical creature, the dark dragon still spewed out flames and poisonous liquid when assaulted by such pain. His body even landed amidst the dark elves from the air, as the black cloud enveloped him, his claws tearing all the nearby dark elves to pieces.

Even more dark elves died in a sickening fashion beneath the attacks of the flames and the poisonous liquid. Another hundred dark elves perished after a few breaths. There were less than a hundred out of the original three hundred dark elves.

When the cloud of dark light dispersed and the dark dragon's body once again revealed itself, Han Shuo discovered blood running down the dark dragon in multiple places. Even Gilbert's flesh and skin were charred and burnt. His movements weren't as agile as before and both his eyes were injured. He moved around blindly like he couldn't see anything.

"Prepare yourselves, we're going to be dragonslayers very soon." Han Shuo smiled sinisterly at the old priest behind him as he gave the order.

# Chapter 145: Capturing the lewd dragon

“Kill that damned dark dragon!” The dark elf matriarch Dana no longer possessed her previous beauty and demeanor as she screamed with her hair wildly strewn all over the place.

Due to the dark dragon’s random rampaging, the dark elves scattered and dodged in all directions, occasionally running into the dark dragon’s poisonous bouts of flame. Even though Dana had the protection of the dark elves, she still appeared quite bedraggled.

Under Dana’s instructions, the remaining dark elves started attacking the almost blind dark dragon. All sorts of arrows and magic struck the dark dragon’s body, further worsening his injuries.

As an advanced rank magical creature, the strength of the dark dragon was beyond all doubt. Even with three hundred dark elves, if it hadn’t been for the male dark elf sacrificing his life to activate that strange bow, it was likely that they would have been unable to harm the dark dragon.

But up to now, because the dark dragon had already been gravely injured to the point where his eyes could no longer see, his large body had become a living target. As injuries racked his body, his speed became slower and his attacks weren’t as powerful as before.

The dark elves in the back were pushed up against the rock wall that Han Shuo and the others were standing behind. When Han Shuo saw that the dark dragon was about to die as he observed everything, he immediately nodded at the old priest.

“Obliterate the stone wall, we’ll go in and cleanup.” Han Shuo laughed sinisterly and gave instructions to the old priest.

The forest troll warriors were ready after the old priest conveyed Han Shuo’s instructions and immediately started moving the boulders away. The dark elves had long since made their preparations to clean up afterwards and dug a sloping pit not too far in the distance. The forest troll warriors only needed to exert a little bit of strength to turn the thick logs that the dark elves had prepared. The boulders rolled at a slope and

surged into the deep pit in the back.

When all the boulders in the mountain valley had rolled into the deep pit, the passageway was finally opened again. Han Shuo swept the scene with a cold gaze and waved his hand, telling the forest troll to charge.

The forest trolls hunters in the back row hurled out spears and javelins with their thin arms, and the weapons whistled as they landed amongst the dark elves. Although the dark elves had been prepared for an attack, they still cried out with multiple howls of agony as the multitude of spears and javelins rained down.

Scores of dark elves were nailed dead beneath this wave of attack. The matriarch of the dark elves was so incensed that she wanted to leap over and fight Han Shuo to the death.

“Matriarch, let’s retreat!” A female dark elf elder cried out loudly.

“Shameless forest trolls, I’ll settle this with you sooner or later!” Dana’s shrill voice bawled out loudly. She then turned desolately and gave the order, “Retreat, everyone retreat!”

The dark elves, who hadn’t died yet, all ran for their lives under Dana’s orders. Even Dana swiftly left under the cover of some experts.

If roots weren’t fully removed, they’d reappear again when the spring wind blew. Since they’d erupted in full blown hostility, Han Shuo naturally hardened his heart and spoke coldly to the priest, “After them, exterminate them all.”

The forest troll chief gave the order to attack and the forest troll warriors came howling out of the mountain valley, giving chase to the remaining dark elves.

Han Shuo targeted one of the dark elves and gave the little skeleton the order to kill. Wielding the bone dagger, the little skeleton was as fast as lightning as it swept past the hordes of forest trolls, speeding towards the dark elf with the strange bow.

The male elf had expended his life earlier to activate the strange bow into shooting a frighteningly powerful arrow, riddling the dark dragon’s



body full of injuries. Han Shuo was exceedingly curious about that strange bow, so he'd kept his eye on it all along.

When the dark elf, who'd used up his life had died, the bow was grasped by another dark elf. Han Shuo had the little skeleton chase him because he wanted to obtain the bow in the elf's hands.

Gilbert roared out raspily as its enormous body rolled, creating thundering sounds as he thrashed around on the ground. The forest trolls around him hastily avoided the dragon when they saw that he was moving around again.

Even when heavily injured, the strength of an advanced realm magical creature was still very frightening. The forest trolls had already seen him terrorize the dark elves, so they were deathly afraid of the dark dragon's enormous strength to the point of being unwilling to let up their guard even now.

The dark dragon's body thrashed as it slowly moved towards the swamp. It looked like it would attempt to flee back to its old nest at all cost now.

Seeing that the dark dragon wanted to flee and casting a look at the dark elves escaping in all directions, Han Shuo immediately roared at the old priest, "Split half of our force to handle the dark dragon and have the rest chase after the dark elves. Those chasing the dark elves shouldn't go too far. Even if they can't kill all the dark elves, they should return in a short amount of time.

The old priest made a simple hand gesture and half of the forest trolls, who'd all been ready to chase after the dark elves, automatically split off, with the remaining half attacking the dark dragon.

The forest trolls had more than twice the amount of numbers compared to the dark elves. Once two hundred trolls joined forces in attacking the dark dragon, it was unable to escape after a mere second.

"Wah wah... that hurts, don't hit me! Don't hit me! I surrender!" The dark dragon Gilbert cried out loudly as his large body slowly began to shrink beneath the circling black lights.

Han Shuo started, he hadn't expected that the dark dragon would actually beg for mercy. He laughed uproariously as he lifted a hand indicating for the forest trolls to cease their attacks, intent on seeing what the dark dragon wanted.

When the forest trolls had surrounded the dark dragon in the center, the dark dragon's body continued to shrink beneath the circulating black lights, slowly transforming into a humanoid form.

A tall, slender young man with burnt skin, smoke coming out of his head, and traces of blood around his eyes appeared. He grimaced and cried out with pain, continuously begging for mercy. "I surrender, I surrender!"

Casting a glance at the old priest and all weapons leveled at this young man, Han Shuo grasped the Demonslayer Edge and slowly walked in front of the young man. "There's no use in surrendering. There are many valuable things on you, your dragon crystal, dragon meridians, and dragon horns are all priceless treasures. I can obtain them all if I kill you, do you think your surrender is of any use?"

Dark dragon Gilbert immediately raised both hands and called out, "No, no! My most valuable things aren't on me. I can belong to you and form a master and slave contract with you, as long you give me beauties and treasure and keep me by your side."

Han Shuo immediately paused when this suggestion was raised, and thoughts spun madly through his mind, weighing up the possibilities of this suggestion.

"Don't hesitate, think about it. If I become your servant, I can help you kill people, burn things, and fly everywhere and take out your enemies. As my master, you only need to give me treasure and beauties to enjoy. What a good business deal this is." The young dark dragon called out loudly, as if deathly afraid that Han Shuo wouldn't agree. He then added on, "I can compromise if you don't have treasure, but I must have beauties to sleep with, or I won't do it!"

Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry as he looked at the shameless and cowardly dark dragon. He stood there, not knowing what to

do. The old priest suddenly walked over to Han Shuo and hurried him, "Liaison, hurry and agree. He'll be an absolutely loyal servant if he forms a contract with you."

"Lewd dragon, why must you have beauties?" Han Shuo stared at Gilbert and asked, amused. The latter was covered in burns and blood and looked like he would die at any time, but still roared loudly for beauties.

"I don't know, I really don't know. That's what my daddy told me when I was born. Us noble dark dragons must have plenty of treasure and beauties to win respect from other dark dragons. Beauties are our goal." Gilbert's black hands kept rubbing his eyes as he answered loudly.

"Eh, is this your first time away from home?" Han Shuo stared at him and asked once again.

"You, how did you know that it's my first time away from home?" Gilbert started as turned towards Han Shuo's voice.

This lewd dragon was actually quite silly. Han Shuo contemplated silently and then opened his mouth, "Alright, I accept your request. You and I will immediately form a master and servant contract, otherwise I'll immediately kill you."

"Master, I'm your servant now, will you find beauties for me?" The lewd dragon Gilbert cried out and pleaded Han Shuo.

"I haven't found any for myself yet, you wait there on the sidelines!" Han Shuo said nonchalantly.

# Chapter 146: I'll safeguard it for you

“How can you do this, you can't do this!” Gilbert's loud complaints traveled far.

“Alright, alright. Let's talk about this later. Rest up first.” Han Shuo randomly fobbed Gilbert off with some excuses and silently mused over the mental pulse he'd felt earlier.

When he'd sealed the contract with Gilbert earlier, a marvelous connection formed between the two. According to the power of the contract, Han Shuo was able to locate Gilbert's position even with his eyes closed. In addition, Han Shuo knew that with the power of master and servant, he could absolutely dictate the life and death of the lewd dragon.

As Gilbert complained and whined, the little skeleton returned to Han Shuo with the bizarre bow in hand. When the small lewd dragon Gilbert saw the little skeleton appear with the bow, it recognized the presence and instinctively dashed behind Han Shuo in a panic.

Since the bow had appeared, that meant the dark elf who'd wielded it was done for. Han Shuo took the bow from the little skeleton and held it in his hand, sensing it. He didn't discover anything uncommon about it at all. He observed it closely and discovered that the entire bow gave off a dark brown color like ancient tree bark, full of complex, strange, and mysterious patterns.

“Liaison, the matriarch of the dark elves Dana and one third of the dark elves successfully escaped.” The old priest reported what the forest troll chief had to say and stood next to Han Shuo to speak respectfully.

Nodding, Han Shuo first stored the strange bow within his storage ring and said, “The dark elves are very familiar with the underground world. They're the masters of this place and it's not strange that they'd be able to use the terrain to escape. In order to prevent the dark elves from coming back and seeking revenge, we should leave the underground world as quickly as possible. Otherwise, we'll have great trouble once Dana gathers the other dark elf clans to attack us.”

“Master, are you returning to the world above? Oh, that’s wonderful. I’ve never left the underground world. I can finally see what the outside world looks like now.” Gilbert appeared very excited to hear that Han Shuo and the others were returning to the world above and cheered loudly.

Looking at Gilbert strangely, Han Shuo asked with a frown, “Have you always lived underground? Then how did you become enemies with the dark elves?”

“Eh, there’s nothing much to it. I ran away from the Dark Dragon City underground and then got lost. I wanted to go aboveground and ran into the lizard men. They treated me as an honored guest and agreed to take me out of the underground world, and promised to help me find beauties and treasure. So I then helped them destroy the homes of the dark elves in return.”

“But when I came to destroy their village, I discovered that the dark elf girls were very pretty. It was a pity that these girls came running to me actually attacked me instead. I escaped to the swamp when I was hurt and you know the story from there.” Gilbert looked innocently at Han Shuo as he detailed what had happened to him.

Although these words were confusing, out of order, and didn’t explain many vital details, Han Shuo more or less understood what Gilbert meant. He was too lazy to inquire further and so nodded and asked, “Are your injuries serious?”

“Very serious!” The little lewd dragon scratched his head and said dispiritedly. He paused and then said, “But I’ll be able to slowly recover after some time. It was mostly that weird arrow that made me feel pain. I really don’t know why such a weak and fragile lifeform could shoot such a powerful arrow!”

Han Shuo slapped Gilbert’s black head and said, “Idiot, didn’t you see the dark elf immediately die after shooting that arrow? That was an evil arrow that consumed life in its wake. Of course it’d be strong. Don’t think you’re really something just because you have a large body.”

Gilbert cried out in pain and rubbed the head that Han Shuo had just

slapped, muttering, "I'm already injured. Even though you're my master, you still can't bully me!"

Thinking for a bit, Han Shuo took out the Medusa's essence blood and gave it to the little lewd dragon. "This is the essence blood of the Medusa, it has a miraculous effect on injuries and will definitely be good for your injuries. Take it and use it sparingly, don't waste it."

"Oh, wondrous master, I salute you." Gilbert temporarily couldn't see anything because his eyes had been injured, but when he heard that there was Medusa's essence blood that could heal his injuries, he waved his hands as he kissed up to Han Shuo, finally laying his claws on the small flask with the Medusa blood."

"Bring my litter over and carry this blind dark dragon. We need to leave the underground world as soon as possible. Otherwise, we'll have incredible trouble when Dana gathers the other clans of dark elves."

The old priest also understood the danger they were in with their current situation. He gave instructions to the forest troll chief in the distance and two litters were carried over. The comfortable, spacious one held the little skeleton and the somewhat crude one held the little lewd dragon Gilbert. Han Shuo walked in front, leading the way.

It was a good thing that Han Shuo had silently taken note of the path on the way here. With Han Shuo's current memory and brain, he was able to fully recall the complicated and winding roads in his mind. They didn't run into any difficulties on the way back out under Han Shuo's guidance. When they reached the entrance passage once again and started walking into the spacious and interwoven caverns, the old priest was incredibly surprised.

"Liaison, we've only walked through this area once, yet you've remembered the entire path already?" The old priest couldn't help but ask with curiosity after holding his questions in for a while.

"Oh, this is all conducted under the guidance of the mighty Datara and has nothing to do with me." Han Shuo responded carelessly.

He gave an order and the little skeleton poked a head out of the litter,

waving his little hand at the old priest and saluting Han Shuo. The old priest was baffled as he didn't know the significance of the little skeleton's saluting motion, and so gave the little skeleton a round of compliments again.

Halfway through, many scattered and random footsteps rang out in Han Shuo's ears. His heart seized as he urged the forest trolls onwards, wanting them to leave the underground world as quickly as possible.

His sharp eyes saw some strange creatures with the body of a man and head of a lizard at the end of the cavern. He remembered the conversation between Gilbert and the dark elves, immediately understood that these creatures were likely the lizardmen below ground. However, what he didn't understand was why the lizardmen were here.

"Some lizardmen are here, do you know what's going on?" Han Shuo snapped his fingers and some forest troll warriors brought the litter holding Gilbert over to Han Shuo, allowing him to ask his question.

"Oh, it really is the lizardmen. I hadn't thought that they'd keep their word. They promised me that they'd take me out of the underground world, but I ran into the dark elf trap later and retreated back into the swamp. To think that they were still waiting for me!" Gilbert cheered and surged out of the litter.

Perhaps it was because of the effects of the Medusa's blood, but Gilbert's eyes, the ones that previously had blood gushing out of them, were now back to normal. Although he was still covered in injuries, the blood had stopped flowing from his wounds.

The little lewd dragon suddenly roared out lowly with a resonant voice, "Lowly lifeforms, are you here to offer tribute to me?"

The lizardmen at the end of the cavern suddenly cheered when they heard Gilbert's voice. Dozens of lizard men appeared from either side of the cavern, with a few of them lifting a chest, respectfully placing it beneath Gilbert's feet. An elderly lizardmen hobbled forward on a cane, "Mighty, noble dark dragon, we've heard of you punishing the evil dark elves for us. This chest of treasure is what we've promised you, please

accept it.”

Gilbert walked over and lifted the lid to see that it was filled with all sorts of radiant and sparkling crystals. He was immediately very excited as he then asked, “What about the beauties you promised me?”

The old lizardman snapped his fingers and three curvaceous female lizards walked in front of Gilbert. One of them used unpracticed common tongue to say shyly, “Honored noble dark dragon, us three sisters will serve you well, please take us with you.”

“Ah hahaha.” Han Shuo laughed loudly as he watched the little lewd dragon’s smile freeze on his face. He couldn’t help but laugh a bit mockingly.

“Forget it, I’ll accept the crystals, but you take the three lady lizards away. I don’t need them.” Gilbert picked up the chest of crystals and avoided the three lizard beauties’ attentions. He immediately spoke to Han Shou and wanted to leave immediately.

When Gilbert drew near, Han Shuo snaked out a hand like lightning and grabbed Gilbert’s box of beautiful crystals and threw it into his space ring, ignoring Gilbert’s complaints. “Yours is mine, I’ll safeguard it for you. Heh heh.”

The forest troll entourage then walked towards the world aboveground thanks to Han Shuo’s amazing memory.



# Chapter 147: The mission is a go

Not running into any further danger along the way, Han Shuo and the others made it safely out of the underground world, exiting from the mountain valley they'd come in through.

Although this time's outing had been a bit different from the original plan, he was still satisfied with the overall result. Not only had he received two cartloads of gold and jewelry from the dark elves, he'd also received a chest of beautiful crystals, a mysterious bow and a dark dragon subordinate. Han Shuo felt that this trip had been quite worth it.

As they walked towards the forest trolls' village, dark dragon Gilbert kept complaining, switching tracks between wanting Han Shuo to return his chest of crystals to him, and Han Shuo finding beauties for him. Indifferent to his whining, Han Shuo turned him down flatly.

The dark dragon knew a lost cause when he saw one, and didn't continue wasting his breath, preferring instead to sulk in a corner and tend to his wounds. Meanwhile, Han Shuo didn't remain idle either. He mastered another journeyman level necromancy magic, "Dark Fog". Not only could this magic create fog within a certain perimeter, but it was cast in such a way that the caster would be unaffected, allowing only enemies' vision to be obscured. It was a very practical magic to use in attacking and running away.

Han Shuo had mostly grasped the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens by now. After some testing, he discovered that apart from some issues in grasping direction, all his other problems were being resolved through continuous practice. It would appear that he really would be able to soar through the air before too long.

When they passed by the forest trolls' sacred ground, Han Shuo had the forest trolls wait outside. He and the little skeleton went inside and stored all the remaining treasures within his space ring. The place of extreme wood still had great use for Han Shuo, so he left specific instructions for the forest trolls guarding the sacred ground to keep an eye on this place.

After returning to the village, Han Shuo discovered traces of a violent fight outside the village. As he entered the village and listened to the old priest's summary, he learned that the forest trolls that had gathered from all areas had engaged the elves after they'd left. The forest trolls' superior numbers forced the elves to retreat after losing a few of their number.

As the god that the forest trolls worshipped, the little skeleton received adoration from all the forest trolls. Han Shuo then gave instructions to the old priest and took all the luxury items that they'd robbed from the McGrady Guild. Using the excuse of observing potential targets, he left the forest trolls along with the little skeleton and lewd dragon Gilbert.

Han Shuo arrived at the cemetery of death after a few days of walking. Because of the contract, Han Shuo wasn't afraid of Gilbert spilling his secrets and led him directly into the cemetery of death. When Gilbert discovered that Han Shuo possessed the cemetery of death, a string of fawning words poured out from his mouth and lauded Han Shuo up to the heavens.

"Alright, you stay here temporarily and rest up. I'll come find you if I have any instructions." Han Shuo paid no attention to Gilbert's rambunctiousness and left through the transportation matrix. He returned to the Empire's capital of Ossen.

Han Shuo discovered Emily's marks right after walking out of the cemetery of death. This cave was where Han Shuo had placed the transportation matrix for transporting in and out of the cemetery of death. Only Emily knew about it apart from Han Shuo.

From Emily's message, Han Shuo knew that Emily had come looking for him and wanted him to contact Chester at the Dark Mantle as soon as he'd returned from the cemetery of death.

He picked up the transportation sticks from the ground and didn't return to the Academy, but made for the Dark Mantle stronghold instead.

"Oh, you've finally appeared! Mistress Emily has looked for you many times already. I've also been to your Academy to look for you but couldn't find traces of you. In the end, Mistress Emily told me to stay here and said

you'd contact me. To think that you'd actually appear!" Coincidentally, the bandit guard Chester walked out as Han Shuo arrived at the Dark Mantle's stronghold and started yelling excitedly.

"Has something gone wrong that Emily is looking for me so urgently?" Han Shuo asked askance when he saw Chester's look of anxiety.

Chester nodded and shook his head, speaking with a wry face, "Something must've happened, but Mistress Emily didn't tell me specifically what had happened."

"Then, what did Emily tell you?" Han Shuo knew that Emily would not tell Chester information he had no right to know, and thus asked about Emily's instructions for Chester.

"Leave the capital with me immediately. We need to head for Valen City. Mistress Emily should be there already." Chester responded and then added, "Mistress Emily told me to take you to Valen City and contact her through the organization. She'll explain in detail to you then."

"Then let's go!" Han Shuo nodded in agreement.

Valen City was on the western frontier of the Empire and was separated from the Kasi Empire by the Kerlan Grand Canyon. The Empire's Gryphon Legion was stationed there to defend against the Kasi Empire.

Han Shuo only realized the Dark Mantle's true strength when they were on the move. Han Shuo and Chester used the Dark Mantle transportation matrix to directly travel to Valen City from within the Dark Mantle headquarters.

When the two arrived at Valen City and contacted the local Dark Mantle members, the local members immediately prepared a carriage for them when they heard the two were on business for Emily. The carriage drove directly to the hotel where Emily was staying.

The soil of Valen City was poor, so the entire city would only bustle with activity when the Lancelot Empire went to war with the Kasi Empire. But after so many years of war, the originally poor Valen City became even more impoverished. Many locals had already moved to other places and

the ones who remained conducted their trade with the army.

Han Shuo hadn't seen Emily in quite a while. Emily had taken up residence in an elegant room within the spacious hotel and was furiously writing away at something. She was quite overjoyed when she saw Han Shuo, but grew serious as she saw Chester following behind him, "Chester, you wait outside first, I have some words for Han Shuo."

Chester wasn't unhappy at all and retreated quite respectfully. He stood guard outside for Han Shuo and Emily, preventing others from disturbing their conversation.

"I've already left instructions with the forest trolls. Whoever comes to purchase the siege weapons will be able to do so." Han Shuo walked directly towards Emily and arrived at the side of a burning brazier.

"Our target this time is the Gryphon Legion. According to our speculations, the chief of the Gryphon Legion plans to rebel. What I need to do is gather evidence." Emily didn't conceal anything and directly gave voice to their plans.

Han Shuo gave a start of fright but then felt joy slowly forming inside. As the sons of the chief of the Gryphon Legion, Claude and Clark had long since formed deep grudges with Han Shuo. Claude had died at his hands and Clark had tried to assassinate him earlier. It looked like he'd be able to kill off Clark during this time's mission as well.

"Why does the chief of a legion want to rebel?" Although he was happy, Han Shuo didn't forget the task at hand and asked in confusion.

"His Majesty's health has continued to decline, becoming poorer and poorer. The two princes aren't worth much and neither of them are able to truly obtain his trust. Curiously enough, the chief of the Gryphon Legion petitioned His Majesty to have the princess marry his son Clark. Even though His Majesty declined him in the end, the chief still holds great military power in his hands, and his motives for his petition remain unclear."

"The Dark Mantle then discovered that his movements were becoming a bit suspicious. They seem to indicate that he has some contact with the

Kasi Empire. Our goal is to collect as much evidence as possible. As long as we have enough evidence, my brother will personally make a move and arrest the chief of the Gryphon Legion.” Emily looked at Han Shuo and explained.

“Then, what should we do next?” Since Emily knew the detailed particulars of this mission far better than Han Shuo, he didn’t dare express any opinions and directly asked Emily.

“According to our Dark Mantle’s observations, a storm seems to be brewing within the Empire. The Kasi Empire is watching us with greedy eyes, and seems to be prepared to launch fierce attacks as soon as His Majesty dies. The chief of the Gryphon Legion won’t make his move immediately, but since you’ve already given your orders to the forest trolls, I think the siege weapons stolen from the McGrady Guild will appear in Valen City before too long.”

“This batch of siege weapons could be what Gryphon Legion chief Bob Ascher is planning to use when attacking the palace. As long as we can discover this batch of siege weapons in their house, we can arrest them before they start their rebellion.” Emily explained as she looked at Han Shuo.

“His son Clark isn’t in Valen City right now. I want to kill him first!” Han Shuo suddenly spoke with a low voice when he finished listening to Emily’s words.

Emily started when she heard these words. She couldn’t fathom how Han Shuo would know Clark and moreover, hold such hatred towards him.

# Chapter 148: A familiar female slave

“No matter how your grudge against Clark was formed, he is still an earth rider. You shouldn’t move lightly.” Emily couldn’t help but remind Han Shuo anxiously when she saw his desire to kill.

Nodding with a faint smile, Han Shuo comforted Emily, “Don’t worry, I’m not that kind of brash person. I wouldn’t do anything to him without absolute guarantee.”

Emily’s mind was put at ease only after Han Shuo said thus. “I’m not sure whether or not Clark is in Valen City right now. I heard that he had returned, but I’ve yet to receive word. If Clark really has returned to Valen City, I’ll tell you that Valen City is the Gryphon Legion’s territory. You must be very, very careful.”

“Understood, what should we do next?” Han Shuo asked Emily.

Emily took a fur cape from the seat to the side and wrapped it around herself. She stood up and patted herself down, saying to Han Shuo, “I’ll take you to a place and see if you can collect any intelligence.”

Emily stood up and was checking herself out in the mirror when Han Shuo suddenly remembered the jewels he obtained from the forest trolls. He took out a necklace made from large red agate and walked tenderly behind Emily, laying the necklace over her head and onto her white neck.

The pure and elegant nape of her neck was like white snow. The strand of faintly sparkling red agate further heightened her beauty, adding a few traces of luxurious opulence to her demeanor.

Although Emily’s status was noble and she’d seen all sorts of jewelry, the meaning was greatly different when Han Shuo gently placed the red agate necklace on her neck. When he put it on her, beautiful lights danced within her eyes. It looked like she liked it very much.

“You bad little brat, you rather know how to make someone happy!” Emily’s laughter rang out as she turned back to hug Han Shuo fiercely, giving him a kiss. She then wiped away traces of the kiss from Han Shuo’s

lips before walking outside.

Her expression returned to normal after walking outside and gave orders to Chester, "Go prepare a carriage, we're going someplace."

"Very happy to be of service." Chester responded respectfully and walked off.

When Emily and Han Shuo walked out of the hotel, Chester had already readied a carriage. The two of them sat inside while Chester sat outside with the groom. Their journey started out heading for the southern side of Valen City.

The carriage stopped in front of a spacious mansion after half an hour. There were many sumptuous carriages parked in front of the mansion. Several fierce looking warriors were standing guard with broadswords in hand. Numerous armored guards patrolled the mansion. It looked like security was very tight.

Emily didn't say anything and Han Shuo didn't ask anything either. Emily took out a card when they arrived at the door. The two guards at the door immediately let them through when they saw it and Emily brought the other two into the mansion.

They passed through a hallway paved with oval stones and arrived in a large hall. The hall was particularly bright as more than ten burning braziers lined the walls. This made the entire hall quite warm, and there were many iron cages scattered throughout the hall. All sorts of male and female slaves were inside. Some of the male slaves looked tall and muscular, likely for hard labor. Some of the female slaves had prettier features and wore very revealing clothing. Their exposed skin was full of temptation.

Many men and women wearing extravagant clothing were pointing their fingers at and sizing up the slaves within the cages. They would occasionally pull over a smiling slave trader standing on the side to negotiate prices. There were many wearing military uniforms as well. Judging by the Gryphon patches on their shoulders, it was apparent that they were a part of the Empire's Gryphon Legion.

“This is Valen City’s largest slave trading house. The person behind the scenes is the chief of the Gryphon Legion, Bob Ascher. Make note of the guards in this place. You’ll discover that these guards have strict discipline and it’s obvious that they’re military men. Although they’ve taken off their uniforms, it’s difficult to change the military air about them.” Emily pretended to peruse as she explained things to Han Shuo in a low voice.

Han Shuo started when he heard Emily’s words and asked, shocked, “The Empire has a written law that all titled nobles and officers cannot participate in the buying and selling of slaves. This Bob Ascher dares act so brazenly?”

“Bob Ascher is the emperor of Valen City. Many know that he’s the person in charge behind the scenes of the largest slave trading house. Even His Majesty knows this, but because Bob Ascher has done so much for the Empire, His Majesty had planned on just letting it slide before Bob Ascher wanted to rebel.”

“But some of his actions are now threatening the Empire’s profit, so we can no longer sit idly by. As long as we can gather evidence from the largest slave trading house of Valen City, we can also use this a means to prosecute Bob Ascher.” Emily’s eyes roved around the surroundings as she leisurely explained to Han Shuo.

Chester was a bit surprised to see Emily’s intimate attitude towards Han Shuo.

But as a member of the Dark Mantle, Chester naturally understood that sometimes, he’d have to pretend that he hadn’t seen some things. Thus when Emily noticed his attentions, Chester hurriedly looked away. His expression had already gone back to normal by the time he lifted his head, just that there would be hints of surprise and admiration in his eyes when he looked at Han Shuo, even a slight trace of envy.

“The quality of these slaves aren’t much, I’ll show you some better ones. Maybe you’ll be able to select one that you would like as a maid or serving girl.” Emily’s voice suddenly raised higher when two guards walked towards them as she tugged Han Shuo in the direction of a small house.



Emily once again displayed the card when they reached the door, and the guards respectfully let them through after they examined it. “Beautiful madame, I hope you find a slave that satisfies you.”

She chuckled and turned to nod at Han Shuo, saying with a slight smile, “Come in.”

There was a dim hallway inside that was carpeted with a soft, red carpet and glass chandeliers hung high above. Paintings were hung on the walls of the hallway with a guard stationed every ten steps.

The three of them entered a round auction room after walking for a minute. The auction floor was decorated very opulently. There were regular seats like a movie theater and small rooms for VIP seating. Emily walked to one of the small rooms on the left and conversed a bit with those inside. One of the guards respectfully led her upstairs after a swipe of her crystal card.

Han Shuo heard riotous calls of prices as soon as he entered. A savage with an exceedingly fierce body was restrained in a cage and emitting roars like a wild animal. The people beneath the stage were raising their signs one after another to bid on the fierce-looking savage.

“Some nobles like to fight. They send their gladiators in for private fights, stopping only when one side is dead. Hence they’ll come to pick some slaves with astonishing capabilities because there are less complications with slaves.” Emily explained faintly when she led the two upstairs to the VIP room.

Han Shuo nodded to express his understanding and saw that there was a sign for bidding when he walked into the small room. He also saw a simple magical apparatus that would display the desired bid when activated. It was quite convenient.

Some people have a lofty status or have certain reservations so they don’t wish for people to discover that they’ve appeared in such a place. This is why these small rooms, that can conceal oneself, and can look out but not in, exist.” Emily’s gaze swept alertly across the stage and the people beneath it after they entered.

“The next character to be auctioned will be familiar to the Valen City guests tonight. She’s the young miss of the Addison family of Valen City. The Addison family has colluded with the Kasi Empire and was found out by the noble chief of the Gryphon Legion. The Addison family was thoroughly exterminated a few days ago and all traitors were executed. The young miss of the Addison family has been branded as a slave status.”

“Heh heh, this feisty miss once had a widely known reputation throughout Valen City. Her breasts have now fully developed and she’s still a virgin. I believe that everyone will be quite interested in this feisty miss of Valen City.” A host, wearing a tuxedo, described all this with a smile on stage, perking the interest of those below. He then raised his arm and called out, “Miss Lisa of the Addison family! Oh, little Lisa isn’t a miss anymore, but a female slave that you can enjoy at your leisure about to go home with you. Starting price of three hundred gold coins, the bidding begins!”

A cage descended slowly from the ceiling when his words concluded as Lisa, wearing a ghastly expression and brimming with tears, appeared within Han Shuo’s vision with her very full breasts covered by sexy veils.

# Chapter 149: She's yours

Han Shuo was greatly startled to see Lisa appear inside a cage. His originally wandering gaze became a bit harsh.

Han Shuo had once borne hatred towards Lisa, but as the two spent more time together, he discovered that she wasn't as bad as he had originally thought. She'd then protected him whenever she could. All of this had slowly changed Han Shuo's impression of Lisa.

Lisa's eyes were brimming with tears as she was held captive within the cage. Her bright, clear eyes were now dim and lackluster, suffused with a sense of helpless despair. This made Han Shuo's heart ache with pain.

"Is there some feud between the Addison family and Bob Ascher? Why was the Addison family suddenly destroyed and branded with the tag of traitors?" Han Shuo looked coolly around his surroundings and asked Emily.

Emily had felt that Han Shuo had become a bit on edge when Lisa had appeared, and she couldn't help but ask when she heard Han Shuo's words, "You seem to care a lot about this Lisa?"

Nodding, Han Shuo turned to explain, "Lisa is one of my classmates in the necromancy major back at the Academy. We're good friends and she's helped me quite a few times. I definitely won't sit idly by now that she's in dire straits."

Emily was startled when she heard Han Shuo's words and then responded, "The Addisons were already on bad terms with Bob Ascher before he wanted to rebel. However, because the Addison family had a certain status within Valen City, Bob Ascher didn't dare to do anything."

"But now that Bob Ascher is obviously intent on thoroughly grasping Valen City in his hands, any family that doesn't answer to him must be wiped out. It looks like the Addison family was one of those unlucky families. From the intelligence gathered by the Dark Mantle has been able to obtain in recent times, Bob Ascher has commenced his actions using a variety of excuses.

“Little Lisa’s body is now eye popping, but I must warn you all that she’s also a necromancer. The magic dampening cuffs on her wrists must not be taken off.” The organizer on the stage was still describing Lisa.

The bidders beneath the stage were exceedingly interested in Lisa, and her price increased rapidly. It’d been raised from the original 300 gold coins to over six hundred gold coins, double the original.

When Bryan had been sold originally to the Academy, he’d only been worth five gold coins. To think that Lisa would command such a high price, more than a hundred times more than Bryan’s price. It looked like people were greatly interested in this renowned Lisa.

Those beneath the stage were originally participating in the auction, but bids kept sounding out from the boxed seats above towards the end. Lisa’s price kept climbing up from six hundred to seven hundred gold coins.

Han Shuo watched the proceedings with a cold eye as he suddenly made a move and activated the magical box and keyed in a price of a thousand gold coins. The bid of a thousand gold coins was displayed after the space in front of Han Shuo whirred, causing the noisy hall to immediately quiet down. Everyone’s gazes turned towards Han Shuo’s box in astonishment.

“She’s just a female slave and isn’t worth a thousand gold coins. Your actions will cause others to take notice of us.” It was apparent that Emily didn’t quite understand as she looked at Han Shuo.

“I must save this girl. There’s no point in hemming and hawing and slowly adding on to the price. One high price can cause others to stop in their tracks.” Han Shuo said as he looked at Lisa in the cage, lying there as if she were dead.

Indeed, the bidders, who’d been greatly eager to bid, all stayed their hands with displeasure.

A female slave for the purposes of pleasure wasn’t worth a thousand gold no matter how they looked at it. Although Lisa’s status within Valen City had once been lofty and thus was of some temptation, a thousand gold coins wasn’t a small sum. Setting aside her status, any other slave of equivalent looks would only be worth fifty gold coins.

Therefore, when Han Shuo's high price of a thousand gold coins was placed, the organizer happily slammed down the gavel after calling out three times. "Congratulations to bidder number 83, you only need to swipe your crystal card within the box and transfer a thousand gold into our trading house's accounts. Little Lisa is all yours."

To the current Han Shuo, a thousand gold coins wasn't a big deal at all. His trophies from the Dark Forest in recent times had all been worth tens of thousands of gold coins. Therefore, he didn't even frown at the thought of a thousand gold coins and took out his crystal card, prepared to swipe it through the slot within the box.

Emily suddenly reached out her hand and stopped him. She swept the crystal card in his hand to the side and said, "Let me. If we use your card, the name on your account will be registered in the trading house. Although they will keep your information confidential, it will be easy for Bob Ascher to know your identity if he wanted to investigate you."

Han Shuo felt that her words made sense and said, "Alright, I'll transfer a thousand gold coins to your crystal card and you can use a secure card to make the payment."

Emily actually hadn't planned on letting Han Shuo do so originally, since a thousand gold coins wasn't much to her either. However, when Emily was about to pay for Han Shuo, she noticed Chester eyeing them from the side. She finally nodded and accepted Han Shuo's suggestion, transferring a thousand gold coins from his card to hers and then paying for Lisa.

Some female elf slaves and two fox women were auctioned off next, including a very fierce berserker. Han Shuo's group didn't make any further moves and watched everything happening around them with cold eyes.

"We should come and canvass this place late at night next time. We shouldn't walk around since you participated in today's auction." Emily fully explained everything about the trading house, including things to watch out for, as the auction progressed.

He nodded and agreed, walking out of the room with Emily and Chester.

He was planning on leaving with Lisa when his sharp eyes noticed that someone had entered through the door.

His body suddenly halted and Han Shuo made a gesture towards Emily, then spoke in a low voice, "You and Chester go take charge of Lisa first, I have something else to attend to."

Han Shuo quickly left after saying these words and threaded through the crowd with large strides, abruptly appearing in front of the door and heading towards Lawrence, who'd just appeared. However, two people appeared beside Lawrence before Han Shuo had even drawn close and they took one step forward, staring at Han Shuo alertly.

Lawrence finally noticed Han Shuo at this moment and looked at him with surprise. He then turned his head and spoke sharply at the two men, finally waving at Han Shuo afterwards.

Lawrence asked him with great astonishment when Han Shuo drew close to him, "Bryan, what are you doing in Valen City?"

"I had a few things to take care of in this area. What are you doing here?" Han Shuo asked.

His face growing frosty, Lawrence spoke in a cold voice, "Something's happened to my cousin's Addison family and now even Lisa's fallen victim to a plot to make her a slave. I heard that she was being auctioned off here and have come to rescue her."

Lisa and Lawrence's family were related, and it seemed that he was well aware of what had happened to her family. This was why he'd purposefully made the trip from the capital. This also raised Han Shuo's opinion of him. It would appear that Lawrence was one who valued family.

Logically speaking, there was a limit to how close cousins would be, not to mention that Bob Ascher gave labeled the Addison family as traitors. Such a crime was enough to cause all relatives to pause, as it would be easy for them to become embroiled as well. For Lawrence to make his way here from such a far distance was enough for Han Shuo to view him with new eyes.

“You’re too late, Lisa’s already been purchased for a thousand gold coins!” Han Shuo looked at Lawrence and said with a slight smile.

“It must be that old dog Calvert. Lisa’s family and his family have never gotten along. He must’ve been one of the instigators for what happened to Lisa’s family this time. He would certainly be willing to spend large sums to buy Lisa and take her home to torture.” Lawrence’s face darkened and he spoke to the two behind him. “It looks like we’ll have to be the burning and looting sort of robbers today.”

The two behind Lawrence had no expressions on their faces and wore very ordinary, loose clothing. There wasn’t much that could be gleaned from their outfits, but Han Shuo discovered that one was a swordsman and the other a mage after he concentrated a little. However, he couldn’t determine how strong they were.

“How would I let Lisa be taken by others since I’m here? Don’t worry, I’ve got Lisa.” Han Shuo could be certain that Lawrence was truly worried about Lisa and spoke with a small smile.

Lawrence noticeably heaved a sigh of relief when he heard these words and spoke heartfully towards Han Shuo, “Bryan, I owe you one!”

# Chapter 150: I can help him

“You don’t owe me anything. Lisa and I are good friends at school, so I simply did what I should have done.” Han Shuo saw that Emily and Chester had walked out with Lisa’s figure, draped in a black cloth, as they spoke.

“Let’s leave this area first.” Lawrence noticed Emily and Chester’s movements as he followed Han Shuo’s gaze. His eyes lit up as he spoke softly and turned to walk outside.

A lot procedures needed to be passed before entering the trading house, but it wasn’t so strict when leaving. Han Shuo and Lawrence didn’t meet any resistance as they followed behind Emily and Chester. Emily was escorted by two guards from the trading house and they stayed respectfully when Emily dismissed them at the door.

She was slightly surprised to see Lawrence appear by the carriage. Han Shuo maintained a calm expression on his face and said to Lawrence, “I made Madame Emily’s acquaintance at your place last time. I’ve been hired by her to take care of some things in Valen City.”

Lawrence seemed to understand some things, but didn’t say much. He flashed a friendly smile at Han Shuo and said, “This is between the two of you, so you don’t need to tell me anything. I think we should see how my cousin is doing first.”

He lifted the carriage curtains and the two boys entered. They’d just entered when a weeping Lisa threw herself into Han Shuo’s arms, sobbing her heart out, “Bryan, they killed my entire family. My father, mother, and grandfather are all dead!”

Lisa was heartbreakingly weak at this moment. Han Shuo patted her shoulder lightly and said in a soft voice, “You’re safe now. These people will get what’s coming to them.”

She hugged him fiercely, using all the strength in her body, as if wanting to prove that this moment was real. She stuck her pinky in her mouth and bit down on it, finally crying out in pain, “I’m not dreaming! I’m still alive.



I want to get my revenge! I'm going to kill those brutal people!"

Lisa had always been a small terror at the Academy, but her entire being seemed to have undergone a change after such a drastic event in her life. The innocence on her face had been replaced by hatred, and it seemed like it was the only thing giving her the will to live in this moment.

"Lisa, just what happened? You must tell me in detail. I'll obtain revenge for you." Frosty, cold light shot from Lawrence's eyes as he asked the wailing Lisa in a low voice.

Lisa finally seemed to realize that there was someone else in this carriage other than Han Shuo. She wiped away the tears on her face and looked at Lawrence, immediately choking up again, "Brother Lawrence, I don't know what happened either, only that my father said my mother was sick and wanted me to return home to look after her."

"I'd only just returned when I learned that there might be trouble at home. Mother wasn't sick and father didn't let me go home either. The next day, Calvert, that dog of the Gryphon Legion, brought men and rushed into our home. He killed and captured people everywhere. They're all dead except for me. All dead!"

"Don't worry, I'll get revenge for you." Lawrence promised Lisa with a darkened face.

"Help me kill Calvert! You have to kill him for me!" Lisa murmured helplessly, looking at Lawrence first and then fixing her stricken gaze on Han Shuo.

Her entire family and all her kin had been extinguished in the span of a second. The impact from this stimulus was too much for Lisa. This also made the usually bullying Lisa reveal a helpless side of her that caused others to want to protect her.

"I'll help you." Han Shuo was silent for a moment beneath Lisa's stare, but he finally nodded his head solemnly and promised her.

"We should thoroughly discuss things first if you want to kill Calvert." Emily suddenly said lowly outside the carriage and then stuck her head in

to look at Han Shuo and Lawrence. She said, "We should leave this place at the very least."

"Lisa, come with me." Lawrence ducked out of the carriage and then nodded at the two men standing coolly off to the side. The swordsman departed and came back leading a carriage. Lawrence dragged Lisa in with him and the carriage began to move slowly after the groom cracked his whip.

"Follow him." Han Shuo told Chester outside and then turned to look back at Emily with some apology. "This may conflict with your plan some, but I have to do so."

"I understand. Besides, killing Calvert was our original plan anyways. This causes no tangent from our original plan, and we've gained some additional assistance, no?" Emily first smiled slightly and then spoke a bit gravely. "However, although Lawrence is the son of the finance minister, his two followers seem quite strong. In addition, Lawrence seems to be acting a bit weirdly. How did you get to know him? Do you know of his background?"

Shaking his head, Han Shuo hesitated before responding, "Master Candide once told me that Lawrence's identity was complex. He said that I may land in trouble if I grow too close with him. However, I've been in contact with Lawrence for a while and feel that this fellow is quite alright."

"Candide that old fox! If he knows of Lawrence's identity and didn't tell you, that means that Lawrence's identity is really not that simple. It looks like I have some new questions to ask my brother." Emily spoke with a furrowed brow and was a bit perplexed.

The carriage that Lawrence was in suddenly stopped and he stuck his head out. He opened his mouth when the carriage that Han Shuo and Emily were level with his own, "Bryan, I think this matter has no direct relation with Madame Emily. If you're thinking of her behalf, you should try to make sure she's not embroiled in this."

Han Shuo blanked momentarily and exchanged glances with Emily within the carriage. Emily frowned and mused, before speaking with Han

Shuo, "Go with them and see what the preparations are. Come find me at the rally point afterwards. It'll be a good time for me to go back and investigate Lawrence."

Nodding to Emily, Han Shuo alighted from Emily's carriage and walked towards Lawrence, saying with a smile, "Your considerations are quite thorough, it's true that there's no need to involve Madame Emily."

"My apologies Madame Emily, but you know I'm doing this for your own good. The Aschers don't fear anyone in Valen City, so there are some things that you won't be able to become involved with, even with your status." Lawrence called out softly to Emily's carriage and then ordered those in front of him, "Let's go."

When Han Shuo entered the carriage, he noted that Lisa seemed to have calmed down after Lawrence's consolation. Lawrence didn't say much and mused on certain things with a darkened face. Han Shuo didn't know how to comfort Lisa, so he remained silent along the way.

The carriage stopped in front of a house and Lawrence said gently to Lisa, "You go and rest in that house, Bryan and I will be going out to take care of a few things and will return soon. Don't worry, you'll be very safe inside the house."

Having suffered through such a painful disaster, Lisa was much more malleable than usual. She nodded docilely and was helped down by Lawrence. Lawrence knocked on the door, causing a person to walk out. This person was hidden in the shadows, and Han Shuo immediately discovered that he was the expert that had once spied on Clark.

"Escort her in and tell those inside to protect her. You'll be coming with me." Lawrence returned back to the carriage after giving his orders, with the man walking back outside after Lisa went in. He sat down in front of Han Shuo and Lawrence without saying a word.

Han Shuo took a good look at him as they sat face to face. He discovered that this man looked ordinary, and there was nothing overly special about his face at all. However, it was enough to prove that his strength wasn't ordinary given that he could tail earth rider Clark without being

discovered.

“His name is Lucky. He’s an assassin. The two with the groom outside are senior swordsman Divac and earth major adept mage Adela. We’re going to go kill Calvert now.” Lawrence first introduce his men to Han Shuo and then suddenly announced that they were going to go kill Calvert.

“What sort of plan do you have?” Han Shuo was silent at first and then spoke up in inquiry.

“Calvert is the loyal dog of Chief Ascher of the Gryphon Legion and is in charge of distribution of rations within Valen City. He’s also an officer in the Gryphon Legion and is thirty or forty years old. He only had one son called Caernand who once tried to rape Lisa, but Lisa chopped off his manhood instead. Thus, the two families formed an irresolvable feud. As a senior knight, Calvert has scores of servants at home. Many of them are part of the Gryphon Legion and aren’t too hard to take care of.” Lawrence slowly explained all of this, which proved that he must have thoroughly investigated him prior to all this.

“I happened to receive news that Clark has already returned to Valen City and seems to have arrived at Calvert’s home, seeming to bring some sort of instructions from his father.” Lucky, who’d remained silent until now, suddenly spoke up at this time.

Shock appearing on Lawrence’s face, his brow furrowed tight. Han Shuo’s heart also leapt as a thick killing intent appeared on his face.

Lawrence’s hesitant expression explained that he’d become uncertain with Clark’s appearance. However, having entered the true demon realm, plus the aid of the little skeleton and necromancy magic, Han Shuo was willing to go head to head with Clark. However, he too wasn’t certain if he could beat an earth rider, so he remained silent.

“Uncle Lucky, how confident would you be in killing Clark if you made a move?” Lawrence opened his mouth to ask the assassin Lucky after remaining silent, waiting for an answer.

“I’ve roughly fifty percent certainty.” Lucky replied indifferently.

Nodding, Lawrence said, "Alright, then you make the first move. I trust that with your strength, you'll be able to retreat safely even if you don't succeed. We can then judge based off Clark's condition to see if we need to make a move as well."

"Mm, I think there's no way that Clark will be able to find me if I want to leave!" Lucky responded.

"I think if I coordinate with Mr. Lucky, I'll be able to increase the odds by thirty percent." Han Shuo looked at Lucky and suddenly spoke.

"Bryan, are you certain you won't be discovered and won't affect Uncle Lucky?" Lawrence's face was grave as he looked solemnly at Han Shuo.

"I feel that my inclusion will bring him aid. If you believe in me, I'd like to make a move with him." Han Shuo said seriously as he looked back at Lawrence.

"Alright, Uncle Lucky, take him with you. Give up halfway through if things won't do. We can always find another opportunity." Lawrence thought for a moment and spoke to the assassin.

"Alright!" Lucky responded and looked at Han Shuo. "We'll leave immediately. If Calvert's house catches on fire later, that means the mission's a go and you can come charging in. Otherwise, don't come near us."

"Don't worry, I know what to do. Be careful." Lawrence nodded.

"Let's go." Lucky looked at Han Shuo and jumped down softly from the carriage. He jumped up and landed on a roof that was three meters up without making a sound.

Han Shuo took a deep breath in and concentrated, focusing his magical yuan to employ the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" to take a great leap as well. His body flew out in midair as he jumped even higher than Lucky, also landing silently beside the assassin.

"Eh!" Lucky looked back at Han Shuo in surprise as the corners of his indifferent face tugged upwards. He said faintly, "Not bad, perhaps you really can assist me."

The old assassin didn't look at Han Shuo afterwards as his body started threading through the roofs agilely, seeming to glide through them like a wild ghost, making Han Shuo greatly admire his agility.

However, having already reached the true demon realm, Han Shuo's agility and pliability were just as extraordinary. Making use of his supernatural five senses, he followed closely behind Lucky and didn't fall behind at all.

# Chapter 151: One thing after another

Han Shuo only got to experience the old assassin Lucky's skill after the two flew to Calvert's house. A decent assassin would maintain his position before he made a move on his target. He would only allow his target to feel his presence in the moment that he made his move.

Lucky was quite professional in this regard. He first crouched on the roof after entering Calvert's home, looking out over the entire building, then pointing out the use of each room to Han Shuo. He clearly explained which was the living room, which was the master bedroom, as well as the bathrooms.

It looked like Lucky was very well versed in all architectural styles, and must have given quite a bit of thought to this. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to obtain so much information after just glancing at the layout shortly after arriving here.

Lucky changed into a grey robe that matched the color of the walls. When he slowly walked along the wall, no one detected any disturbance, even as the bright rays of the moon rained down.

Han Shuo took out a similar robe beneath Lucky's gaze and followed behind Lucky, moving towards the roof of the brightly lit living room.

Han Shuo's breathing became measured and steady as they neared the living room, and the rate of his heartbeat also suddenly became quite slow, matching the pace of his breaths. Even the heat emanating from his body began to decrease as they drew near the living room. When they got close enough, he could, at the stage, be mistaken for a shingle on the roof when he wasn't moving.

Lucky was unable to conceal his body as well as Han Shuo had done even after taking a pill. When he finally reached the top of the roof, Lucky looked at Han Shuo with disbelief as he was incredibly surprised by Han Shuo's control over his body.

Since reaching the true demon stage, Han Shuo could feel that his body was indeed more agile and deft than before. He could adjust his body

condition to all sorts of situations by making his own adjustments, making it very easy for him to do something like concealing his presence.

Because Clark would possibly be in the living room, the two didn't dare lift the tiles of the roof to look inside. They placed their cheeks on top of the roof and attempted to listen in on the conversation inside.

"Alright, let's do it like this. Keep your wits about you lately, Lawrence seems to have been spotted in Valen City, so he may try to make trouble or you." Clark's voice rang out as he reminded Calvert to be careful.

"Lawrence is just the son of the finance minister. Isn't he courting death if he comes to find me in Valen City?" Calvert didn't mind at all as his hearty laughter rang out like a bell.

"Uncle Calvert, Lawrence's identity isn't that simple. Anyways, you must always be on guard. My father will send people over to protect you in two days." Clark reminded Calvert.

"I've caused the chief to worry. Heh, it's getting late, why don't you rest here tonight? I've prepared special entertainment for you." Calvert chuckled.

"That's alright, thank you uncle. However, some strangers have appeared in Valen City lately and I have a lot of things to take care of. I won't be staying here tonight." Clark made his excuses and seemed ready to leave.

His ear lifting away from the roof tiles, Han Shuo stood up and threw a glance at Lucky. The two left with a sound and quickly moved away from the manor.

Lucky had decided to change the plan since Clark was going to leave and wanted to get rid of him while he was traveling. He would have to pass through a certain street after leaving Calvert's house. There were all sorts of buildings and several leafy trees on that street, making for a good place to make a move no matter what direction they came from.

"You hide and wait in a tree, pick the best timing after I make my move to attack Clark." Lucky instructed and then crouched on top of a nearby wall, as if he was a gecko, melding into the night.



Lucky had no way of being able to cue when was good time to make a move. Lucky could only let Han Shuo attempt to grasp that critical moment himself.

A horse carriage left Calvert's house after a while, the clopping sound of the horse's hooves appeared quite ear piercing. The groom was a muscular guard and he waved the whip in his hand to spur on the horse. When the carriage passed by where Lucky was concealed, a figure flashed out of the corner of concealment so quickly, that it was as if it had no weight, and stuck itself to the bottom of the carriage.

Han Shuo clearly saw all of this from his vantage point in the distance. He took in a deep breath when he saw the carriage approaching the big tree he was hidden in. Holding it in and watching things closely, he tightening his grasp on the Demonslayer Edge.

A cracking sound erupted from the bottom of the carriage at that moment as the carriage exploded into pieces. Wood shards, sand, and dust flew everywhere as milky-white sword aura shot up two meters into the air, flaring out over the now destroyed carriage. The exploding sword aura was like a bristling porcupine, and Lucky had the body of the porcupine within the spikes of the sword aura.

At this time, Han Shuo discovered that Lucky was an assassin who also happened to be a sword master. The milky-white sword aura flashed by and vanished like it had never appeared. The pieces of the carriage were shattered and lay all over the ground. One person within the carriage was full of bloody holes and had died instantly, whereas the groom at the front of the carriage was running for his life.

Han Shuo had felt extraordinarily surprised in the beginning, thinking that Lucky had succeeded so quickly. However, he realized that the person in the carriage was completely foreign to him when he looked at the corpse. It wasn't Clark at all. The scattered footsteps swiftly approaching from all directions immediately made Han Shuo realize the severity of the situation.

"We got played, retreat!" Han Shuo immediately called out from the

treetop and leapt down from the thick growth.

Lucky's expression remained calm as he scanned the surroundings, calling back softly, "We'll split up and go through the surrounding houses."

Han Shuo nodded and didn't say much, leaping into the air and landing on a roof. When he looked back, he saw that Lucky had already disappeared miraculously.

Han Shuo's heart became even calmer at this time as he coolly looked around and noticed that several soldiers had appeared on the streets to the front and back. These men were charging down on the back of horses, and several had drawn back on their bows to send arrows shooting towards him.

Clark, with an easy expression on his face, walked out from the direction of Calvert's house with another middle-aged knight that was well built. Their gazes landed on Han Shuo as they spurred on the battlesteeds beneath them to come charging over.

There were many houses in the surroundings, but when Han Shuo concentrated and listened, he noticed that there didn't seem to be anyone living in them. He didn't know if they'd been moved beforehand. It was only now that he was a bit regretful that he hadn't used his extremely sensitive senses to investigate his surroundings. He'd been too focused on killing Clark and hadn't thoroughly probed the details.

Han Shuo dodged nimbly when the arrows came shooting over, he noticed many more soldiers were approaching. He weighed things up and cast the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven", sending himself shooting into the air and away like a hawk.

The numerous arrows whistled over and were batted away by the Demonslayer Edge. He'd flown out of the encirclement in the blink of an eye and alighted on a large tree in the distance.

Although Han Shuo wasn't that well versed in the Art yet, he had no problem simply flying through the air. It was because of this Art that he could break free from the soldiers.

In addition, Han Shuo discovered that compared to the levitation spells that archmages could cast in this world, the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens” was much more advanced. None of the levitation spells that the archmages could cast even came close to his Art’s speed and maneuverability.

He took a deep breath in and took stock of his surroundings, discovering that Clark had almost a hundred soldiers with him. These people were conducting a carpet style search, going through each room looking for Lucky. They gave up hunting down Han Shuo after he left and was focused on finding Lucky.

Just as Han Shuo started worrying for Lucky, a figure, using a levitation spell, quickly approached from the distance. The moon was covered by a cloud of dark mist in a second and the already dim sky immediately darkened. When the figure drew close, it took out a mage staff, made of white bone from its spacious sleeves and chanted out a spell in a low voice.

Suddenly, numerous skeletal, zombie, and ghoulish warriors, as well as gargoyles and hate warriors appeared, charging towards the soldiers.

Another low chant rang out as bone arrows flew wildly through the air and crashed into the soldiers, making them cry out in agony.

“Oh my gosh, it’s an archmage level necromancer!” Calvert suddenly cried out with shock.

Han Shuo was also greatly surprised as he fixed an ardent gaze on the necromancer that had appeared in the air, absolutely taken aback by the destructiveness of the necromancy magic.

# Chapter 152: I only need one chance to kill you!

Necromancers were few to begin with, as it was apparent from the numbers of archmages specializing in necromancy magic. This was why the necromancy magic elicited so much attention when it actually appeared.

Han Shuo had only escaped from that area when he activated the Art. He hesitated when this development occurred and decided to move across the roofs of the nearby houses, going back to where he'd started.

The dark creatures that the necromancer had summoned from the other dimension greatly impacted the soldiers who were attempting to chase after Lucky. The enormous hate warriors and gargoyles flying in formation were particularly destructive.

The enormous and incredibly powerful hate warriors were able to pound a soldier into meat paste with a swing of its iron club, whereas the agile gargoyles were equally lethal when they came swooping down with their iron claws.

“Damn it, I’ll kill him myself!” Clark roared out angrily and whipped his battlesteed into action. A spear appeared in his hand as he charged towards the necromancer.

Thanks to the coordination of the galloping battlesteed and the sweeping spear, none of the skeletal and zombie warriors were obstacles in his path. Knights made use of the charging force of their battlesteeds to enhance their own battle strength. Thus, when Clark and the battlesteed charged as one, the scattered dark creatures couldn’t stop him at all.

Because of the appearance of an archmage level necromancer at this time, the soldiers on the side were busily fending off the summoned creatures and couldn’t assist Clark. Senior knight Calvert stayed where he was and was busily directed his troops. When these highly trained soldiers finally calmed down to coolly battle the summoned creatures, rows and

rows of skeletal and zombie warriors began to fall down.

Although the mental strength of the archmage necromancer was colossal, the numbers of his summoned creatures couldn't compete with the number of soldiers here. The ghouls and skeletal warriors in particular were of limited use in this type of battle situation, and were often destroyed by a single stab from a Gryphon Legion soldier.

However, the enormous hate warriors and gargoyles howling through the darkness were still quite fierce, and had killed quite a few soldiers in the blink of an eye. It was a pity that there were only five hate warriors, and six or seven gargoyles. More than ten Gryphon Legion soldiers also surrounded each hate warrior.

Another low chant emitted from the necromancer's mouth as two fallen hate warriors suddenly exploded violently. The two "Corpse Explosion" spells immediately caused scores of Gryphon Legion soldiers to die with agonized howls.

When the necromancer opened his mouth to chant the next spell, Clark, on the back of a battlesteed, had already charged in front of him. The spear in his hand suddenly flared with a milky-white aura, and Clark flew into the air using the momentum from the battlesteed. He shot towards the necromancer, floating in midair, like lightning.

An enormous white skeleton abruptly materialized in mid air, forming a shield of white bone with mind boggling speed. The white bone shield was three meters tall and two meters wide, completely blocking the way in front of the necromancer. The clean, eerily sparkling white bones didn't leave any gaps between them as they came together. Some sharp bone shards were even in front of the shield as reverse spikes. The shape looked very odd.

Clark's concentrated blow smashed against the white bone shield. Even such a highly advanced shield like this one started splintering from Clark's violent thrust, with bone shards flying randomly where it had been struck by Clark's spear.

The necromancer grunted quietly and floated away in retreat like a

ghost. It looked like he had also realized that Clark would be a tough opponent to face and planned on putting some distance between them. Clark's body moved forward with the momentum from his charge as he landed on a roof, putting his spear away and swapping it out for a sword. He moved quickly over the roofs and pursued the necromancer fixedly.

Another dark mist was released as the retreating necromancer's body flashed through the dark mist, vanishing without a trace. Three bone spears came hurtling through the empty air, aiming straight for Clark. Clark also finally pinned down the necromancer's location after the three bone spears appeared.

At the same time, Han Shuo's sharp eyes caught slight movement from a piece of protruding rock on one of the roofs that Clark was moving towards. This made Han Shuo's heart jump and his body abruptly half-crouching to conceal himself on another roof.

The Demonslayer Edge had soundlessly approached Clark according to Han Shuo's wishes.

Snorting coldly, Clark didn't halt his momentum as he suddenly changed direction halfway, the longsword in his hand suddenly flicked upwards and slashed through the bone spear that he hadn't avoided. At this time, Clark's body finally approached the protruding boulder as a strand of cold light suddenly shot out of the rock-like structure and Lucky appeared, wrapped in a gray robe.

Clark hadn't expected an ambush after just batting away the necromancer's bone spear. His fighting aura was halfway through pulling together when he raised his sword to block the hit. A metallic clang rang through the night as Clark's body was flung downwards from the roof.

As Clark descended, a severe whistling sounded out as a thin strand of purple flame appeared in mid air, ramming into the Clark's back and sinking into his waist, vanishing within Clark's body.

A ghastly scream emitted from Clark's mouth. As his body slammed into the ground, his entire body became consumed in purple flames. Han Shuo's eerie figure flew in front of Clark, he looked coldly at Clark

suffering as the purple flames consumed him. He sent out a mental summons and the Demonslayer Edge exploded out of Clark's chest and vanished into Han Shuo's palm without a drop of blood.

"It's, it's you?" The spirit of extreme extreme cold was invading Clark's organs, and his body had been heavily damaged by the Demonslayer Edge. When he saw Han Shuo reveal himself and tug off his mask, Clark spat out these words with difficulty as his teeth chattered with disbelief.

"That's right, it's me. You tried and failed to kill me twice, but I only needed one chance to kill you." Han Shuo said coolly and waved his right hand around fiercely, slowly circulating the "Glacial Mystical Spellfire". A flower of red flame entered Clark's body. His internal organs had been frozen solid and Clark had been about to die when he was thawed out by the flame and turned into a bloody puddle. The speed of change was unbelievably fast.

Three bone spears appeared out of nowhere again and targeted Han Shuo. Their whistling noises startled Han Shuo as he leapt upwards, slashing down with his Demonslayer Edge and destroyed one of the bone spears. Han Shuo shouted out to Lucky in the distance, "Damn it, why is he attacking me as well?"

"I don't know him." Lucky responded and evaded like lightning, because the necromancer had attacked Lucky as well.

So it wasn't one of their people. Han Shuo was surprised and hastily escaped outside. When the necromancer saw Han Shuo escape, he actually came after Han Shuo and pursued him doggedly. The appearance of this necromancer was a bit odd. He wasn't on Lawrence's side and this greatly confused Han Shuo, making him uncertain as to which side he belonged to.

Now that Clark was dead, Han Shuo saw that Lucky had made himself invisible again and was sneaking towards Calvert. It looked like he was planning on taking care of Calvert as well. As for his colleague, Han Shuo didn't know anything about him at all, just that he had his sights set on Han Shuo. Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry, but he knew

that he didn't want to become further entangled by him as he fled for his life at his top speed.

When Han Shuo was a few hundred meters away from the Calvert house, his amazing vision picked up Lawrence's carriage in the distance. Overjoyed, he made quickly in that direction as the necromancer following Han Shuo summoned a few gargoyles to tail him. It was only when Han Shuo appeared next to the carriage that the necromancer abruptly retreated with his gargoyles.

"Bryan, what's going on? There was no signal from you guys, but everything's a chaotic mess over there." Lawrence immediately poked his head out of the carriage when he saw Han Shuo and anxiously asked for a status update.

"Don't mention it. Things have been really odd tonight. Lucky and I don't know what happened as our movement was mysteriously revealed to Clark and we were almost captured. An archmage level necromancer suddenly appeared and attacked Clark and them, and then attacked us as well. I have no idea what's going on." Han Shuo complained.

"Then what of Uncle Lucky, and is Clark dead?" Lawrence asked again.

"Mister Lucky is making his way towards Calvert and seemed to want to take him out as well. Mm, Clark is done for, you don't need to worry about him." Han Shuo responded.

Lawrence couldn't hide the glee in his expression as he laughed with satisfaction, "Dead, he's dead! Valen City will be in chaos now!"



# Chapter 153: An identity to be cautious of

When Lawrence spoke thus, the expression on his face was very bizarre. It was a slightly manic one that seemed anxious to see the world plunged into disorder.

“Bryan, I’m going to stay in Valen City for now. You can come find me in the house we dropped Lisa off in. Where can I find you if I need?” Lawrence was in a great mood as he turned his head to look at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was silent for a moment and then told Lawrence the address of Emily’s hotel, leaving quickly afterwards and not paying attention to anything that happened after.

The hotel that Emily was staying in wasn’t one of the Dark Mantle strongholds, thus Han Shuo wasn’t afraid of Lawrence finding his way there. When Han Shuo made his way back to the Dark Mantle stronghold, metallic horse hooves clopped endlessly on the path to Calvert’s house. It looked like Clark’s death had indeed had a great impact on the entirety of Valen City.

Han Shuo didn’t linger here at this moment and didn’t care to find out whether or not Lucky had succeeded in eliminating Calvert. He masked his traces as he swiftly made his way to the Dark Mantle stronghold.

He easily found Emily after reaching the stronghold. When she saw him, she waved her hand and dismissed Chester. Her beautiful face was grave as she said to Han Shuo, “I know of Lawrence’s identity.”

She was a senior executive of the Dark Mantle alright. Han Shuo looked happily at Emily and said enthusiastically, “Wonderful, just who is that guy? His status seems quite high!”

“You! You better mind your tone and language when you interact with him in the future. This person could have a drastic impact on you.” Emily glared huffily at Han Shuo and then whispered an incantation. A boundary formed within the room and enclosed Han Shuo and Emily within it.

“The members outside won’t hear my words when this boundary is in

effect.” Emily said gravely.

Han Shou was quite surprised to see Emily take such precautions. He asked a bit anxiously, “Alright, stop playing it up, just who is Lawrence?”

Taking a deep breath in, Emily sighed lightly and said, “He should be the third prince.”

Starting in fright, Han Shuo looked at Emily with some incredulity. “You’re joking! The king only has two sons. Every citizen of the Lancelot Empire knows of this. How could there be a third prince? Besides, everyone knows that Lawrence is obviously the son of the finance minister, how could he possibly be the third prince?!”

“I mean it.” Emily reached out a hand to pinch Han Shuo when she saw that he didn’t believe her. She explained, “This is actually one of the royal family’s scandals. The finance minister, Eevee, has some problems in that area, and can only look at his beautiful wife, Alice. Eevee’s relationship with the king is quite good, and the king met Alice at one of Eevee’s private banquets. The king was conquered by Alice’s beautiful looks, and the two finally walked together because Eevee was functioning inadequately in addition to the king making purposeful moves.”

“Eevee detected this because Alice became pregnant. The king himself then put in an appearance and explained the matter to Eevee. Since the deed had been done, and the king was still the king in the end, and Eevee knew that he couldn’t say anything to Alice and thus silently accepted this.”

“Because the fallout from this matter would have been too severe, both sides have concealed it until now. Those who truly hold power within the capital have some sort of understanding towards this matter, but no one dares to talk about it openly that Lawrence is the son of the king and Alice. Lawrence has been raised in the care of his ambitious mother since birth, teaching him the tenets of ruling and the knowledge he should know when controlling a kingdom.”

“Lawrence knew of his status since young, but his potential is extraordinary and he has uncommon social graces, so he has a good

relationship with even his adoptive father. It's a pity that due to his illegitimate status, he can't enter the royal family. The king also feels quite guilty about this and thus treats Lawrence very well. He often meets with Lawrence privately to express his affection, and it's rumored that the king is very satisfied with Lawrence as well."

"Of the other two princes, one of them is fierce and general material, the other is extremely crafty, but is wishy washy about making decisions. It looks like neither of them are ruler material. Because the king's health is starting to decline, he too may feel that he doesn't have much time left and thus has been walking closer to Lawrence lately. It's been said that the king has the desire to reveal Lawrence's identity and have him inherit the throne."

"However, the mothers of the other two princes hold great power within the Empire. If the king acts rashly, he'll lose control of the situation and thus hasn't made a move yet. As the king becomes weaker and weaker, a storm is starting to brew within the Empire. That old fox Candide doesn't want you too close to Lawrence, likely because he's also worried that Lawrence's identity will affect your future path."

These words had an extreme impact on Han Shuo. He'd never thought that Lawrence would have such a lofty identity. If all went smoothly, then he could absolutely become the next king of the Empire and hold all of Lancelot in his hand, deciding the fate of anyone within the Empire.

Emily understood that her words had had a huge impact on Han Shuo when she saw him take a breath in, his eyes continuously dancing. When she saw that he had sunk into deep thought, she didn't disturb him and only stood there, looking at him, waiting for Han Shuo to sort out his thoughts.

After a while, Han Shuo nodded and said with a smile to Emily, "Alright, I understand the particulars of this matter now. Don't worry, I know how to handle my relationship with Lawrence."

"Our Dark Mantle has never intervened in the complex situation of the power struggle within the royal family, and simply takes orders from the

king. We normally don't get involved before the situation has cleared up and the king has given definitive orders. The fact that that old fox would give you a subtle hint after your first mission means that he values you greatly."

"He also means the best for you. The more you know about this matter, the more disadvantageous it is for you. I understand you too well and know your strength and ambitions. This is why I've told you such a highly classified matter. As for how to grasp the situation, I leave that to you." Emily stared at Han Shuo as she continued explaining.

"I know you mean well. Heh heh, I know what to do. Oh, I forgot to tell you. I killed Clark. Valen City should be engulfed in chaos by now." Han Shuo smiled faintly at Emily.

It was Emily's turn to have shock written on her face after she heard these words. She looked at Han Shuo with incredulity, asking with extreme shock, "What, what did you say? You said you killed Clark?"

Nodding, Han Shuo said firmly, "Yes, I killed Clark, but someone helped me with it and I only did it through an ambush. Don't be too surprised."

Breathing out slightly, Emily was still quite surprised. She shook her head and said, "We've investigated Clark's strength and he's a solid earth rider. He reached this level at such a young age. His potential is extraordinary, and to think that he would die so easily after being ambushed by you. It looks like you're keeping quite a few things from me."

"No, I'm really not hiding anything from you. Just that an archmage necromancer appeared halfway through, and my colleague helped us with Clark. We've received great help from his strength, otherwise we would've never succeeded." Han Shuo smiled wryly and quickly summarized what had happened.

Emily's expression grew even graver after she finished listening to Han Shuo. She murmured, "Necromancers are rare enough already, an archmage necromancer is like the feather of a phoenix or the scale of a dragon. I wonder which faction this necromancer belongs to?"

"I'll need you to investigate that." Han Shuo smiled.

“Come and make a trip with me, we need to find something.” Emily pondered for a bit and then wrapped herself with a nearby fur.

“What are we doing?” Han Shuo walked up to Emily and tenderly adjusted a corner of her clothing.

Smiling coyly at Han Shuo, Emily cackled like a little girl planning on playing a prank. “Clark’s just died, so the entire Valen City must be in an uproar right now. The Gryphon Legion must be in a busy panic right now and searching through the entire city for you two. What we need to do is stir the muddy the waters and make things even more confusing.”

“Heh heh, that’s wonderful. I find that I like doing bad things. Perhaps I was a killer or an arsonist in my past life.” Han Shuo smiled faintly.

“You’re also quite a villain in this life.” Emily rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, taking down the boundary and walking outside together.

# Chapter 154: Why bother so much?

Within the span of a few short months, of Bob Ascher's two sons one had mysteriously gone missing and the other was killed in the streets. This was simply too great of a shock to him, particularly because Clark had been the son that he'd valued more and placed the most hope in. To have him be killed by others in Valen City made him go utterly crazy.

This night in Valen City was destined to be a chaotic time. All of the Gryphon Legion had been summoned and were conducting a carpet style search for all suspicious personnels. Because of their chief's explosive rage, all the ordinary soldiers within the Legion all held equally poor tempers. Any unfamiliar faces or merchants would be beaten viciously if they gave the slightest hint of not cooperating.

Metal hooves galloped over the streets as citizens, sleeping soundly in the middle of the night, were rudely awakened. Even the symbol of the Gryphon Legion, a troop of gryphons, soared through the night skies of Valen City on patrol. Everyone was as if they were confronting a great enemy, and all thought that the Kasi Empire had invaded in the night.

The gryphons in the sky were black dots as their strange cries reverberated through people's eardrums. They flew from the west side of the city to the south. Then flew from the south to the north. They would land and search with the soldiers on the ground whenever they saw something out of the ordinary.

"So these are gryphons. They're truly big alright." Han Shuo stood behind a large tree near Bob Ascher's slave trading house and murmured to himself as he inspected the gryphons.

"That's right, the gryphons are a very fierce flying species. A single gryphon by itself can rip apart ordinary magical creatures. The king values old Bob so much and doesn't dare make a move even though he knows that he wants to rebel in large part because of this Gryphon Legion." Emily huffed lightly and shivered a bit as she spoke.

The water that had accumulated on the streets had already frozen into

thick sheets of ice in this harsh winter night. Icicles from the edge of the roofs, glinting with cold as the severe cold wind came howling over. As a mage, it made sense that Emily would find herself cold.

Sucking a breath in, Han Shuo's right hand clasped Emily's smooth, small hand as he circulated his magical yuan. Han Shuo's right hand was like a small furnace as he brought warmth to Emily.

"You're a necromancer and also have an uncommon martial arts technique, but why can you also use fire magic, and deploy it so adeptly? It's like you can adjust the temperature according to your wishes. How are you doing it?" Emily's charming eyes sparkled as she fixed them on Han Shuo, pouting as she admonished him.

"This is actually one of the techniques I'm training in, you don't need to be that surprised." Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders and responded honestly to Emily.

It was a pity that Emily was obviously not having any of Han Shuo's explanations. She didn't keep asking however, but just spoke with a smile, "Alright, alright. I'll discover all your secrets one day. Um, your mysteriousness is like a poison to me. The more I want to know about you, the more mysterious that I find you are."

"Heh, don't be boy crazy. Let's go, let's go." Han Shuo stretched out his hand with a smile and patted Emily's round butt, urging her to move along.

The two hadn't brought Chester along with them this time. When they approached the slave trading house where Lisa had been auctioned off last time, Han Shuo released a dark mist magic and surrounded the structure, enveloping it with darkness.

"Heh heh, your grasp of necromancy magic isn't bad at all now." Emily chuckled lowly. She deployed the archmage levitation spell and her body slowly flew through the air, landing on top of the five meter tall wall. She opened her mouth again, "I entangled the rope inside, you can climb over using it."

"Why go to so much trouble!" Han Shuo smiled and suddenly leapt

upwards, his speed much faster than Emily's levitation spell as he suddenly found his footing next to Emily.

Emily's body stiffened as she looked at Han Shuo like she'd seen a ghost in broad daylight. A strange light danced in her beautiful eyes as she threw herself into Han Shuo's arms, using all the strength in her body to pummel Han Shuo's chest. She yelled at him, seemingly angry and happy. "You villain! You reached the archmage realm a long time ago, but still kept lying to me. I'm going to beat you to death! You jerk, jerk!"

Han Shuo heard some noises traveling from the distance and didn't dare remain at a high vantage point for fear of attracting attention. He suddenly grabbed Emily and flew down, hiding in a corner of the slave trading house, clasping her small hand afterwards, explaining with a wry smile, "I didn't lie to you, this is a method that's similar to the levitation spell and is one of the techniques that I'm training in. It has nothing to do with magic. Think carefully, did you sense any magic pulses from me earlier?"

Emily started after listening to Han Shuo's words and her long eyebrows fluttered in confusion. She looked at Han Shuo in shock afterwards and asked with incredulity, "Just what kind of martial art technique are you training in? According to my knowledge, even the strongest swordsman or paladin can only fly for short periods of time using fighting aura. That technique wasn't flying at all, so how could you do it?"

"I told you before that the technique I'm training in is rather incredible and I'm not at liberty to discuss so much to you." Han Shuo truly couldn't explain much regarding demonic magic, so he could only say so much to Emily.

"Alright, alright. I knew that I wouldn't get much out of you anyways. Let's go. Let's see if we can get anything useful from the slave trading house while it's still a chaotic mess within Valen City." Emily pouted and rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, tugging him towards the trading house proper that she was now familiar with.

Emily must have thoroughly investigated the trading house beforehand.



She was very familiar with the buildings and floating through the air along the way, not making a single sound. A thin, dark magic shroud surrounded her, completely concealing her movements.

Han Shuo was quite familiar with covert operations like these. Not only did he not make a single sound, but he used his extraordinary senses to continuously point out the way to Emily, helping the two evade many patrolling guards along the way.

The two had made their way past two large auction buildings after a short while and was headed for the three houses located towards the back.

“This trading house usually has part of the Gryphon Legion stationed here. It will be very difficult for us to escape once they discover traces of us. Today however, the soldiers inside would’ve been deployed due to Clark’s death and will be searching the entire Valen City. This is perfect timing for us.” Emily explained to Han Shuo as they walked.

Han Shuo became quite serious once they started talking business. He listened to Emily as he silently observed the surroundings. A very strange smell suddenly wafted into his nostrils. The smell of blood was mixed in with the smell. Han Shuo felt that it was slightly pungent as he slowly took in the smell.

He wrinkled his nose, reached out a hand and grabbed Emily, saying lowly, “There’s the smell of blood here, something’s wrong.”

“I don’t smell it.” Emily took in a deep sniff and said in surprise. She then thought for a bit and seemed to recall Han Shuo’s miraculousness, “See if you can find the source of the smell of blood.”

Nodding, Han Shuo said quietly, “Follow me.”

Grabbing Emily’s small hand, Han Shuo followed his nose in search of the origin of the blood smell. He passed by two houses and came by the side of a pond. There was an artificial mountain next to it, with several deep and slightly creepy caves within it. Han Shuo’s ears proved their worth as he walked inside one of the caves with Emily.

A creak suddenly sounded as the originally solid stone wall suddenly

split apart as a guard dashed out from inside, covered in blood and wearing a frightened expression. A bone spear appeared out of thin air after he took only a few steps, running the guard through from behind. Two zombie warriors then walked out and dragged the guard's body inside.

Han Shuo and Emily received a good eyeful of the scene that had just taken place. Han Shuo was taken aback, and then spoke, "Perhaps the necromancer I saw earlier today is inside that cave."

"There's a high possibility for that, but the owner of the slave trading house is Bob Ascher, and the necromancer is one of Clark's killers, so what would he be doing here?" Emily was still a bit perplexed as she conversed lowly with Han Shuo.

"The most dangerous place is also the safest. There's an enemy behind every bush and tree now. The trading house is Bob Ascher's place of business and actually sent out the most number of soldiers. Who would've thought the necromancer would appear here? The fact that a soldier was killed just now is enough to prove that this necromancer isn't a guest either. This means it's highly likely that he has the desire to hide here." Han Shuo contemplated and then spoke slowly.

"Mm, you make a lot of sense. Shall we go see what's going on?" Emily complimented and then asked Han Shuo's opinions.

"Of course, I'm rather curious about this necromancer as well. I would likely only be able to run the other way if I faced against him alone, but with you by my side, we have nothing to fear." Han Shuo said and then paused, paying attention to the disturbances inside. He spoke again after a while, "Alright, the zombie warrior's footsteps have gone into the distance. We can go inside and take a look."

# Chapter 155: The three eyed demon god

## Ansidesi

The two were greeted with a scene of corpses strewn everywhere as soon as they entered the cave. Roughly estimating, there were at least a couple dozen. Judging from their clothing, there were guards, some nobles who'd come shopping, and even some slaves who'd been imprisoned in the cages.

Many torches burned along the walls, casting bright light all over the surroundings. It looked like a place to hold slaves. There were many cages made from iron bars lying around, as well as some torture equipment. It looked like this was the place they used to teach a lesson to unruly slaves.

There was a black stone erected in the center that had been shaped into a plinth. A corpse was tied to some iron bars on top of the plinth. There was also an indentation about three meters wide and long in the middle of the stone, with a thick scent of blood emanated from it.

More than ten zombie warriors had been summoned and they picked up the corpses on the ground, throwing them into the bloody pool in the middle of the plinth. These whole corpses sank into the blood with a splash. The surface began bubbling shortly thereafter and then quieted down, with the liquid level rising slightly afterwards.

The amount of fresh blood within the blood pool increased as the corpses were tossed in. It was actually about to overflow. The necromancer, whom Han Shuo had previously seen was standing off to the side of the plinth. He was holding the bone staff and had revealed his face. His body was wizened and he was staring into the blood pool with no expression. There were no signs of life in his grey pupils.

Han Shuo and Emily immediately backed up into a corner and made use of a crack to observe all that was going on. Emily set up a sound isolation boundary around the two and spoke in a low voice, "It looks like the necromancer is setting up some ritual altar. I wonder what he's about to do?"

Han Shuo shook his head and responded with a grave expression, “Maybe it’s because I know too little about necromancy magic, but I don’t know anything about the altar that the necromancer has set up. It looks like archmage level necromancers have indeed grasped many more strong magics.”

Just as Han Shuo and Emily were conversing lowly, the necromancer suddenly waved the bone staff in his hand and mumbled out an incantation. The blood pool on the altar suddenly started churning, and the corpse that was tied on top of the altar suddenly had its flesh and skin whipped off, becoming a stark white skeleton.

Another necromancy magic was chanted as the not yet dispersed souls from the newly dead on the ground seemed to materialize and condense into grey smoke, surging into the blood pool that surrounded the altar. The blood pool transformed into a whirlpool as the bones from the corpses that had just sunk to the bottom all revealed themselves again, slowly reforming themselves into a three eyed demon god with eight spikes on its head and a spiked tail attached to its waist.

The three eyed demon god was formed from the white bones and its three eyes were red, yellow, and blue, embedded into its head in the shape of a triangle. An enormous buffet of evil presence started emanating from it as it started forming, suffusing the entire area with its evil presence. It was a kind of evil that was wildly violent and bloodthirsty.

Even though they were quite a distance away, Han Shuo felt a chill grip his heart as he fixed his eyes on the three eyed demon god, not shifting from it for a second and focusing all his attention on the movement by the altar.

“Oh, my gosh! He’s connected with the three eyed demon god Ansidesi through the altar!” Emily gave a low exclamation as her eyes were filled with surprise.

A god was a being of utmost strength at a legendary level of existence. They had divine arts that stretched to the heavens, but were constrained by the laws of their plane of existence and couldn’t reveal their actual

body in this world, but through some rituals and mediums, some people in this world could use mystical arts to contact the gods.

Han Shuo had always felt that this unsubstantiated saying was quite ridiculous, and felt that this was something that was impossible to actually exist, but now that the truth appeared in front of his face, Han Shuo had no choice but to believe. The three eyed demon god Ansidesi had appeared from who knew how many planes of existence through this necromancer's ritual, descending his consciousness on these skeletons. Han Shuo stood blankly there for a moment, his thoughts churning in a mess.

A string of profound and ancient sounds emitted from Ansidesi's mouth. Han Shuo and Emily were completely befuddled as they had no idea what this string of sounds meant. However, the wizened necromancer seemed to be able to communicate with it.

However, the necromancer had been crouching on the floor and had buried his head in his chest in worship when he suddenly lifted his head with a look of fright, then quickly sung out an incantation, releasing the "Life Reconnaissance" spell and sent it through the surroundings.

"This is bad!" Han Shuo knew things would get bad as soon as he saw this spell appear. He suddenly exhaled and planned on pulling Emily out of here.

It was a pity that he was still a bit too slow. The "Life Reconnaissance" spell suddenly lit up when it neared Han Shuo and Emily's position. The necromancer worshipping on the floor immediately had his face sink and his bone staff suddenly waved, sending the dozens of zombie warriors walking towards the two.

"We've been made. We need to get out of here!" Emily cried out and suddenly backed up, planning on taking Han Shuo away from here.

At this moment, Han Shuo's sharp eyes saw that Ansidesi's body, formed from white bones, crashed back into the pool of blood with a thud when the necromancer lost his concentration.

It would seem that a necromancer couldn't lose his concentration for

even a second when using the mystical arts and the blood and bones within the pool to communicate with the three eyed demon god. When the necromancer shifted his attention to Han Shuo and Emily, the divine consciousness that had crossed who knew how many planes of existence would be unable to use the bone and blood to manifest itself.

“The three eyed demon god can’t help him, we don’t need to be afraid of him.” Han Shuo’s body halted in front of the cave entrance as he pulled Emily’s retreating body to a stop as well.

When Emily’s movement was arrested by Han Shuo, her beautiful eyes focused on the altar when she heard his words. She also discovered that Ansidesi had disappeared within the bloody pool and cool composure wrote itself over her face. “Who are you and how dare you use such an evil ceremony to summon Ansidesi within Valen City?!”

“The two of you shouldn’t have come in. I wouldn’t have killed you otherwise.” The shriveled necromancer spoke in an extremely dry and cracked voice, using a levitation spell to float towards Han Shuo and Emily from the altar.

He waved the bone staff in his hand as he let loose an adept level necromancy spell, “Chain of Wraiths”. More than dozens of wraiths were entwined into one long, metal chain, snaking towards Han Shuo and Emily. Dozens of zombie warriors also raised their wooden clubs and rushed to attack Han Shuo and Emily.

Snorting delicately, Emily took out her staff and lowly sang out a dark magic spell, forming a inky black Grim Reaper’s blade out of midair. It churned towards the zombie warriors with a wave of her staff, and the zombie warriors were all sliced cleanly like paper beneath the reaping of the blade. Not a single one was able to come near Han Shuo and Emily.

As the “Chain of Wraiths” came hurtling over, Han Shuo’s Demonslayer Edge suddenly whistled out of his hand as he activated the “Glacial Mystical Spellfire”. The Demonslayer Edge sent out eye piercing red light, enveloped in red spellfire as the temperature of the surrounding air suddenly skyrocketed. The Demonslayer Edge burned with the red spellfire

as it landed swiftly on the Chain.

The dozens of wraiths making up the Chain all opened their mouths to scream in frightened horror beneath the searing heat of the red spellfire Demonslayer Edge. When the Demonslayer Edge sank into the Chain, the Chain emitted sharp, squeaky sounds and gave off grey smoke. The dozens of wraiths flew into pieces as they screeched and wailed.

Three bone spears suddenly formed and shot towards Han Shuo and Emily. Han Shuo used his mind to control the Demonslayer Edge to block the two aiming for Emily. He also chanted lowly and sent a bone spear hurtling through the air, crashing accurately into the other bone spear that had been about to hit him.

“Eh, kid you’re also a necromancer!” The wizened necromancer suddenly exclaimed in astonishment and looked at Han Shuo with great surprise.

“Heh heh, indeed, indeed. We even teamed up to take out Clark at Calvert’s earlier. This is our second time meeting tonight.” Han Shuo looked leisurely at this necromancer and said with a slight smile.

Han Shuo had kept his features covered up at Calvert’s and only taken off his mask after killing Clark. The two had been quite a ways apart when the necromancer attacked Han Shuo, and so he hadn’t clearly seen Han Shuo in the deep of the night. It was obvious that he hadn’t recognized Han Shuo this time either.

“So it was you!” The necromancer called out lowly and then quickly floated out towards Han Shuo. He said sinisterly, “As a fellow necromancer, I’d like to see if you truly understand the mysteries of necromancy at all.”

The necromancer made a move after he finished speaking, looking like he would take out Han Shuo first!

# Chapter 156: Soul Erosion

"I've only just set a foot inside the door and have many questions to ask you!" Han Shuo himself possessed many tricks and had a dark archmage by his side. They wouldn't come off worse at all with two against one. Therefore, Han Shuo wasn't nervous at all when he saw the necromancer float over.

His figure was shapeless and unpredictable, like a ghost's, and the necromancer continuously changed direction. Just when he was ten or so meters away from the two, the archmage necromancer suddenly waved his bone staff and chanted an incantation.

An evil knight, covered in black armor and dark colored skin that measured over three meters tall appeared, riding a howling beast that was stronger than a rhino and covered with brown scales. It raised a spiked club, that was as thick as a human body, as it spurred on the howling beast beneath it, charging viciously towards Han Shuo and Emily.

The evil knight was a dark creature that was one level higher than a hate warrior. Only archmage level necromancers could summon them. They came from the dark abyss of the other dimension. Their black armor held an absolute advantage in deflecting physical attacks. Combined with the charging force of the howling beast beneath them, they were everyone's worst nightmare.

The evil knight immediately charged towards Han Shuo and Emily when it appeared, raising its club high and bringing it down like a metal pillar.

Emily immediately backed up when she saw the evil knight and murmured a dark spell. The Grim Reaper's blade from earlier had yet to vanish, and it swung towards the evil knight with Emily's manipulations.

After summoning the evil knight, the necromancer didn't take another step forward, but rather quickly dodged to the side, summoning a team of gargoyles to attack Han Shuo and shooting bone spears every which way.

Compared to fighting students in the Academy, the necromancer was obviously much more experienced and had a very fine grasp on the timing



of battling. He'd approached the two in an unpredictable manner just now in order to summon the evil knight, and took advantage of the short distance to charge and deny the two any chance to defend.

The Demonslayer Edge followed Han Shuo's thoughts and whirled out in flight again, infused with the flaming red spellfire, shooting towards the gargoyles making their way over. Han Shuo himself chanted a "Bone Shield" spell and blocked towards the front, defending against the bone spears.

After blocking two rounds of bone spears, the magically summoned "Bone Shield" broke apart. Han Shuo's mental strength swiftly circulated and he abruptly summoned the little skeleton, giving the mental order to fight the evil knight.

The evil knight on top of the howling beast was an extremely high level dark creature. It very agilely used the metal club in its hand to block the attacks from Emily's Grim Reaper blade. The spiked club that had appeared with it was quite durable, as it didn't break at all when it collided with Emily's magic blade.

"Eh, you only know how to summon skeletal warriors?" The necromancer was quite perplexed when he saw that Han Shuo had only summoned a bizarre skeleton after swiftly chanting a spell.

A leisurely smile played about his lips as Han Shuo didn't respond, only mentally giving the order for the little skeleton to attack the evil knight.

His two leg bones springing up, the little skeleton's seven bone spurs shook as he flew through the air. He clasped the bone dagger tightly in his hands as he made the first move, moving swiftly behind the evil knight like a streak of lightning.

The evil knight facing off against the Grim Reaper blade, seemed rather disdainful of the little skeleton. It only slightly shook its shoulders and shifted his black armor to cover his back. The necromancer had a mocking smile on his face as he watched as the little skeleton attacked, not worried in the slightest for the evil knight that he'd summoned.

Just as the little skeleton's bone dagger was about to land into the evil

knight's back, the bone dagger suddenly froze for a second and suddenly changed direction, stabbing into the evil knight's exposed neck. The evil knight facing off against the blade's attack suddenly emitted a string of ghastly screams as the giant spiked club in its hand waved around wildly.

Emily's summoned blade slipped past the spiked club's defence and smashed into the howling beast's body, cutting its head off, giving rise to a spray of light like a comet.

The little skeleton flew over at the same time and landed on the evil knight.

It blurred into motion, seeming to stab randomly into the now unarmored evil knight.

The little skeleton also yanked out bone dagger that had been stabbed into the evil knight's neck, grasping it in his hand and continuously plunging it into the evil knight's body. The evil knight, that had been covered with gleaming armor and riding the howling beast, suddenly changed greatly.

The black armor suddenly rusted over, the evil knight's originally strong and gleaming body dissipated into dust, vanishing in an instant. Even the howling beast that it was riding also scattered into ashes. It was the manifestation of life being thoroughly wiped away.

Emily breathed a sigh of relief when the evil knight vanished, her highly tensed heart was finally able to calm down and the Grim Reaper's blade also vanished without a trace. The little skeleton was the only thing remaining as it spun its bone dagger, recalling the seven bone spurs on the ground and placing them back on its back.

The jeering look on the necromancer's face had long since vanished utterly as he looked at the little skeleton with a look of incredulity. He cried out in shock, "Impossible, this is completely impossible. A hundred skeletal warriors wouldn't be able to harm an evil knight. This goes against the basic tenets of necromancy theory!"

A faint smile still on his face, Han Shuo said very easily, "Nothing is impossible. Although I don't have as much necromancy knowledge as you,

I don't think anything is illogical here.”

He gave an order and the little skeleton's legs shook as it took off towards the necromancer.

The necromancer was greatly surprised, but then immediately chuckled oddly, “Good, very good! Then let me see what secrets you have!”

A necromancy incantation sang out lowly from his mouth as the necromancer swiftly approached Han Shuo. Just as the little skeleton was about to bump into him, the necromancer suddenly leapt high into the air and flung out the bone staff in his hand, coming on top of Han Shuo's head.

An enormous evil mental strength suddenly surged into Han Shuo through the bone staff like a magnet, attempting to subvert Han Shuo's memories. The necromancer displayed a proud smile as he said viciously to the panicking Emily, “Don't make any moves. I've already established a connection with his soul. If I suddenly die, he'll lose his soul and become an idiot.”

Emily was immediately stunned motionless when she heard those words as she looked anxiously at Han Shuo. She discovered that Han Shuo was standing there frozen, completely out of it with his eyes unfocused like he was a sculpture or stone.

Even the little skeleton, that had just received Han Shuo's order to attack the necromancer, suddenly stood there blankly, looking around as he wielded his bone dagger, as if waiting for Han Shuo to give him an order.

“Haha, this is a necromancy magic called ‘Soul Erosion’ that I've recently grasped. I can take over a person's soul through necromancy magic and gain all his secrets after I erode his soul. I'm connected to the target throughout this process, and my target will be unable to escape even if I suddenly die. Haha!” The necromancer started explaining proudly to Emily when he saw that his power through the bone staff had invaded Han Shuo's brain.

Emily was quite frantic right now as she looked at Han Shuo, not knowing whether to fight this necromancer or not.

As an archmage, Emily could clearly sense the enormous even mental strength surging into Han Shuo's body through the white bone staff over his head. She didn't dare not believe the necromancer's words.

Just as Emily was utterly frantic and didn't know what to do, the originally slack jawed Han Shuo suddenly cried out harshly as red and purple spellfire surged up his arms. His entire being seemed to be enveloped in purple, red flame as his face appeared quite contorted, his entire body full of a frightening aura.

At the same time, the previously cocky necromancer suddenly had all color drained from his face as he cried out with extreme fear, "No, don't!"

# Chapter 157: Taking all the memories of the soul

The white bone staff, that had originally been hovering above Han Shuo's, head had reversed directions at sometime and left his head to hover over the necromancer's instead. The frightened necromancer kept chanting spells and attempted to regain control of the staff, but nothing he did would have any effect.

The Demonslayer Edge abruptly flew out at this time and stabbed into the necromancer's chest. Red spellfire suddenly flared up over his head, whereas Han Shuo sat down cross legged. It was his turn to chant in a low voice.

The necromancer was burnt to a crisp in very short amount of time as his head was encircled by red spellfire. His head was like a black cinder, and it was no longer possible to make out his features.

A profound incantation rang out from Han Shuo's mouth. He waved his hand and the white bone staff suddenly shot out a green light that weaved together to create a net. The net of green light encompassed the necromancer's head like a whirlpool sucking something in.

A cloud of grey aura suddenly floated out of the necromancer's body and was slowly detained by the green net, just as the souls of the other dead within the surroundings had been. The net and the white staff floated in front of Han Shuo.

The white staff suddenly flew into Han Shuo's hand when it reached him, while the green net got absorbed into Han Shuo's brain through his facial orifices, along with the soul within it.

Emily was completely gobsmacked by this sequence of events. She had no idea what was going on. She didn't understand why the previously cocky necromancer had suddenly lost his soul to Han Shuo instead.

After the green net and necromancer's soul were absorbed by Han Shuo's brain through his orifices, Han Shuo sat down cross legged and

didn't move a muscle. However, his expression continuously changed, at times joyful, enraged, and at times pained.

As Han Shuo sat there without moving, the little skeleton that had been standing in a daze seemed to still be perplexed. It walked around the surroundings with bone dagger in hand. When the little skeleton reached the center where the altar was, his eyes suddenly landed on the pool of blood that had been used to summon Ansidesi.

"Leave that place!" Emily knew that the little skeleton had an unexplainable connection with Han Shuo. When she saw the little skeleton run to that dangerous place, she immediately spoke up to stop him.

That evil pool of blood in the center of the altar had been formed from the corpses of countless numbers of trading house guards. The necromancer had likely added in a number of devious items. Emily was quite afraid that the evil within the pool would invade the little skeleton's body if he went in.

It was a pity that Emily wasn't Han Shuo. Her words had no effect on the little skeleton. Her words actually had the opposite effect, as the little skeleton touched its smooth head and looked at Emily with some confusion, turning back to leap forward into the pool.

"Oh, my gosh. Not only is the master crazy, but so are the summoned creatures!" Emily was going mad in her anxiety and started cursing.

Emily still walked towards the altar, even though she was cursing, planning on seeing how she could help the small skeleton. When she reached the altar however, and saw that the little skeleton was splashing around happily within the pool of blood, she actually felt the emotion of joy from the little skeleton, submerged up to his neck as he played like an innocent child.

"Eh, what's with this little skeleton?" Emily didn't know what to say when she saw that all was well with the little skeleton and that he seemed to be having a great time.

All the corpses that had landed in the pool of blood earlier had seen

their flesh and blood immediately dissolve, with their bodies sinking into the pool without a trace, but the little skeleton hadn't seemed to be affected at all after entering the pool. This took Emily aback greatly. When she thought back to the first time she met Han Shuo and how the little skeleton had seemed to be immune to many dark magics, chasing her up and down the battlefield, Emily had to shake her head with a rueful smile. There were indeed some things that she couldn't explain.

Suddenly, Emily's lashes fluttered quickly as she looked at the pool of blood, perplexed. When looked at closely, it seemed that the blood within the pool was slowly decreasing.

When Emily refocused her attention on the little skeleton, she noticed that the seven bone spurs on the back of the little skeleton's back were absorbing the blood from the pool. This strange phenomenon made Emily cry out in shock and murmur, "My gosh, what kind of demon did he summon?!"

The blood within the pool was slowly absorbed into the seven bone spurs on the little skeleton's back. When the blood began to run dry, the multitude of white bones within seemed to be affected by some power and liquified with the remaining blood, also to be absorbed by the seven spurs.

This process had taken roughly half an hour and everything within the pool had been absorbed by the little skeleton's spinal area. Emily discovered that the seven bone spurs on its back had turned a fey, bright red and subtly emitted a bloodthirsty light. They looked even more sharp and frightening than before.

The pool was in a square shape and was three meters deep after everything had vanished. The little skeleton was only a meter tall. He looked up at Emily, seeming to be considering how to climb up.

"Out of ideas now, aren't you." Emily huffed and planned on unfurling a rope to pull the little skeleton up.

Who would know that the little skeleton would suddenly activate the seven bone spurs on his back as soon as she's spoken, shakily flying out of the bottom of the pool of blood, landing next to the shellshocked Emily.

The little skeleton didn't even look at Emily once as he activated the seven bone spurs again to fly next to the still meditating Han Shuo.

"Damn it, you're just as much of a jerk as your master!" Although the little skeleton was expressionless, Emily could feel that he was smugly showing off at the moment and she couldn't help but curse at him.

She then saw the little skeleton continue to fan the seven bone spurs and start flying around the enormous room. He started off shakily, but then started leveling out. As he flew more steadily, his speed increased as well. Emily's eyes couldn't even keep up with him towards the end.

Han Shuo breathed out lightly at this moment and suddenly said, "It's finally done!"

Emily was greatly surprised and turned her head to look at Han Shuo. She was suddenly mesmerized and looked at his eyes with great astonishment, forgetting to ask Han Shuo what was going on.

Han Shuo's eyes were suddenly incredibly clear, like the brightest star in the vast heavens. They were alluring and deep, giving others a feeling of impenetrable mysteriousness.

"What's wrong?" Han Shuo couldn't help but stand up when he saw Emily's lovesick expression and walked over to pinch her face, asking with some confusion.

"No, nothing much. Just that your eyes seem brighter than before, and even your presence seems to have undergone some changes." Emily brushed away Han Shuo's playful hand a bit bashfully.

"Heh heh, so it turns out there's a really nice side benefit to taking over the necromancer's soul." Han Shuo laughed gleefully.

"Hurry up and tell me, just what is going on?" Emily's curiosity was killing her at the moment as her hand snaked out and clutched Han Shuo's throat, asking viciously.

"Cough, alright, alright!" Han Shuo smiled in explanation after he wrenched Emily's hands off his neck. "I told you that the martial techniques I'm training in are quite miraculous. Not only have they



strengthened my body, but they've even enlarged my brain. He wanted to use the soul erosion spell just now to take over my soul and memories, but because my brain had been enlarged, I could also sense all the memories of his soul throughout this process."

"Logically speaking, a necromancer at my level, mental strength, and brain processes would definitely be far inferior to the speed at which he would erode my soul. Ordinary people wouldn't even have the time to repeat his name before their memories were co-opted."

"But it was a pity that the tenaciousness of my enlarged brain was something that he didn't imagine. I took over his memories before he could take mine and occupied his soul, obtaining all of his. It's that simple."

Emily was gobsmacked by the explanation that came from Han Shuo's mouth. She looked at Han Shuo with an incredible look and kept shaking her head, "Unbelievable, seriously unbelievable. What kind of monster are you?"

Hugging her fiercely, Han Shuo held Emily and said cheekily, "Alright, alright. Don't be so surprised. We can go now."

The Demonslayer Edge suddenly flew up and out of the necromancer's chest after he finished speaking, landing into Han Shuo's palm. There was a chopped off finger at the tip of the Demonslayer Edge with a space ring on it. Han Shuo took that as well.

"You brat, stop flying around and come down." Han Shuo yelled up with a smile at the little skeleton still circling in the air. The little skeleton capered down in front of Han Shuo and suddenly screeched to a halt in front of him, standing on the ground, waving his bone dagger.

"He, he entered the pool of blood and absorbed all of the blood and all the fragments of bone into those seven bone spurs." Emily hastened to explain to Han Shuo what the little skeleton had done while he was meditating.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, "I know. It isn't the first time that he's done something so daring. This is no big deal. See, he can fly now, isn't that

great?”

“I have no idea what kind of demon you’ve created here. I notice that he seems to have his own emotions now. I don’t know if it was my misimpression, but when I was laughing at him being unable to get out of the pool of blood, he immediately flew out proudly from it. Truly, I could feel that he was showing off towards me, I promise!” Emily looked at the little skeleton and seemed to suddenly remember what had just happened.

“Heh heh, don’t be surprised. There are too many mind boggling things in this world. I believe that what you saw wasn’t an illusion because I’ve had the same impression before as well. I can’t really say for sure what’s going on now, but I think that he’ll give me an explanation as he continues to evolve in the future.” Han Shuo wasn’t surprised at all as he pointed to the little skeleton and smiled faintly.

Emily started when she heard these words and looked at the little skeleton with a wry smile after a while, then shifting her gaze to Han Shuo. “You two weirdos!”

“There’s nothing weird about this. You must get used to everything about me, because I believe that there will only be more amazing things that will happen in the future.” Han Shuo laughed heartily and looked to be in quite a good mood.

“Bryan, you’re growing at such a fast speed that your future accomplishments will be hard to imagine. Perhaps I won’t be able to help you with anything soon. I’m just a widow, will you cast me aside then?” Emily suddenly seemed to think of the matters of the future as she looked at Han Shuo. Her beautiful eyes looked at him and asked with a bit of forlornment.

“Don’t be silly. I’m with you, not because of what you can help me with. Even if our identities change in the future, that won’t affect anything between us.” Han Shuo looked deeply at Emily and saw her display a happy expression. He then pulled on Emily. “Let’s go, let’s go. Let’s leave, we don’t need to go anywhere else. I think I’ve gotten what you need.”

The two didn’t linger as they left, hand in hand. The sky had just started

to brighten, as the two left stealthily, similar to how they had arrived.

# Chapter 158: Reaching the sky in a single bound

The Dark Mantle had strongholds in any of the Lancelot Empire's cities. Naturally, Valen City was no exception.

If you are not reading this at [volaretranslations](http://volaretranslations.com), this translation is stolen and is not the latest/most complete update.

Han Shuo sat cross legged within a secret room carved out of dense rock, slowly digesting the memories from the necromancer's souls.

Han Shuo didn't set foot out of the secret room once within the four days, going through decades of the necromancer's memories. This necromancer named Clarendon had been 52 years old, and his experiences of all those years were all analyzed by Han Shuo.

Dozens of battles and a lifetime of studying necromancy, as well as a few secrets of his identity, were completely absorbed and memorized by Han Shuo in those four days. There were many minor details of course, but Han Shuo was too lazy to remember those.

After he'd assimilated all of the necromancer's experiences, Han Shuo realized that Clarendon had been in service to an organization called the Calamity Church. As such, all his actions, including the operation against Clark, had been on the orders from the Church's senior executives. He had no idea why he had to assassinate Clark.

Apart from a few matters having to do with Clarendon's identity, Han Shuo's greatest acquisition was the necromancer's comprehension of his path from apprentice to archmage, including the experience of every single battle and subsequent reflections.

If there really was a way to reach the sky in one bound in this world, then Han Shuo was doing so right now. With the theoretical knowledge and battle experience from this necromancer, Han Shuo's path to archmage was crystal clear. He would be able to quickly learn many advanced magics as long as he had enough mental strength.

Clarendon's experience from dozens of battles greatly broadened Han Shuo's worldview, and would prove to be of incalculable benefit to his future battles. The untested Han Shuo took note of some matters to avoid. In this way, the practical experience gains were likely on par with that of those of necromancy knowledge.

Han Shuo had obtained all of the valuable aspects from Clarendon's memories after four days, but he didn't immediately leave this secluded secret room. He spent another two days to fully grasp the other necromancy magics that a journeyman mage should know.

When Han Shuo walked out of the secret room, he felt refreshed and in great spirits. He was greatly at ease and felt quite confident about their mission this time.

"You're finally out. Mistress Emily has left orders that I must take you to her as soon as you emerge." Chester was standing guard at the door and spoke respectfully to Han Shuo when the latter emerged.

"Chester! Why are you so serious now. I remember that you weren't like this when I first met you!" Chester had spoken with a very casual tone and been quite at ease when he'd interacted with Han Shuo before. Chester was now noticeably more reserved when facing Han Shuo and spoke like he was speaking to his supervisor. This made Han Shuo rather confused.

"Bryan, you'll become a great person in the future, I'm just getting used to things beforehand." Chester briefly relaxed and smiled.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said leisurely, "Even if I become a great person, our relationship shouldn't be that estranged." He clapped Chester's shoulder and laughed easily, "True partners should relax. I feel rather ill at ease seeing you this solemn."

"Alright, alright, I know what to do. Bryan, hurry up and go see Mistress Emily. She said that I had to bring you immediately to her when you emerged." Chester chuckled lightly, relaxing after Han Shuo had clapped his shoulder, and leading Han Shuo swiftly down a brightly lit hallway.

They emerged from the secret room after a few minutes, finally arriving in front of the room Emily was in. Chester winked at Han Shuo, backing

away with a chuckle, and only resumed his guard when he had placed some distance between them.

Although Han Shuo and Emily had purposefully concealed their relationship, a hint of their true status still seeped out from the tone of their conversation and gestures. As a bandit, Chester was naturally very perceptive. He had naturally discovered a few hints after spending a few days together. However, Chester was a smart man, knowing his only chance to exceed his current station in life would lie in friendly relations with Han Shuo. So, although he knew full well some of what was going on, he pretended he didn't.

Han Shuo understood this and so wasn't even slightly worried that Chester would tattle. He maintained the easy smile on his face as Chester winked, pushing open the door to Emily's room without a care in the world, not having the slightest reservations at all.

"Who is it?!" Emily was greatly shocked as she cried out from within the bathroom. Han Shuo's sharp ears even picked up a few hints of water dripping.

His eyes flickering, Han Shuo realized that Emily was actually taking a shower at the moment. After six straight days of closed door cultivation, he'd been keeping things in for quite a while. He chuckled deviously and closed the room door, shooting straight for Emily's bathroom.

Emily was a bit panicked at first, but immediately knew who had come when she heard Han Shuo's evil chuckle. She blushed and fell back into the tub.

"The beauty stealer is here!" A cocky smirk on his face, Han Shuo circulated his magical yuan, shredding his shirt from his upper body and revealing his sturdy, domineering figure. He leaped into the bath, causing the water to spray everywhere.

"You evil villain! Such a rascal!" Emily pouted teasingly and splashed around, seeming to protest against Han Shuo's invasions, but her curses had turned into soul lurching panting within the span of a few breaths.

Emily's thrashing and twitching body relaxed into a long moan after a

long while, and the ripples in the water finally calmed.

“That was beautiful!” Emily sighed softly, draped over Han Shuo’s broad and firm chest. She said contently, “You evil little thing, I hate and love you!”

Han Shuo was sprawled out lazily by the side of the tub and said leisurely, “It’s one of the happiest things in life to be able to take such a warm soak on this cold winter day. Oh right, what were you in a hurry to find me for?”

“To ask you what you’ve gained through the past couple of days, of course!” Emily’s slender hands subconsciously kneaded Han Shuo’s back as she asked him.

Han Shuo took a deep breath in and thoroughly described the gains of the past couple days for Emily. Emily was incredibly shocked and looked at Han Shuo with great delight, “You’ve gained his necromancy magic comprehension and his real life battle experience!? Doesn’t this mean that as long as you have enough mental strength, you’ll be able to quickly grasp all of the archmage level magics that he already knows?”

“I think that’s the logic. I’ve already tried to practice another journeyman level magic and discovered that I could master it quickly with the prior understanding of the necromancer. I didn’t have to go through too much trial and error in the middle.” Han Shuo nodded.

“My gosh, incredible, this is too incredible!” Emily’s incredulous joy doubled when she heard Han Shuo’s words. She kept repeating those sentences and appeared even more excited than Han Shuo.

“The necromancer obtained those documents from a secret room within the slave trading house. They chronicle Bob Ascher’s business dealings and can prove that he was involved in its operations.” Han Shuo handed the documents that the necromancer had taken from the secret room over to Emily after describing the situation.

Although the necromancer named Clarendon had set up a magical boundary within his space ring, Han Shuo broke it open very easily. He had obtained several books regarding necromancy, a few medicines for

replenishing mental strength, and a few magic robes that had the effect of increasing magic power.

Of course, what Han Shuo was most satisfied with was still Clarendon's white bone staff. This white bone staff was specially refined for necromancers, using this staff to cast necromancy spells would enhance Han Shuo's power.

Han Shuo could originally only summon one bone spear when he cast the bone spear spell, but with the white bone staff, he could release two at once. Even the number of summoned dark creatures would increase as well.

The delighted Emily was about to say something as she held the documents that Han Shuo had given to her when she suddenly thought of something. She stared fixedly at Han Shuo and spoke urgently, "What organization did you say that this necromancer is from?"

"The Calamity Church!" Han Shuo started and replied.

Her expression changing drastically, all the color drained from Emily's face as she spoke to Han Shuo, "Don't tell anyone you killed Clarendon. I must report this to my brother immediately, especially since it involves the Calamity Church. Oh, Lawrence came looking for you and wanted you to drop by when you had the time. If you're careful, you can make your way to him. "

Emily hastily gave Han Shuo a few more reminders and told him not to tell anyone of his involvement with the Calamity Church. She then hurriedly left for the secret room with the magic mirror that would enable her to speak with the senior executives of the Dark Mantle.



# Chapter 159: Leaving with the beauty

Ever since learning of Lawrence's identity, Han Shuo had been pondering how to interact with him. From the current situation, Lawrence was obviously planning on involving himself in the struggle of the princes. It was because of the mysteriousness that shrouded his identity that made his situation not that optimistic.

If Lawrence really could inherit the throne, Han Shuo wouldn't mind growing closer with him and would even be willing to go to bat for him, but if Lawrence didn't have this kind of strength in him, it would place Han Shuo in a disadvantageous position if he were to brashly associate himself with Lawrence.

Therefore, even though he was well aware of Lawrence's identity, Han Shuo pretended that he didn't know and arrived at Lawrence's residence with his usual expression.

The assassin, Lucky, was the one who showed Han Shuo in. After their experience assassinating Clark, the old assassin had completely accepted Han Shuo and his expression was no longer that remote. When he brought Han Shuo in, Lucky said, "He's not here right now, but will return at any moment. You can wait here if you're not in a hurry."

Nodding, Han Shuo looked at Lucky with a faint smile, "No worries, I'll wait for a while. Oh, right. You went off after Calvert afterwards, but did you get him?"

"Of course, not only him, but I killed his son as well." The old assassin displayed a trace of pride in his eyes. It looked like he was quite proud of his skills.

Han Shuo chit chatted randomly when he suddenly remembered about Lisa and asked, "Oh right, Lisa isn't present at the moment. I'd like to check in on her."

"Miss Lisa is elsewhere. Please come with me, I'll take you to her." Lucky responded and took Han Shuo through a garden, arriving at a building in the quiet rear of the property. He then spoke quietly to Han Shuo, "Miss

Lisa's emotions have calmed down because Calvert and his son have been killed, but you'd best not bring up her family."

Han Shuo nodded in understanding and didn't say much.

He approached the building and knocked lightly.

"Is it cousin Lawrence?" Lisa asked through the door as her voice still seemed a bit melancholic.

"It's me!" Han Shuo responded.

"Oh, Bryan, you've come to see me." Han Shuo could hear long awaited happiness in Lisa's voice as her footsteps rapidly drew near. Lisa opened the door and appeared in cotton pajamas in front of Han Shuo.

Although Lisa's features hadn't changed since her life changing event and her naive and cute demeanor remained just as youthful as ever, a constant sorrow clouded her clear eyes. Her demeanor was such that it evoked protective feelings, a marked difference from her previous obstinate, headstrong ways.

However, this weak Lisa looked quite pleasing to Han Shuo's eyes. He closed the door after walking in and huffed out lightly, pretending to be cold, "The weather outside is quite cold!"

"Thank you for killing that old dog Calvert!" Lisa tugged on Han Shuo's sleeve, leading him inside with her as she thanked him.

A brazier was burning inside as it spread warmth throughout the house. Lisa added a few sticks of dry firewood to the brazier and then took her seat on a soft, leather chair.

"It was one of your cousin's men who killed Calvert, so you should thank him instead. I only made a mess of some things." Han Shuo found a seat and poured a cup of hot water for himself.

"If it wasn't for your distraction, my cousin's man wouldn't have succeeded that easily." Lisa had indeed changed a bit from before. She was silent for a bit after speaking, then looked a bit fearfully at Han Shuo. "You spent so many gold coins to buy me from the trading house. According to

the rules of slavery, I belong to you.”

Starting in fright, Han Shuo immediately said seriously, “Lisa, you should know that I bought you purely to save you and had no other thoughts whatsoever. In addition, it wasn’t that many gold coins. We’re friends after all, don’t misunderstand!”

Lisa shook her head desolately, appearing a bit frantic as she looked at Han Shuo, “Do you not want me because you disdain me now?”

“No, not at all. We’re friends and this is what I should do. You have your own personal freedom. I don’t want you to feel guilty about those thousand gold coins.” Han Shuo hastened to say.

Lisa was silent once again after speaking. “Because of Bob Ascher, my family clan is completely annihilated. My status as a slave is also confirmed. You bought me in front of so many people in the trading house, this is also an irrefutable truth.”

“Then I can return your freedom to you and lift the status of a slave from you.” Han Shuo thought and said to Lisa.

Han Shuo heard footsteps sound outside of the door, and Lawrence walked in with a slight smile after a short while. He asked when he saw Han Shuo and Lisa in conversation, “What are you two chatting about?”

“I’m saying that I’m going to dissolve Lisa’s status as a slave.” Han Shuo responded as he looked at Lawrence.

“Give me your crystal card, I’ll transfer a thousand gold coins to you. Then you’ll have sold Lisa to me through legal proceedings. Leave the rest to me.” Lawrence seemed to have given the matter some thought already and responded immediately when Han Shuo spoke up.

“No need, Lisa is my friend, I can give her to you now. I can’t take the thousand gold coins.” A thousand gold coins was nothing in Han Shuo’s eyes, and he really had held the mentality of saving Lisa at the time.

Lawrence didn’t insist on refusing after Han Shuo, but nodded at Han Shuo with a smile. Lawrence said forthrightly, “Alright, I’ll take care of her status. However, this is Valen City and Bob Ascher’s territory. I’ll get Lisa

back to the Empire in the next two days. Bob Ascher will be powerless even if he wants to do anything.”

As the third prince, Lawrence’s relationship with the king was very close. There naturally wouldn’t be any difficulty for him to handle such matters. Valen City was in an uproar at the moment, and there was indeed some danger to Lisa’s life if she stayed here. It would be a good thing to get her as far away as possible.

“Lisa, I have some things to discuss with Bryan separately. We’ll be leaving first!” Lawrence cast a glance at Han Shuo and walked outside. Han Shuo then rose to his feet and followed.

The two of them walked to an artificial mountain by the side of the front yard and Lawrence looked deeply at Han Shuo, asking, “Bryan, why have you come with Mistress Emily to Valen City this time?”

This had to do with secrets of the Dark Mantle, and so Han Shuo naturally couldn’t say much. He shook his head in apology, “I’m sorry, I promised Mistress Emily that word of this wouldn’t travel.”

Sighing lowly, Lawrence said genuinely, “You have a clean birth and although you once had a status of a slave, it’s of no matter. However, Emily is different, and her current status is old Hahn’s daughter-in-law. Walking too close with her will affect you in the future.”

“I think I understand your meaning, but I know what I’m doing. You don’t need to worry about me. Right, if you’ve come to Valen City to save Lisa and kill Clark, then you’re finished here. Are you leaving soon?” Lawrence meant well, but Han Shuo and Emily’s relationship had been cemented already. Han Shuo had his own thoughts and plans and naturally wouldn’t change anything because of Lawrence’s words of advice.

“Apart from this, I also promised someone to take out Bob Ascher. Perhaps you can assist me?” Lawrence suddenly spoke as he looked at Han Shuo.

“Haha, you must be joking. You’re inviting me to fight against the chief of the Gryphon Legion. This is too laughable. I know how much I weigh

and I'll have no effect whatsoever against someone at the level of old Bob." Han Shuo's eyes gleamed, but he still played dumb.

Lawrence stared at Han Shuo and was about to say something when Lucky's low call suddenly traveled in, "We've been compromised! I think we need to retreat immediately, Bob Ascher's men are on their way."

Lawrence was startled and his face changed slightly. "Bryan, please take Lisa around the path in the yard to the back. We need to make some preparations."

Time was of the essence and so Han Shuo didn't say much else. He immediately nodded decisively and suddenly moved, breaking through the door into Lisa's room like lightning.

He didn't wait for Lisa to say anything as he took down a leather coat from the wall and wrapped her in it. He wrapped Lisa in it and leapt out the window, rushing for the path in the back yard.

Rapid hoofbeats sounded in the distance and approached quickly. Han Shuo knew that the Gryphon Legion must have sent a lot of men this time. He didn't know if Lawrence and the others could make it out. Bob Ascher's Gryphon Legion blotted out the sky in Valen City. Even a prince would only face death if he went head to head with Bob Ascher.

# Chapter 160: You shouldn't have chased after me

After leaving the back yard, Han Shuo immediately focused his concentrations. Although he held Lisa within his arms, his speed was still as fast as lightning as he sped along the path.

It was noon, but there were no pedestrians on the road during such a frosty winter. Add to that, the fact that the soldiers had been turning Valen City inside out over the past two days, the civilians were all hiding in their homes and didn't dare to walk about. Thus, Han Shuo's dashing figure rather stood out along the road.

Two airborne patrolling Gryphon Knights spurred their gryphons on and detected Han Shuo's figure. The gryphons screamed as the knights hefted their three meter long spears and flew towards Han Shuo.

"There are gryphons in the air!" Lisa's face was frozen red from the cold bite of the wintry air. She raised her head from her position in Han Shuo's grasp and noticed the pursuit from the two Gryphon Knights, hastily voicing a reminder to Han Shuo.

"I know, don't worry!" Han Shuo had long since noted the pursuit and he responded in a low voice to Lisa without a change in expression. His body continued to dash quickly through the scattered streets as his mind spun, searching for ways to react.

Han Shuo had thoroughly remembered all the places they'd passed on the way to Lawrence's. Now that they had been spotted by the Gryphon Knights, Han Shuo was quickly thinking of ways out.

He couldn't expose the Dark Mantle stronghold, so he couldn't return there at the moment. Now that there were Gryphon Legion members patrolling Valen City and two Knights in the air had set their sights onto them, he had to quickly shake them off or find a place to kill them. Otherwise, more trouble would quickly descend upon them.

As his thoughts raced, Han Shuo suddenly changed direction and didn't

dash in and out of alleyways. He ran towards the direction of a patch of trees, circulating his magical yuan, making it so that he seemed to have a boundless source of energy. The speed of his dash was faster than the two knights' expectations.

The two knights had planned on landing as soon as Han Shuo had left the cover of the houses and killing him. Who would've thought that Han Shuo would speed forward like he was riding a fierce and swarthy horse as soon as he left the area, catching them off guard.

However, the knights naturally held an advantage being in the air. When they regained their composure, they spurred their gryphons onwards to catch up to Han Shuo and circled above the trees, locking their sights onto Han Shuo.

They were already a few li away from where Lawrence lived. Han Shuo had observed for a little bit just now and noticed that only these two knights were pursuing him, so he hadn't been unduly worried. His body halted as soon as he entered the cover of the trees and suddenly came to a complete stop, swinging Lisa up and around him so that she was on his back.

"Hold on tight and don't let go no matter what!" Han Shuo ordered lowly.

She nodded her head docilely and said resolutely, "I understand. I won't let go even if I die."

"Don't worry, we won't be the ones to die." Han Shuo comforted Lisa confidently and took out a firm, supple rope from his space ring. He firmly tied Lisa onto his back to prevent her from sliding off halfway through. Han Shuo gripped the Demonslayer Edge in his right hand after doing all this and looked coldly at the two Gryphon Knights hovering overhead, preparing himself to kill two men and two beasts.

"Let's see where you'll run to now!" A Gryphon Knight laughed disdainfully overhead, shaking the sharp spear in his hand and digging his heels into the gryphon beneath him in an odd way.

The gryphon circling in the air suddenly screamed out bizarrely and

dived down towards Han Shuo. The metal claws of the gryphon could rip apart a buffalo. As it dived down towards Han Shuo like this, the aura formed by its enormous body and the knight's coldly gleaming spear was enough to stun an enemy senseless.

The other Gryphon Knight moved his steed closer to Han Shuo, but didn't immediately make a move. The arrogance and disdain on his face seemed to indicate that having one out of the two of them was more than enough to take care of Han Shuo, and that his attentions weren't needed at all.

Han Shuo's demeanor was aloof and remote as he held his ground without moving, staring intently at the diving knight and gryphon. A white bone staff suddenly appeared in his other hand when the Gryphon's metal claws was skimming the tops of the trees and Han Shuo quickly released a "Dark Mist" spell.

With the enhancing effects of this bone staff, the area of coverage by Han Shuo's "Dark Mist" spell had increased by one third, completely enshrouding an area that measured ten meters in diameter.

"Ugh, damn it, I can't see anything!" The Gryphon Knight bellowed furiously, some panic evident in his tone of voice.

He'd been chasing after Han Shuo all along and had witnessed Han Shuo's speed with his own eyes. That agility was something that a strong swordsman should possess, and a sword shaped Demonslayer Edge had appeared in his hand when he'd reached the treetops. His posture completely resembling that of a swordsman.

However, when it really came down to the actual fight, a white bone staff had suddenly appeared in Han Shuo's hands and he'd released a "Dark Mist" spell in the nick of time. This greatly astonished the Gryphon Knight, who'd also fallen into Han Shuo's trap.

The diving Gryphon Knight exclaimed in astonishment, alerting his companion that something was wrong. His companion moved quickly, intent on coming over to rescue his comrade.

It was too late.



A streak of bizarre, incandescent red fire flared strikingly through the dense, black mist. It was like it wasn't affected by the "Dark Mist" spell at all, displaying a heart stirring arc and tracing a long, bloody path.

The gryphon screamed bizarrely in pain as the knight yelled hoarsely, the cries rising at almost the same time as that fey, red fire. Screams that would strike fear into people's hearts as the long, bloody line painted itself through the patch of dark fog.

It was only when that bizarre, red fire extinguished itself did the despairing cries of agony finally fall silent.

The other Gryphon Knight that had arrived in the area listened to the screams with his scalp tingling with numbness. He couldn't see what was occurring and could only frantically repeat his questions, "Camper, what's wrong? What's going on?"

He kept calling out, but didn't dare to approach the black mist. He only observed from a distance.

The "Dark Mist" was a spell that took effect swiftly and also dispersed quickly. As the chilly wind blew, the black mist, that had coalesced quickly, vanished in a short period of time.

Han Shuo still stood where he was and had a cruel, cold leer on his face. Lisa on his back had her eyes tightly shut, burying her head into Han Shuo's neck as she couldn't bear to look upon the scene.

A bloody mess of severed limbs and hacked off flesh was scattered around Han Shuo. Some belonged to the Gryphon Knight, and some to the gryphon. A thick scent of blood attacked the nose as Han Shuo was stepping on a head that was slowly leaking brain fluid. It was as if he'd just been baptized by blood as he was covered in the gore, making his leer appear even more horrifying.

Dry retching suddenly sounded from the Gryphon Knight. He turned his gryphon immediately, fearfully trying to make his escape.

"Do you think that you're the only one who can fly?" Han Shuo's leer split in a laugh. He activated the "Demonic Art of the Ninth Heavens" and

took to the air, shooting towards the Gryphon Knight like lightning with Lisa on his back. He arrived behind the Gryphon Knight before the latter had travelled too far.

Two bone spears shot out and stabbed into the gryphon's rump, making it scream shrilly. It actually turned and shot towards Han Shuo with the knight on its back. After the experience of his initial panic and the fact that his steed was now charging towards Han Shuo of its own volition, he quickly understood that Han Shuo could also fly through the air and that there was no opportunity for him to escape. He therefore hefted his spear and took aim at Han Shuo.

Every Gryphon Knight was at least a senior knight. Therefore, when he hefted his spear, it flared out with dark green fighting aura, as if silver lightning were traveling through the air after making use of the gryphon's momentum to hurtle towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had just used the sharp Demonslayer Edge to slaughter a Gryphon Knight, along with his gryphon. There was an uncontrollable bloodthirst rising in his heart. It was as if there was a voice spurring him on in his heart that told him to keep killing in such a gory manner. It happened to provide the perfect outlet for his emotions as he saw the Gryphon Knight charge towards him.

Han Shuo threw his head back in a long howl and flew over with a leer. The Demonslayer Edge hadn't appeared to be particularly long before, but with the circulation of the "Glacial Mystical Spellfire", a two meter long purple and red light spat from the tip. The purple light was out in front, and the red light connected to the Demonslayer Edge in the back. The weapon looked quite magical.

Even with Lisa on his back, Han Shuo's speed wasn't much slower than the Gryphon Knight's as he flew using the Art. His magical yuan circulating at top speed. Han Shuo emitted a dense killing intent that seemed to materialize as a black aura around his body. When viewed from afar, Han Shuo's figure with Demonslayer Edge in hand was like a shooting star falling towards the ground.

A ball of dazzling splendor exploded from where the two intersected, a deafening metallic clang reverberated in the surroundings. The Spellfire infused Demonslayer Edge shot out a meter of cold, purple light, crashing into the fighting aura emitted by the long spear. The spear was immediately churned into dust as it was ravaged by the violent magical yuan.

A bone piercing cold immediately crept over the knight's body. He reacted, but didn't have time to make a move before Han Shuo coalesced a red spellfire a meter tall. The blood veins in the knight's right arm gripping the silver spear suddenly exploded beneath the piercing cold and burning heat. His muscles started sliding off his bone, like they'd been doused in acid, as droplets of blood escaped from his arm.

"You shouldn't have chased after me!" Han Shuo leered at the horrified Gryphon Knight. The Demonslayer Edge started flying according to his will afterwards and hacked off the gryphon's metal claws. The Demonslayer Edge then hewed downwards and spliced the knight and gryphon's body into two, like he was cleaving apart a mountain. Fresh blood splattered like rain down towards the trees.

The two Gryphon Knights had now died grisly deaths at Han Shuo's hands, but Han Shuo actually had an unsated feeling. His heart trembled as he suddenly came to his senses, finally understanding why he had such a fervent desire to slay and slaughter.

Since his demonic magic had reached the true demon realm, Han Shuo had thoroughly become a demon. It was the first time that he'd had overwhelming power and would find it difficult to control the urges deep within his heart, particularly as the next realm was the most dangerous "bloodlust" realm. As one began to enter the bloodlust realm, the practitioner would start to have the desire to erupt in full blown slaughter in every battle.

It was a good thing that since he hadn't yet entered the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo could still control his thoughts and desires. It would become harder to control his bloodthirsty desires once he reached the next realm. He wouldn't be able to stop once he started fighting unless he saw blood,

becoming an extreme, gore-seeking violent demon.

He exhaled lightly and privately reflected that practicing demonic magic was truly a perverse way. However, the exhilaration of fighting and killing today made him feel damn good, and his entire being seemed to strut around like a new person.

“Over there, after him!” The battle screams of horses came in from the distance. Han Shuo hovered in the air and swiveled his head, seeing that a troop of Gryphon Legion cavalry was quickly approaching him. This troop was formed only by earth bound knights. Han Shuo wasn’t afraid that he’d be unable to shake them off.

Snorting coldly, Han Shuo flew downwards and picked up speed to leave when he was level with the trees.

“You know how to fly!” Lisa suddenly put her lips next to Han Shuo’s ears at this time and exclaimed with astonishment at this time.

# Chapter 161: Bumping into a familiar face

Outside of Valen City, Han Shuo set Lisa down when they arrived at an outcropping of randomly scattered rock in the wilderness.

Suddenly, having been set down, Lisa hugged Han Shuo tightly from behind. Her burgeoning breasts were pressed tightly against his back and he could clearly feel their soft, smooth firmness.

Han Shuo had been carrying Lisa back all along, but because he'd been fighting in a dangerous situation and had been busy avoiding hits, he hadn't focused his attentions on anywhere else. Now that the two were out of danger, Lisa suddenly embraced him tightly from behind, giving rise to strange feelings in his heart.

"Do you like that?" Lisa perched her lips next to Han Shuo's earlobes as she plastered her chest against his back, huffing out a breath of hot air and asking shyly in a low voice.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo turned around and looked at Lisa, prying her from his body with a small bit of effort. He smiled, "Alright, we're safe now. Now that we've left Valen City, it will be harder for the Gryphon Legion to capture us than it would be for them to ascend to the heavens. You can be at ease."

Pouting, Lisa once again approached Han Shuo and hugged him tightly, her two arms squeezing him tightly around the waist. She said softly, "I'm nothing now, all my kin is gone. What should I do in the future?"

Clapping Lisa's shoulder, Han Shuo comforted her, "Don't worry, Lawrence will take care of you. He rushed here from the capital when he heard that something had happened to you. He truly dotes on you."

"I often played with cousin Lawrence when we were young. He already doted on me back then. Heh heh, he's been like my own brother all these years. I'm very grateful to him!" Lisa said proudly when she heard Han Shuo mention Lawrence, and then cried out in surprise, saying with worry, "Oh no, he didn't leave with us, could he possibly be in danger?"

“Don’t worry, your brother Lawrence isn’t an ordinary person. If he can’t handle even this little bit of danger, then all his years of living will have been wasted.” As the third prince, Lawrence had always been educated by his ambitious mother. He was also heavily valued by the king and had experts by his side. It wouldn’t be a problem for him to leave peacefully at all.

“Right, you haven’t answered me, why can you fly?” Han Shuo’s comfort had great effect on Lisa. She heaved a sigh of relief and suddenly thought of this matter, fixing her beautiful eyes onto Han Shuo.

“Eh, this is difficult to explain. I can only say that I’m using a levitation spell that’s not limited to archmages. As for how I can fly, I can only say that it’s a marvelous technique.” It was difficult to explain anything regarding the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven” to either Emily or Lisa, and it was impossible to put things plainly. Therefore, he could only gloss over the matter.

More than ten people suddenly appeared in the distance and slowly walked towards Valen City. Han Shuo looked at them from afar and paid them no attention when he saw that they weren’t wearing the uniform of the Gryphon Legion. He stood there and continued to talk to Lisa.

The slope of random rocks that Han Shuo and Lisa were standing on happened to be where the group of people would soon pass by. When they drew near, a soft exclamation suddenly rang out, “Eh? Bryan, what are you doing here?”

Han Shuo started and then paid close attention to the group of people. He suddenly discovered a familiar face among them – Candice. Boasting a fit body and wearing a broadsword on her back, Candice was wearing the thin, tight uniform of a swordsman and seemed to be unafraid of the assault of cold air.

When she saw Han Shuo, she made a gesture to the mercenaries behind her and then walked over dashing to Han Shuo. She swept her eyes up and down Han Shuo when she walked over and frowned, “You’re bringing a small girl to feel her up behind this random outcropping of rock on such

a cold day?”

“None of your business!” Lisa flicked a glance at Candice, seeming to not like her tone and hectored in an unfriendly manner.

Han Shuo struggled a little bit and broke free from Lisa’s grasp. He looked at the Battlefire mercenary band members behind her and noticed that they numbered six in total. Five of them were spread out and surrounded a girl with a better figure wearing a thin veil, seeming to be protecting her.

Looking at Candice, Han Shuo understood that Candice should have accepted a mission and was protecting the thin veiled girl behind her. He then looked at Candice and said with a slight laugh, “Long time no see Candice. You must’ve accepted a mission and are in the middle of carrying it out?”

Nodding, Candice admitted to it readily. She laughed heartily, “Indeed, I have a tough life! Not everyone can be as carefree as you, able to make out with a girl in a place like this on such a cold day!”

“Don’t you think random thoughts! We’re only here because of some matters.” Han Shuo smiled at Candice ruefully.

“We’re on a date, and what business is it to you!” Lisa’s lip curled as she seemed to resume the usual spitfire she had at school, glaring at Candice like she was a little hen itching for battle.

“Alright, alright, what are you posturing for?” Han Shuo felt things were a bit bizarre as he smiled and patted Lisa, indicating for her to say a few less words.

“This little girl is rather interesting, heh. Right, Bryan, how are things between you and Phoebe now?” Candice looked in amusement at Lisa and then stared at Han Shuo in inquiry.

“Same old, I’m business partners with her. She’s taken over the guild now and has been incredibly busy lately.” Han Shuo responded carelessly and then asked Candice, “Are you going into Valen City?”

Nodding, Candice said, “That’s right, we’ve accepted a mission to escort

Miss Belinda to Valen City. We'll take her safely back when Miss Belinda concludes her business in the city."

Because Candice and Han Shuo had gone through a life and death situation with each other before, Candice had accepted Han Shuo in the depths of her heart. Therefore, she fully revealed the details of her mission this time.

Thinking rapidly, Han Shuo weighed things up before warning Candice, "Valen City has been a bit uneasy during these past few days. The chief of the Gryphon Legion, Bob Ascher, has seen one son gone missing for a few months and his eldest, Clark, was just killed two days ago. The chief is enraged to the extreme and is turning Valen City upside down. I recommend that your employer not venture into Valen City at this time if there's nothing too urgent."

"Thank you, I'll mention your suggestion to my employer, but I can't decide whether or not she'll listen to me." Candice was very surprised by this news, and it was apparent from her furrowed brows that she too was placing high emphasis on this matter.

But she was a mercenary, and since she'd accepted an employer's mission, she had to proceed according to the original contract. She had no power to modify the contract even if some abnormalities cropped up along the way, or else she'd have to pay additional compensation. Therefore, she could only speak thus.

Nodding, Han Shuo was about to say something when his brow suddenly furrowed as he suddenly turned in the direction that they had come from. He hesitated and asked Candice, "Did you run into any danger along the way here?"

Candice first started in surprise, and then remembered Han Shuo's miraculous abilities. Her pretty features immediately stilled as she quickly responded, "We did run into some danger along the way, but we quickly handled it. Why do you say this? Did you discover something?"

"There was another group of people behind you since you've appeared. I thought they had nothing to do with you and was just another group of



people wanting to enter Valen City, but a huge gust of wind blew by just now and I happened to hear the word 'Belinda'. If I'm not mistaken, this group of people that's continuously kept their distance from you must have something to do with your employer 'Belinda'." Han Shuo responded with a frown.

If it'd been anyone else to say these words, Candice would've never believed him because even she hadn't detected anything out of the ordinary at such a far distance. Not only had Han Shuo picked up the traces of another group of people, he could even make use of the wind to hear what they were saying. This was a completely unimaginably queer occurrence.

Only a wind archmage would have such miraculous hearing to be able to pick up on what others were saying so far away. Han Shuo was obviously not at this level.

However, after going through life and death with Han Shuo last time, Candice understood that he did happen to have such miraculous abilities. She had long since seen his capabilities and thus believed him without hesitation. Her long eyelashes fluttered rapidly as she contemplated with a furrowed brow, then spoke to Han Shuo, "What direction are they in, how many and what's their strength like?"

# Chapter 162: The abnormalities of the white bone staff

“There are three people five hundred meters behind you. Because they’re further away and wearing ordinary gear, I can’t figure out their strength.” Han Shuo observed for a moment as he stood on the outcrop with narrowed eyes, responding to Candice’s question in a low voice after a while.

“Thank you Bryan, I’ll remember your help.” Candice said lowly and didn’t say much else to Han Shuo, turning to return to the Battlefire mercenary band, discussing something with the mercenaries.

“What is she to you that you’re willing to help her?” Lisa tugged on Han Shuo’s sleeve after Candice had left.

“A friend of mine from awhile back. Let’s go. We’ll leave in another direction. We still need to return to Valen City in a bit.” Han Shuo looked at Candice and saw that she was still discussing things with her employer. He knew that his words had had an effect then.

Candice was a mercenary and had her missions and way of living. Han Shuo gave her a reminder out of the kindness of his heart when he ran into her and saw that her mission held some latent danger. He was being a good friend, but wouldn’t interfere in her matters.

When she heard that Han Shuo wanted to leave, Lisa didn’t say much as she ducked her head shyly and walked behind Han Shuo, reaching out her hands to entwine around his neck and jumping firmly onto his back. She said merrily next to his ear, “I still want you to give me a piggyback me.”

Han Shuo was speechless, and then smiled ruefully. He said to Lisa on his back, “I had no choice just now because there was an emergency. That’s why I put you on my back. Now that we’re out of danger, you no longer need to be piggy backed. We can slowly walk back.”

“Hehe, I’m not getting down no matter what you say.” Lisa’s small hands entwined themselves around Han Shuo’s neck as her fleshy thighs criss

crossed themselves around his waist, appearing quite at ease.

Lisa was at an exuberantly youthful age, and because of Han Shuo's random teachings, her originally flat chest was now a bit ridiculously well rounded. Han Shuo could even feel that her chest on his back wasn't much smaller than that of Emily's. That soft, wondrous feeling made Han Shuo's heart itch a bit.

Off in the distance, Candice spoke a bit with her comrades and seemed to be set on continuing to make their way to Valen City, ignoring the three following behind them. Their minds made up, the group began moving out again. Candice flicked a glance over at Han Shuo and happened to see Lisa on Han Shuo's back. She was rather taken aback.

Han Shuo felt Candice's slightly bizarre gaze and turned to lift his head proudly, as if showing off something to Candice. She couldn't help but break into soft laughter.

"Hang on, we're leaving too." Han Shuo didn't force her to come down from his back when he saw that Lisa's mind was set. She'd just lost her parents and was in the most painful moments of her life. He didn't want to make her unhappy at a time like this. He gave instructions in a low voice and walked off on another path, avoiding the direction that Candice's crew was taking to Valen City.

It was already evening at this time. Han Shuo took note of the direction and made a circle around the city walls. He used the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" to fly over the city walls when night had fallen, landing in Valen City's territory.

They arrived at the hotel that Emily had stayed at last time and Han Shuo made his way directly to Emily's room. Chester called out lowly from within the room before they entered, "Who is it?"

"It's me!" Han Shuo responded and pushed open the door. He looked at the surprised Chester and asked, "What are you doing here?"

Chester hesitated when he saw Lisa on Han Shuo's back, responding, "Madame Emily thought that this might be where you're meeting Lawrence and had me stay here in hopes of receiving word from anyone of

you.”

“Then, did you receive any messages from Lawrence?” Han Shuo couldn’t head directly to the Dark Mantle from here because Emily had arranged for men to be here, and because Lisa was present. This was also where he’d told Lawrence he was staying, so Lawrence was likely to come here after he escaped.

Nodding, Chester answered, “Lawrence hasn’t come by yet, but he’s sent a messenger. The man told me that if you and Lisa came back, please take Lisa to this place!” Chester handed over a card as he spoke. The address that was not too far from here was written on it.

“What did the man who Lawrence sent look like?” Han Shuo had to take all precautions.

After Chester had described the person, Han Shuo immediately understood that the person who’d come was the old assassin Lucky and therefore there was nothing to worry about in this matter.

Letting Lisa down from his back, Han Shuo looked at her and said seriously, “Lisa, we’re about to do something very dangerous. You should go with Chester and immediately go to where your cousin is. Lawrence will take you back to the Empire in a short period of time. Do as I say, alright? We’ll stay and get revenge for you.”

After experiencing an extreme hardship in life, Lisa was much more mature than Han Shuo had remembered. Although an expression of longing remained in her eyes after he said his words, she nodded her head docilely, agreeing to Han Shuo’s arrangements.

“Hire a carriage. Take Miss Lisa to the place on Lawrence’s card yourself. Place her safely in Lawrence’s hands.” Han Shuo said with a smile to Chester.

“Don’t worry, I’ll handle all of this perfectly.” Chester promised Han Shuo with great confidence and then bowed towards Lisa, gesturing for her to walk ahead of him.

Lisa looked deeply at Han Shuo, saying to him with some worry

afterwards, “Be careful, don’t let anything happen to you.”

“Don’t worry, nothing will happen to me. Make use of the cover of the night to make haste. Go with him.” Han Shuo nodded and urged Lisa on with a slight smile.

Lisa turned and followed Chester after these words, and the two quickly moved outside. The Dark Mantle’s influence was naturally significant in such a city as large as this. It wouldn’t have been a difficult thing to accomplish if Han Shuo had wanted to send Lisa back.

However, he’d only joined the Dark Mantle only a short while ago, so it wasn’t a good thing to use the organization’s resources for his own personal affairs. In addition, as the third prince, it would be a more than appropriate thing for him to handle this matter and take care of Lisa’s affairs after she’d returned back to the Empire.

Han Shuo turned after Lisa had left and walked into the inner chamber, saying with a slight smile, “Come on out.”

Emily walked out with a smile from the inner chamber wearing a soft leather coat and rolled her eyes when she walked next to Han Shuo. She reached out a hand and pinched him, saying with some jealousy, “You made off with Lawrence’s sister after visiting him and made him send men here to ask for her. You’re something alright!”

Grasping her pinching hand and pulling it forward, Han Shuo held Emily in his arms and started roving his hands all over her well rounded chest. He smiled in explanation, “I’m not as bad as you think I am! I only took her with me because Lawrence’s location had been compromised.”

He explained the entire matter to Emily, who then responded with a furrowed brow, “According to Lawrence’s words, he may be here to act against Bob Ascher on the king’s silent approval. This may be one of the methods that His Majesty is using to test Lawrence. He’ll be using Lawrence’s performance in this matter to determine Lawrence’s future path.”

Han Shuo started slightly after hearing Emily’s words. He hadn’t thought that much at first, but it all made sense after Emily had explained things.

He mused silently for a moment and then said, "If this is the case, then we might actually have the inclination to cooperate with Lawrence."

"That's right, the Dark Mantle is under no restrictions when we conduct missions. I don't mind cooperating with Lawrence if the timing is right, but as for how to actually act, we must have a defined plan." Emily's slender brows were knit tightly as she spoke with some concern.

Emily's worries stemmed from Lawrence's identity as prince. She was afraid that if others misunderstood their relationship before the greater picture had been set. If Lawrence wasn't king in the end and another prince inherited the throne, then Emily, Han Shuo, and those others who had been too close to Lawrence might attract fatal disasters. Thus, Emily was quite cautious.

"I understand your meaning. Don't worry, I know my place when interacting with Lawrence." Han Shuo said quietly. He thought for a moment and then asked, "Right, you left in a hurry to notify your brother about the Calamity Church and told me not to mention this to anyone else. Why is that?"

Emily's charming features became incredibly grave when these words were voiced. She took a deep breath in and responded, "The Calamity Church is an evil church. They worship all sorts of evil gods, and numerous evil experts are gathered within their ranks. I only know of a few rumors about this church and don't know the details, but my brother told me that this Calamity Church is the largest evil cult on the entire continent. They commit acts hated by both man and god in the shadows. It's always a great threat to any country whenever they embark on a large scale mission."

"Ten years or so ago, several empires cooperated to exterminate the Calamity Church and swept away all of their exposed strongholds. There was no news of the Calamity Church for a long while after that, but everyone knows that they hadn't been destroyed at all. They are only in hiding. The fact that you confirmed this fact from the memories of the necromancer from the Calamity Church means that this matter is receiving significant attention."

Starting in shock, Han Shou looked askance at Emily, “Did you report the fact that I took the necromancer’s memories?”

“Of course not.” Emily pouted and rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, seeming to fault him for not believing her. She only continued to speak after he apologized. “I only said that we killed the necromancer together and gained this information from his space ring.”

“I see. It looks like this necromancer was a big fish.” Han Shuo smiled and fished out the white bone staff as they chatted, toying with it as they continued talking.

A strange buzzing sound suddenly emitted from the white bone staff, like the drone of an unknown bug. This made Han Shuo’s hair stand on end with astonishment.

“Is there anyone here in this hotel?” A familiar voice traveled in from outside at this moment. It was Candice calling out loudly.

The white bone staff still continued to sound out oddly and kept vibrating, seeming to want to fly out of Han Shuo’s grasp. This greatly surprised both Han Shuo and Emily.

“Eh? Miss Belinda, what are you doing? You can’t leave by yourself.” Candice’s shouting suddenly became frantic calls. It seemed that her employer had walked out of the Battlefire mercenary band’s protection.

Firmly grasping onto the shaking white bone staff, Han Shuo also felt rather perplexed and shook his head quickly. “I don’t know what’s going on either. This has never happened before whenever I used it.”

Frantic footsteps quickly approached their room, accompanied by Candice’s frantic yells. Han Shuo’s thoughts raced as he seemed to understand something and put the white bone staff back into his space ring. He made a motion towards Emily as he tip toed over to the window.

# Chapter 163: Convening in a small hotel

Han Shuo lifted the window slightly upwards, revealing a long, narrow crack and made use of this opening to look outside.

Candice's employer, Belinda, was wearing a face veil and revealed only a pair of sapphire colored eyes. A strange expression was in them as she seemed to be looking for something. She looked to and fro upon arriving in front of Han Shuo and Emily's room.

Candice and the others of the mercenary crew ran over frantically behind Belinda. Candice was on high alert as she kept a hand on the magic sword strapped to her back, looking carefully around the premises, deathly afraid that something would happen to Belinda.

Candice only breathed a sigh of relief when the other members surrounded Belinda in the center. She spoke to the still peering around Belinda in admonishment, "Miss Belinda, please tell us before you walk around next time. We've been hired to ensure your safety, but we won't restrict your freedom of movement. You have no need to suddenly run away like this!"

Belinda's features were hidden behind her face veil, as her half moon, slender eyebrows were tightly knit together. Her beautiful eyes darted around as she appeared quite confused. Belinda only came to herself after Candice had spoken with displeasure, speaking apologetically in a gentle voice, "I'm sorry, I just thought I saw an acquaintance and so I hastened over. It turns out that I was mistaken."

Candice was also quite perplexed upon hearing these words and she said with a strange tone. "There was no one here. Why would you say that there was a figure here? This is too strange."

"Ah, it could be that I'm short on sleep and my eyes are seeing things. I'm truly very sorry." Belinda's bright eyes swept around the room that Han Shuo and Emily were in as she responded carelessly to Candice.

More frantic footsteps sounded from behind as a slightly chubby, middle aged woman walked into view smiling merrily. She held a book in her



hand and curtsied politely when she walked in front of the people, then saying apologetically, “Honored guests, you must be here to look for lodging. I was preoccupied just now and am truly apologetic. Please come register at the front counter with me.”

“To think that no one’s standing at the front of this hotel. This is truly a bit worrying. In addition, the external surroundings don’t seem that good. Should we switch to another hotel, Miss

Belinda?” Candice didn’t seem to like this hotel and raised this suggestion with a sour expression.

Wrapped in a veil, Belinda’s clear eyes surveyed the surroundings and said, “No need, let’s stay here. I think this place is fine.”

“Then alright.” Candice had to follow to her employer’s wishes and responded with some disappointment.

“Excuse me, what kind of people live in the rooms along this hallway?” Belinda seemed to ask a careless question to the chubby hotel owner.

“Apologies, we’re not at liberty to say. This is for the privacy of our guests, I’m sorry!” The hotel owner stuck to her principles. Although she plainly wanted Candice and them to stay here, she wasn’t willing to budge on a matter of integrity.

Nodding, Belinda didn’t continue her line of questioning. She said softly, “That is fine too. Are there any free rooms around the hallway? If so, I’ll stay here.”

The middle aged woman’s eyes lit up as she quickly flipped through the book in her hand, then pointed at a room not too far away from Han Shuo and Emily’s, saying hastily, “This room is empty, but it’s not the best in the hotel. If the honored lady doesn’t mind, you can immediately take up residence in it.”

“No problem, then this room it is. Candice, you handle the rest.” Belinda said gently as her clear eyes flicked a surreptitious glance at Han Shuo and Emily’s room, striding out in front to her room.

The owner of the hotel knew that Belinda was the master of this group,

so she very quickly fished out a set of keys when Belinda started moving. The owner opened the door and let Belinda in when she got to the door.

“You guys go in first and protect the lady. I’ll take care of the paperwork and arrange rooms for us around Miss Belinda.” Candice gave orders to the rest of the Battlefire mercenary band after she saw Belinda head inside before following the overjoyed, chubby owner back to the front desk.

Han Shuo only closed the gap in the window when those of the Battlefire mercenary band followed Belinda into the room. He said lowly to Emily, “The abnormalities of the white bone staff must have something to do with Belinda. This person’s identity is very suspicious.”

Emily had seen some of what had just happened as well and immediately nodded when she heard Han Shuo’s words. She said gravely, “It looks like Belinda has something to do with the necromancer you killed. Since you’ve taken all the memories from his soul, do you have any impression of this Belinda?”

Furrowing his brow and thinking deeply, Han Shuo shook his head firmly in the end, “No. Belinda has never appeared in any of Clarendon’s memories. I really don’t understand why she could sense the white bone staff.”

“How did Clarendon obtain the white bone staff?” Emily started and approached the question from another perspective.

“It was awarded to him by the senior leadership of the Calamity Church after Clarendon completed a certain number of mission. He only knows how to use the white bone staff, but not where it comes from.” Han Shuo responded after musing with his eyes shut for a while.

“It looks like Belinda is from the Calamity Church. She could be here because of Clarendon’s disappearance. We need to be careful.” Emily thought for a bit and concluded gravely.

Belinda was currently Candice’s employer. If she was from the Calamity Church, then it was an unknown why she had asked Candice to protect her on this trip to Valen City. Han Shuo couldn’t quite understand this point, but given that Belinda could sense the white bone staff, this meant

that her background wasn't simple. He considered the situation silently as he thought of the evils of the Calamity Church.

"Belinda must be suspicious of the rooms in this hallway. I think we should temporarily leave this place and switch to another room to observe her." Han Shuo suggested to Emily after thinking for a bit.

Nodding, Emily said with confidence, "No problem, the owner of the hotel is one of ours. We can switch to any room we want."

No wonder Emily had chosen to stay at this hotel in Valen City. It turns out the owner was part of the Dark Mantle! It looked like the Dark Mantle's intelligence network was quite vast indeed.

Making use of the time before Candice returned and the fact that Belinda had gone into that room with the members of the Battlefire mercenary band, Han Shuo and Emily quietly snuck out of their room from another exit. They entered a great lobby on the floor above and leaned against the window, able to see the front yard from their vantage point.

Emily must have triggered some mechanism as the hotel owner merrily appeared in the lobby after a short while. She still wore a professional smile and bowed slightly in front of Emily, "Madame Emily, what orders do you have?"

"Sister Helene, arrange a new room for us, ideally a bit of a distance away from Belinda, but able to observe them as well." Emily also responded amiably with a bit of a smile.

The middle aged woman called Helene was a bit surprised by Emily's words. She thought for a moment, "Three people also came in and asked for a room that could be used to observe Miss Belinda."

His mind connecting the dots, Han Shuo thought of the three that had been following Candice. He asked involuntarily, "Where are they now, and did you give them the proper rooms?"

"Don't worry, I've purposefully kept the rooms that can observe Belinda's room. I knew something was wrong with that woman when her

gaze at your room was a bit off.” Helene flicked a glance at Han Shuo and displayed a ‘don’t you worry, I’ve got it under control’ look on her face as she explained with a smile.

“Sister Helene has accomplished many achievements for our organization over the years. Although she doesn’t know offensive magics, she’s very adept at observing people. This is why I stay here when I’m in Valen City.” Emily also rolled her eyes at Han Shuo and smiled slightly.

“Enough, Madame Emily, don’t compliment me like that. I’ll go arrange new rooms for you right away. I’ll also keep an eye on those who’ve just arrived and will immediately report any developments to you.” Helene sashayed out after replying merrily.

“Alright, we should make our preparations as well. We must keep a close eye on that girl. Investigating her background may lead to enormous profits for us.” Emily said.

# Chapter 164: The female alchemist

They changed rooms and switched into one of the rooms on the other side of the artificial mountain in the yard. From this room, they could look directly into Belinda's room through the window.

Candice seemed to be discussing something with Belinda upon returning as she stayed within the room and didn't come out. The other mercenaries were arranged in the rooms on either side of Belinda's.

The three people who had followed Belinda were given rooms neighboring Han Shuo and Emily's room. Thanks to a magical mirror, they could directly observe the three's movements.

The trio looked like nondescript, ordinary featured men. They actually looked quite similar and could have been three brothers. One of them leaned against the window and kept an eye on Belinda after moving into the room, whereas the other two fell into a deep sleep on the bed, likely because they were too fatigued.

It was still daylight, so the two groups of people made no moves, maintaining a calm, peaceful situation. Han Shuo observed them for a while and noticed that both sides were doing nothing out of the ordinary. He returned to Emily's side and thought for a moment, "Keep an eye on the situation for me. I'm going to make a trip to the cemetery of death to check on things."

"Hmm? Why do you suddenly want to go back to the cemetery of death?" Emily was a bit surprised by Han Shuo's decision and stared at him with a questioning gaze.

Smiling mysteriously, Han Shuo said, "I recently took in a follower and want to see if his injuries have healed yet."

Han Shuo had already moved further into the room and ripped up the wooden panels of the closet, setting up the transportation matrix inside. Emily was long since used to Han Shuo's mysteriousness by now and didn't ask much when she saw that he was about to leave. She said, "Alright, I'll stay here and observe them. I'll go over and pull you back if

anything happens, so you'd best not stray too far from the cemetery of death."

"Mm, don't worry, I'll stay within the cemetery. You can come find me anytime if there's anything out of the ordinary." Han Shuo responded and stood within the matrix, closing the doors to activate it.

"Gilbert, where the hell are you?" Han Shuo immediately yelled loudly when he reappeared in the cemetery of death.

The little lewd dragon appeared in front of Han Shuo with a pop and fell to his knees immediately, saying pitifully, "Noble master, you've finally remembered your faithful servant. There's nothing interesting in this boring place and I can't go out either! I'm bored to death!"

"I told you to keep a good eye on that place, you didn't slack off, did you?" Han Shuo had once told Gilbert to pay attention to the piece of land that was refining the earth elite zombie, just in case something untoward happened there.

"Of course I didn't slack off, but there's really nothing worth keeping an eye on there. Nothing's happened since you left. Oh, honored master, when will you take me out to go look for beautiful women?" Gilbert complained to Han Shuo.

Compared to his charred look last time, Gilbert was now dressed in a gleaming black robe and had his hair perfectly combed. Apart from his skin being the color of coal, the young Gilbert looked rather handsome.

"How are your injuries?" It remained to be seen whether or not he'd take Gilbert out with him, based on his injuries. Although this little lewd dragon was a shot mess, his strength as a dragon was extraordinary, so he would make a good helper regardless.

Gilbert puffed his chest out after hearing this question and said very cockily, "Not a problem. As one of the strongest predators on this planet, this kind of injury was not a problem for me at all."

"Stop bullshitting me, how are your injuries?" Han Shuo glared as he spoke harshly.

As his master, Han Shuo could more or less sense a bit of Gilbert's condition through the ties of the contract. Although he was much better than before, Han Shuo could still feel that he hadn't fully recovered, and so couldn't help but take a severe tone when he heard Gilbert speak this way.

Gilbert shrank into himself and said with a bit of trepidation, "I'm not fully recovered yet, but I'm pretty much all healed, I won't drag you down."

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "Alright, I'll consider taking you with me. Maybe in the next two days. Rest well. If you become a burden when I need you in the future, I won't let you off the hook that easily!" Han Shuo walked towards the spot where the earth elite zombie was being refined. The center of the area where the earth zombie was being refined had sunk in, and the concentrated earth essence was still slowly flowing in.

He took a look around and focused his concentration, establishing a connection with the zombie in the ground. Han Shuo instantly sensed a roaring sense of life when he did so. This sense of life was brimming with the rich qi of earth. Han Shuo immediately understood that the refinement of the zombie was already on the right path.

This was because when ordinary zombies were summoned, only a dead silence could be felt when a mental connection was established. Only incredibly strong dark creatures such as the knights would send forth a bit of the feeling of life when connected to the caster. There was a vibrant sense of life and the rich feeling of earth qi exuded from this zombie warrior. This meant that it had truly grown after absorbing the essence of the place of extreme earth.

"Alright, you stay here and rest up. I'll let you out in a few days." Han Shuo was at peace when he saw that nothing was out of the ordinary within the cemetery, and that the dark dragon and earth elite zombie were all regaining their full strength. He walked towards the structure within the cemetery.

Gilbert was quite excited upon receiving Han Shuo's promise and he kept bouncing around Han Shuo, complimenting his mighty prowess.

Gilbert's fawning smile made Han Shuo burst out laughing.

Han Shuo planned on leaving through the transportation matrix, but suddenly remembered that he hadn't gone into the basement for a very long time. Now that his mental strength had increased, Han Shuo planned on seeing if he could make it another level farther.

He had Gilbert stay where he was and walked down into the secret chamber by himself. He easily broke through the boundary at the first level and walked in matter-of-factly.

When he arrived at where he'd been stuck before, Han Shuo focused his concentration and charged forward, hoping to land on the next level of the cemetery of death.

Bam! Han Shuo was immediately bounced back when he hit the boundary and his mind ached with pain.

He fell to a sitting position and staggered to his feet, immediately understanding that his current mental strength wasn't enough to make it to the next level. A thought struck him as he held the Eye of Darkness in one hand and took out the white bone staff from his space ring with the other.

The cemetery of death was once hallowed ground for necromancers, and the green Eye of Darkness was the key to opening the cemetery of death. The white bone staff could enhance necromancy magics and although its function was different from the Eye, they were both items of necromancy. Han Shuo held the two in his hand and weighed them up, trying to see if there were any commonalities between the two.

Han Shuo couldn't help but focus his attention on the two items in his hand. The Eye of Darkness suddenly lit up and shot out green light, resulting in a surge of strength entering the white bone staff. A trace of black light suddenly shot out of the white bone staff and instantly sank into the Eye of Darkness.

Shocked, Han Shuo originally paid no attention to the Eye of Darkness and set his concentration on the white bone staff. He originally hadn't sensed anything out of the ordinary from the white bone staff, but



suddenly discovered that there was a small magical formation within it.

“Ah, it’s a boundary formation that acts as a magical brand, no wonder Belinda could sense the white bone staff.” Han Shuo suddenly realized what had happened when his concentration made a round through the staff.

There was a type of boundary that acted as a magical brand in Clarendon’s memories and could be placed on weapons and clothes. It usually existed in the formation of a magical formation. The owner of the magical brand would be able to sense the existence of his brand within a certain existence.

So it turned out that such a magical brand existed within the white bone staff. There were traces of magic left within the staff that had not only blocked Han Shuo’s mental exploration and alerted Belinda of its existence.

Perhaps it was the Eye of Darkness absorbing the residual magic within the white bone staff, causing the magical brand formation to collapse from lack of energy, but this allowed Han Shuo to take a peek at the situation inside.

Han Shuo’s concentration sank thoroughly inside and discovered a small line of text within the formation – Work 17 from Alchemist Belinda of the Calamity Church. “The Calamity Church alright.” Han Shuo said lowly and didn’t plan on remaining within the cemetery of death. He reemerged on the ground and went back to the hotel, planning on coming up with a good strategy to take care of Belinda.

# Chapter 165: An abnormal situation within the hotel

A faint fragrance drifted into Han Shuo's nose and mouth. A strong woozy feeling suddenly assaulted him and he almost fainted.

It was a good thing that the tenacity of his body was much stronger than an ordinary person's after the demonic magic had reforged his body. The magical yuan had an even more wondrous effect. His body started automatically circulating it the moment he became dazed after taking in a breath of the faint scent.

The demon infant in his abdomen instantly expelled the fragrance from his body. The dizzy feeling in his head also disappeared as well.

At this moment, Han Shuo held his breath and started circulating magical yuan first before taking in another breath of the fragrance. When he took the breath in, his immensely strong nerves were fully mentally prepared and in the instant the dizzying feeling appeared, the feeling of wanting to faint turned from strong to faint until he was no longer affected by it.

Now that he was in the true demon realm, his physical body had been reforged to a depth beyond normal imagination and even this strong, cloying fragrance wasn't enough to affect him.

Oh no! I wonder what's happened to Emily! After his perverted body grew used to the fragrance, Han Shuo suddenly recalled that Emily had been in the room and hastily pushed open the closet door.

Emily had been within the room, but was now nowhere to be found. He didn't know where she'd gone. There were traces that the room had been turned over, and judging from the level of mess that had been made, someone had been by.

Han Shuo's transportation matrix was set up inside closet and clothes were covering the magic sticks. Therefore, even if someone opened the closet doors, they wouldn't be able to discern anything out of the ordinary

if they didn't inspect closely.

When he saw that someone had gone through the room and that Emily had vanished without a trace, Han Shuo immediately started worrying. Now that he planned on walking out of the room in search of his Dark Mantle colleague, he suddenly discovered that everything about the hotel was a bit out of sorts.

He lifted a corner of the window to discover that it was already night. However, as he gazed into the distance, he could see that the rooms in the distance were lit up. This meant that it wasn't too late at night yet, but all the rooms within this hotel were shrouded in darkness. There was faint light emitting from only Belinda's room as very low voices engaged in discussion came from it.

As Han Shuo held his breath and concentrated, he discovered that there were small fly-like bugs swarming the hotel courtyard. There were dozens of them, and they spread out to fly into all of the various rooms of the hotel. A gray mist emitted from their tails, emitting the fragrance that had almost caused Han Shuo to faint.

Creasing his brow, Han Shuo was almost certain that the abnormal events within the room had to do with Belinda. He soundlessly opened the door and took out the black robe that Dark Mantle members wore during missions. He made it to the top of the roof in the darkness and slowly slunk towards Belinda's room.

As he did so, Han Shuo deftly used the magical yuan to completely cover traces of his presence, adjusting his heartbeat and breathing to a very hard to detect frequency.

"Master Belinda, all of the guests within this hotel have been gathered into the living room of the suite." Han Shuo heard a low voice speak as soon as he laid his ear to the roof of Belinda's room.

"Mm." Belinda responded faintly and seemed to walk towards the lobby.

Han Shuo carefully moved his body towards the lobby. When he arrived, he lightly reached out a finger and circulated the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire". A small flame appeared on his fingertip, burrowing through

dense wood material on top and allowed him look below.

There were more than ten people in a dead faint placed in a lobby that was very similar to the room that Han Shuo was staying in. Emily was amongst them, as well as Chester, having returned from his mission of taking Lisa to Lawrence. Hotel owner Helene was amongst these people, and even Candice and the other members of the Battlefire mercenary band as well.

Apart from the people whom Han Shuo was well acquainted with, there was also the great druid Caspian and female elf Angelica. Han Shuo had bumped into both of them in the Dark Forest, but had met them separately. He only knew that the two of them were traveling together when he saw both of them here now.

There was no one of particular interest within the rest of the hotel guests. They were likely here to conduct business in Valen City and didn't raise Han Shuo's interest.

The three people who had been following Belinda were all standing there respectfully, as if subordinates waiting for Belinda's orders. This rather surprised Han Shuo as he hadn't thought the three following her would be her men.

Belinda's slender brows knit together tightly when she arrived in the lobby and she swept a gaze over those below her. She said softly, "I felt vibrations from white bone staff number 17 when I arrived at the hotel. I personally refined that white bone staff and awarded it to Clarendon."

"However, the presence from the staff suddenly vanished without a trace when I arrived at the end of the hallway. It looks like someone suddenly returned it to their space ring. No one's left the hotel since I've arrived, so the white bone staff must be within one of their space rings."

"Master, then how should we do this?" The one who looked to be the oldest out of the three brothers asked in inquiry.

Belinda's blue eyes looked shrewdly at the people on the ground and pointed at Emily. "The white bone staff should be on her. She's the only one with a space ring." Out of Emily, Candice, Caspian, and Angelica,

Candice had always been with them, so was naturally ruled out. It looked like Caspian and Angelica had arrived later, therefore, in Belinda's eyes, Emily was the one with the staff.

The person who'd asked the question walked over to Emily after Belinda's words and took off her space ring, handing it respectfully to Belinda.

When Belinda took Emily's space ring, she touched it with closed eyes for a while and said, "She set up a magical boundary inside. Tie her up and then wake her."

"Master, what about the others?" It was still the oldest of the three asking the questions.

Waving her hand, Belinda said carelessly, "Same old, kill those who have no value."

Han Shuo immediately became nervous when he heard these words. Apart from Emily, Candice, Angelica, and Caspian were also in the lobby below. Although Caspian had no relationship with Han Shuo, he was friends with Candice and Angelica to varying degrees. He couldn't watch them be killed in front of him.

"Don't you think that you're going overboard with your actions?" Caspian, supposedly in a dead faint, suddenly spoke up before Han Shuo took action.

Caspian stood up as he spoke and protected the little elf Angelica behind him.

When Han Shuo noticed this abnormality, he immediately stopped and continued crouching on the roof, observing what was happening below.

"Eh? You can still remain conscious beneath the strong effects of my fragrance. It seems that the great druid Caspian does indeed have some magical abilities." Belinda exclaimed softly but spoke calmly.

"I don't care who you are, but your methods are greatly distasteful to me. I will ignore the fact that you harmed us earlier if you let all those here go, and I will allow you to leave as well." Caspian looked at Belinda with

disfavor and snorted.

“Fereeca, you three brothers can take advantage of this to see what kind of magical abilities a great druid of the nature divinity possess. Kill him!” Belinda didn’t waste any blather and immediately waved her hand, indicating for the three brothers to kill Caspian.

Fereeca and his brothers suddenly displayed a ruthless look of killing intent after Belinda’s instructions and unsheathed three longswords, surrounding the druid.

“Don’t blame me for what happens next since you won’t listen to me!” Caspian glared at the three of them and took out an odd staff shaped like an old root from his space ring, planning on fighting the three.

At this moment, all of the scattered flying bugs in the small hotel seemed to be summoned by some power and converged on Belinda’s room.

At the same time, the thick branches of a large tree by the side of the room suddenly seemed to be summoned as well, sending its gnarled branches into the room like pliable snakes.

# Chapter 166: The armored golem

Han Shuo could clearly see the changes in the room through a long and narrow crack in the roof above.

The flying bugs converged from all over the hotel and gathered in the room, next to Belinda.

The pliable branches of the nearby tree began to spread throughout the room crazily. The branch-like staff in Caspian's hands emitted a vibrant feeling of life.

"Why aren't you acting yet?!" Belinda snorted softly at this point.

Fereeca and his brothers attacked Caspian, almost in unison, after receiving Belinda's words. The three of them moved in concert. The tip of Fereeca's longsword suddenly crackled with lightning, and the other two had one of their longswords howl with the sound of the wind, cutting through the air extraordinarily quickly. Another flared with burning fire and roiled towards Caspian.

Han Shuo was greatly astonished when the three of them attacked together. He could tell from the changes in their longswords that Fereeca and his brothers were mage swordsmen. Fereeca looked like a thunder magic major, while the other two specialized in wind and fire magic respectively.

The three longswords also looked like they'd been tempered with special methods. They could directly imbue their elemental magic attacks into the longswords when they attacked to enhance their power and speed. It was very intimidating.

"Three mage swordsmen huh! No wonder you're so cocky!" Caspian snorted coldly when they struck out and waved the magic staff in his hand as he spoke.

The branches wove madly like snakes within the room, dancing in their movements. The scores of branches were like a long whip as they hurtled towards the brothers. Caspian took a step forward at the same time and

grabbed the fainted Angelica, jumping out of the window and landing on a nearby tree.

The entangling branches were astonishingly agile beneath Caspian's manipulations. It was like they knew martial arts as they avoided the attacks of the three magical swords. High up in the tree, Caspian had a benevolent smile on his face as he raised his branch-like magic staff and lowly sang out a spell.

The tree he was standing on suddenly came alive like an enormous octopus. The leafy branches were like countless tentacles of the octopus as they spread through the house with extreme speed, churning towards everyone inside.

"Up!" Caspian roared.

A huge rumble sounded as the house Belinda and everyone was in suddenly lifted itself, with the roof caving in shortly thereafter.

Han Shuo's eyes were fixed tightly on Emily within the house, and he rushed down to save her when he realized that something wasn't quite right. It touched his heart to see that the pliable branches that had snaked into the house from all directions were protecting all the people apart from Belinda and her men.

As the house collapsed on itself, the flexible branches had already brought the people, who Belinda had sent to sleep, out.

"The friend on the roof, it's about time for you to come down, isn't it?" When Han Shuo was about to leave when he discovered that Emily had been pulled out of the room by the branches, Caspian's bright eyes landed on Han Shuo as he asked with a smile.

Seeing that his movements had been exposed, Han Shuo didn't continue to hide and he jumped down from the tree, landing in the hotel's spacious inner courtyard. He then very casually walked up to the tree that Caspian was on and stood next to Candice and Emily.

"You go about your business, I'll help you look after these people. I won't let them harm those beneath this tree." Han Shuo lifted his head to smile



at Caspian as he spoke.

Caspian started when Han Shuo opened his mouth, and then looked at Han Shuo oddly. "Have we met before? Why does your voice sound familiar?"

"Heh heh, let's do away with these people first." Belinda and the others rushed out from the collapsed house at this moment and glared angrily at Caspian, immediately attacking in this direction.

"Alright, I think I must know you." Caspian responded and waved his staff, looking at Fereeca and his brothers gravely.

The branches of the leafy boughed tree above him kept entangling amongst themselves and looked grotesquely strong. The other trees within the courtyard were affected by the power of nature and started waving their branches as well, joining Caspian's side. Han Shuo was greatly surprised by this development.

After he took a look and realized that Caspian seemed to be able to deal with these people, he then focused his attentions on the fainted Emily.

He took a deep breath in and placed a hand on her back. His magical yuan circulated into a small whirlpool in his left hand.

Using his knowledge of the human body, Han Shuo concentrated and used the effects of the magical yuan to quickly clear out the fragrance's effects from her body.

Her long lashes suddenly fluttered, making Han Shuo delighted as he knew that meant she would wake soon.

A large rumble suddenly traveled to Han Shuo's ears. He abruptly lifted his head in surprise and saw that a four to five meter tall three eyed monster with eight horns on its head and a spiked tail had suddenly appeared within the courtyard.

Han Shuo recognized this monster with one glance. It was the image of the three eyed demon god Ansidesi that the necromancer Clarendon had tried to raise. This three eyed demon monster was now formed of shining, grey armor and its enormous body was filled with power, giving others an

intensely intimidating feeling.

“A golem formed in the image of the demon god? You’re from the Calamity Church?” Caspian’s face changed drastically when the golem appeared and he exclaimed in shock.

“You guessed right!” Belinda said softly and then gave instructions to the golem, “Kill him.”

The four or five meter tall golem shaped from grey armor charged towards Caspian after receiving Belinda’s order. A towering tree next to it furiously sent branches churning towards it.

Before the branches had thoroughly entangled the golem’s ankles, the fierce looking golem suddenly exerted force and broke free of the soft branches around its ankles. Every heavy step the golem set down on the ground shook the ground with a thunderous crash, as if an earthquake were happening.

A nearby tree twisted many branches together and formed a branch thicker than two people’s waists put together, slamming towards the golem. When the golem discovered that an attack was about to hit it, it raised its spiked tail and swept it in an arc, crashing into the thick branch.

The thick branch, that had been roiling towards the golem, was halted in its tracks by the golem’s armored tail. Its tail was deeply embedded into the branch and it actually ripped out the branch with a vigorous shake of its tail. The branch splintered into a pile of twigs and branches.

A string of profound magical incantations suddenly rang out of Emily’s mouth as a few dark magic spells landed on the golem. However, these spells, that had an incredibly destructive effect on men and animals, had absolutely no effect on the golem.

“The alchemists of the Calamity Church have developed golems in the shape of the evil demon god with incredible magical immunity. Don’t waste your efforts.” Caspian lowered his head to give Emily this reminder.

“Then what should we do?” Emily lifted her head to ask anxiously.

“Take these innocent people away from here. I’ll think of a way to delay

them.” Caspian was also equally anxious as he swept a glance below.

“The golem is being manipulated, this matter will be over if we can control her.” Han Shuo suddenly spoke coldly at this moment.

“This is indeed the case, but she has three mage swordsmen protecting her and a golem attacking us. It’s a bit unrealistic to think that we can put her under our control.” The three eyed demon god golem had already arrived at their location as they were talking. Caspian waved his staff to spur on the great tree beneath them to intercept the golem.

“Emily, you protect those beneath the tree. Caspian, you slow the golem down. Leave the rest to me!” Han Shuo roared coldly as he dashed forward like lightning, setting his sights on Belinda in the midst of the three mage swordsmen.

# Chapter 167: Capturing the female alchemist

“Be careful!” Emily cried out in warning when she saw Han Shuo rush forward.

The courtyard was the size of a basketball court. With Han Shuo’s speed, he arrived in front of Belinda and the others almost as soon as Emily had finished talking.

But just as Han Shuo moved, Fereeca and his brothers understood what he was after and surrounded Belinda in their midst. They protected her on three sides and kept all three pairs of eyes on him, grasping their magic swords in their hands tightly.

Han Shuo chanted the spell for the “Dark Mist” lowly as he charged forward. He immediately released the spell when he appeared next to the four, enclosing everyone within it.

“Damn it, he’s a necromancer!” Fereeca cursed as the magic sword in his hand suddenly sent out brilliant crackles of lightning, lighting up the darkness around them.

Two zombie warriors and the dagger wielding little skeleton appeared within the dark mist. The three of them started attacking the three brothers at the same time under Han Shuo’s commands.

Even with the light from the lightning, absolute visibility still couldn’t be gained in the area covered by the dark mist, particularly due to the fact that it was also nighttime. As the caster, Han Shuo circled the three brothers like a ghost hidden in the darkness and was in no hurry to make his move.

The two zombie warriors were immediately hit with devastating attacks when they neared the three brothers. The one wielding the fire sword sent one of the zombie warrior’s clubs flying with one fiery stroke, engulfing the zombie warrior with flames in an instant. The other was remarkably agile with his command of wind magic and the speed of his flurrying

strokes were too fast to be witnessed.

More than ten strokes landed on the other zombie warrior in the blink of an eye, making it lose the ability to battle in a short amount of time.

Two bone spears broke through the air at the same time aiming for Fereeca. The little skeleton brandished the bone dagger and also sped towards Fereeca.

To Fereeca, he felt that the bone spears were more of a threat than the little skeleton. When he heard the bone spears whistle towards him, he concentrated his attention on the source of the sound, flashing through the darkness like a streak of lightning and bringing them both down.

The little skeleton, who'd been moving as slowly as a regular skeletal warrior until now, suddenly picked up speed and stabbed swiftly at Fereeca's chest.

"Be careful!" Belinda, manipulating the golem off on the side, noticed this abnormality and shrieked a warning.

Fereeca startled in a fright and didn't defend himself in time. He immediately dodged, but a large bit of flesh was carved out of his chest and he grimaced in pain.

The Demonslayer Edge's harsh howling suddenly sounded piercingly at this moment, displaying a heart stopping red splendor in the darkness and quickly moved between Fereeca and his brothers.

Two soft sounds broke through the air, like a wooden stick breaking through paper.

The two who had just finished off the zombie warriors hadn't even had time to clearly see what had happened when they felt a gusty draft in their chests. They lowered their heads to see a great, bloody hole in their chests and that their blood was spurting out like arrows.

The two fell down with a thud shortly after looking down at their chests.

On the other side, Caspian discovered that the golem's movements had suddenly become a bit stiff due to Belinda's distraction. He immediately

waved his staff and once again commanded the branches to entangle the golem.

Beneath the tree, Emily took out her staff and swiveled her gaze between the golem and Han Shuo, seeming to monitor the danger within the terrain.

“Don’t kill her, just capture her!” Emily saw that the Demonslayer Edge was howling louder and louder after having feasted on the blood of the two mage swordsmen. She spoke up in reminder when she saw that moving streak of red drift closer and closer to Belinda.

If it hadn’t been for Emily’s reminder, the Demonslayer Edge would’ve reaped Belinda’s life in the next second. Han Shuo immediately understood Emily’s thoughts and summoned the Demonslayer Edge back to him, having it sink back into the palm of his hand.

Having evaded one of the little skeleton’s bone dagger attacks already, Fereeca’s chest was on fire, but this pain was only temporary, as the little skeleton’s seven blood red bone spurs spun out and suddenly nailed him to the floor.

The seven blood red bone spurs were all sparkling with an evil, red splendor as the blood within Fereeca’s body all quickly flowed into the seven bone spurs. They had sucked Fereeca’s body dry in an exceedingly quick manner. His body was like a piece of dried, aged meat.

As the seven bone spurs drained Fereeca of his blood, the little skeleton seemed to enjoy this greatly as it capered happily with bone dagger in hand, giving Belinda, who stood in the distance, a feeling of uncontrollable fear.

“Don’t move.” Belinda suddenly heard a harshly cold voice behind her in the darkness, and then saw the bizarre weapon, that had reaped the lives of two of her men, resting on her shoulder.

“Who are you to interfere in the matters of the Calamity Church?” Belinda wasn’t panicked as her sapphire eyes looked ahead to the front, maintaining a gentle tone and speaking faintly.

“Cut the bullshit and make the golem stop, or you’ll die immediately.” He’d already killed Clarendon, so his grudge with the Calamity Church was certain. Han Shuo was now completely unfettered in his actions and wouldn’t care about the threats of the Calamity Church at all.

The harsh tone and the killing intent flaring out from the Demonslayer Edge made Belinda realize that Han Shuo wasn’t joking. She grunted lowly and said, “You’ll regret provoking us.”

As she spoke, Belinda manipulated the golem somehow and the fierce, stocky armored golem that was four, five meters tall suddenly disappeared within a strange magic scroll in her hands.

Pa rang out as Han Shuo exerted a bit of force and hit the back of her head, making Belinda’s body collapse and faint.

The little skeleton had retrieved the seven bone spurs after sucking Fereeca dry. The dark mist was slowly starting to dissipate. Han Shuo saw that everything was in control and dismissed the little skeleton.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo picked up Belinda and carried her under his arms, walking out of the area and arrived next to Emily.

“Let’s leave the rest to Elder Caspian.”

Han Shuo lifted his head and looked at Caspian with a slight smile.

Since the golem had disappeared, Caspian naturally had no reservations and looked at Han Shuo with great surprise, “Who are you? How do you know that my name is Caspian, have we met before?”

“Hehe, we did indeed meet before, but we’re not well acquainted with each other. Mm, these people here are innocents and have only been caught by the fragrance. They’ll wake up slowly even without your help. We need to take this person of the Calamity Church to interrogate her, so we’ll be on our way.” Han Shuo smiled as he looked up to Caspian.

“No, this woman is from the Calamity Church. If the matters of today aren’t handled well, great trouble could befall you. It’s better if you give her over to me, I’ll handle this matter appropriately.” Caspian seemed a bit unwilling to let Han Shuo take Belinda away. He alighted from the tree

and spoke to Han Shuo.

“Our Dark Mantle has already taken charge of the matter of the Calamity Church. It’s not your place to say what we can or cannot do.’ Emily suddenly flicked a displeased glance at Caspian and spoke with a darkened face.

Caspian started when he heard these words and then spoke with the air of enlightenment, “So you’re of the Dark Mantle. There’s no problem in that case then. Take the woman, I’ll guarantee the safety of all of those here.”

“Then you have our thanks.” Han Shuo picked up the three magical swords as he spoke and searched the bodies of Fereeca and his brothers.

“Let’s go, stop searching, there’s nothing there.” Emily rolled her eyes at Han Shuo ill temperedly, seeming to laugh at Han Shuo’s greed.

“Explain things to her if she wakes up to prevent her suspecting anything.” Han Shuo pointed at Candice as he spoke and left with Emily, returning to the Dark Mantle stronghold.



# Chapter 168: Ripping off the veil

As Han Shuo and Emily brought Belinda to the Dark Mantle stronghold, they noticed that the flying bugs that had been circling the hotel were trailing them from a short distance.

The Demonslayer Edge suddenly flashed as its sharp point sank into one of the flying bugs and brought it to Han Shuo's palm. He took a closer look and discovered that this bug was the same material as the golem that Belinda had released. They were all made of metal armor, with just one of them being extremely big and the other being very small.

Magical yuan circulating in his palm, Han Shuo pinched his thumb and forefinger together tightly and a sharp crack rang out as he pulverized the bug. Han Shuo's eyes narrowed into slits as he noticed an exceedingly small magical formation within the stomach of the crushed bug, with traces of magical elements flickering within it.

"This Calamity Church is indeed formidable to set up a formation within such a small flying golem!" Han Shuo couldn't help but sigh with amazement as he put the flying golem away.

Emily nodded, in full agreement with Han Shuo's words, and spoke with a tinge of fear in her voice, "The Calamity Church is the most evil of all churches, with all sorts of evil magics and secret arts. Take the golem in the shape of the three eyed demon god for example. If the force and strength it displayed could be mass produced, then the knights of our Empire will have no way to contend against the attacks of these golems."

She was definitely part of Dark Mantle; Emily's first thought was for the country's security and not how much personal gain these golems could bring her.

"I'm going to dispose of those flying bug golems to prevent them from following us to Dark Mantle. It won't do for someone to discover our traces." Han Shuo brought out the Demonslayer Edge and willed it to charge into the crowd of flying bugs, destroying all of them in short order.

When all the flying bugs had been destroyed, Han Shuo and Emily didn't

linger as they made use of the night to sneak back to the Dark Mantle stronghold.

Han Shuo placed Belinda on a chair in the secret room he'd stayed in two days ago and had Emily take out ropes to secure Belinda to the chair.

Completely unconscious, Belinda had no feeling that she was being tied to the chair. After Emily tied her down, she looked at Belinda's veiled face curiously and said, "Why is this girl veiled? Is there something that she can't show the world?"

Shrugging, Han Shuo smiled, "There are only three possibilities for a face veil. She's either too beautiful and afraid that her features will bring danger to herself, she has a need to wear it out of certain cultural considerations, or that she doesn't want people to see the flaws of her face."

"I'm quite curious myself which of these possibilities she falls under. But since she's our prisoner now, I think you can just directly take off her face veil."

Emily glared at him involuntarily when Han Shuo waxed eloquent, and an odd tone colored her voice, "Hmm. I didn't know that you knew so much about facial veils!"

Han Shuo smiled awkwardly and hastened to explain, "This has nothing to do with me. I only know about all this because I've gotten Clarendon's memories."

Snorting softly, Emily didn't say anything else as she reached out a hand to slowly pull off the light veil on her face.

The features of the senseless Belinda were slowly uncovered. Thin, arched brows appeared below a smooth, gleaming forehead. A pair of tightly shut, long lashes then came into view as Belinda's charming nose was slowly revealed. Her skin was white and translucent, she was a wondrous beauty no wonder how one looked at her.

However, when her veil was fully pulled off, Han Shuo and Emily suddenly saw a black birthmark come into view on Belinda's left cheek.

This birthmark made her originally beautiful face appear a bit frightening.

“You guessed right, she has a natural defect. If it wasn’t for this black birthmark, she’d definitely be an unabashed beauty. What a pity!” Emily looked carefully at Belinda’s exposed face and spoke with some regret.

An oval shaped face, pert nose, juicy red lips, sapphire blue eyes, and translucent pale skin all combined with a lovely figure to form the body that a beauty should have. It was a pity that the birthmark on the left side of her face was simply too eye catching. It caught the attention of anyone looking at her and formed a severe contrast, thoroughly casting her looks in the shade.

“Alright, I’ll wake her now.” Han Shuo’s expression was the same as usual as he didn’t particularly care about this girl’s appearance. He walked to the back of the chair and placed a hand on the back of her neck, lightly pinched the meridians on the back of her neck and then patted her right cheek gently. “It’s time to wake up.”

Belinda’s skin was smooth and soft. Han Shuo felt that the sensations were very comfortable when he placed his hand on her skin to wake her. It was like touching an expensive piece of satin.

Belinda’s long lashes fluttered as her clear eyes opened. She first scanned her surroundings in confusion, then alighted on Emily and Han Shuo with surprise.

If you’re not reading this on volaretranslations, this chapter has been stolen and is incomplete.

The confusion in her eyes immediately faded away as Belinda rapidly recognized where she was. Her clear eyes sparkled with ice as her voice turned soft, but threatening, “Who are you to dare capture me? My Calamity Church won’t let you get away with this. You’ll regret what you did today!”

“No need for you to worry about that. What business do you have in Valen City? Apart from assassinating Clark, what other evil plots are you up to?” Emily looked coldly at Belinda and started her interrogation.

“Do you think I’d tell you? You’re wasting your effort.” Belinda looked disdainfully at Emily.

Belinda suddenly noticed the veil in Emily’s hand and thought of something. Her previously tender voice became shrill for the first time. Panicked, she glared at Emily and said loudly, “You’ll pay the price for taking off my veil!”

After watching for a while, Han Shuo walked impatiently in front of Belinda, his voice chilling, “Tell us what you came here for, or I’ll give you another birthmark on your right cheek.”

Belinda’s facial expression changed when she heard these words and she gave a high pitched giggle, “You’ll be sorry for this!”

Her previously red flushed face abruptly drained of all color as her body stiffened instantly. Her breathing slowing to a shallow pace and her eyes shutting once more, she seemed to have fallen into a coma as all her bodily functions went into hibernation.

Han Shuo was dumbfounded by the sudden turn of events. He looked at Emily ruefully, “She seems to have taken some medicine and fainted again. This is a bit tricky, what do you think we should do?”

Emily came over and released a dark magic into Belinda’s body. She then closed her eyes and thought for a bit, but could only lower her head to sigh, “The Calamity Church is certainly difficult to deal with. There’s no point in interrogating or torturing her if we can’t wake her up.”

“So what do you say?” Han Shuo spread out his hands and backed away in resignation.

Thinking for a moment, Emily replied, “I’ll report what’s happened here and see what the senior executives say. In addition, notify the forest trolls that the siege weapons they’ve sold to the merchants seem to have been secretly transported to Valen City. I need to go gather some intelligence to see if I can obtain tangible evidence.”

“Then what should I do?” Han Shuo asked.

“Heh heh, there’s nothing for you to do at the moment. Do whatever

you'd like. I'll come notify you immediately if anything happens." Emily looked at Han Shuo with a smile.

Nodding, Han Shuo responded, "That sounds good. I'll stay in the secret chamber and start practicing high level necromancy magic. I'll also see if I can find a way to wake Belinda and get something out of her."

"Whatever you'd like, but behave! Don't you take Belinda to bed whilst I'm not here!" Emily was about to leave when she suddenly thought of something and suddenly turned back to glare ferociously.

"Eh, I'm not the type to take advantage of others. Don't worry!" Han Shuo smiled ruefully.

"Humph, and you say you're not. That's exactly how you got me!" Emily glared fiercely and then seemed to remember something. "However, Belinda's black birthmark probably has affected your feelings towards her. I don't think I have anything to worry about."

Emily was obviously proud of herself after saying these words and left happily.

# Chapter 169: Premeditated partnership

Han Shuo's magical prowess had increased in recent times due to his advancement to the true demon realm, and his mental strength had also advanced by leaps and bounds due to the strengthening of his brain. He'd already fully grasped all the magics that a journeyman necromancer should know.

Having received all of Clarendon's memories, Han Shuo's understanding of necromancy magics had taken a giant leap forward. He'd received knowledge of many difficult to grasp concepts thanks to Clarendon's decades of experience, so his magic was brought to new heights.

Han Shuo now felt that his mental strength was much greater than before, and since he'd fully grasped all of the journeyman magics, he planned on taking the next step forward. He'd made a promise to Fanny to officially be in a relationship with her when he reached adept status. This proved to be a great impetus for Han Shuo.

Since he had some free time now, Han Shuo remained within the secret room and made use of the time to meditate and to sort through Clarendon's reflections.

As Han Shuo continued to practice the advanced magic, "Acid Bog", Han Shuo felt that he was expending too much mental strength and temporarily halted his practice.

His eyes flicked around at this moment and rested on Belinda, who sat in a drug induced coma. A thought struck him as he walked over to Belinda's side, placing a hand on her back and slowly circulated his magical yuan, extending one tendril into her body.

It was precisely because of the harsh reforging his body had undergone that Han Shuo was incredibly familiar with the construction of the human body. As the magical yuan flowed into Belinda's body, Han Shuo concentrated and could feel the trail of the magical yuan as it traveled through her body.

As Han Shuo focused his attention in this matter, he quickly discovered

that there was a numbing medicine within Belinda's body. It was like an anaesthetic that could stimulate the nerves to make one spontaneously faint, making it difficult for them to be awoken.

When Han Shuo detected the effects of this medicine, he smoothed out his breathing and used a bit of magical yuan to slowly circulate through Belinda's body. He used the power of the magical yuan to absorb this medicine and collect it into the palm of his hand.

As he did so, Han Shuo unintentionally looked at the black birthmark on Belinda's left cheek. A thought struck him as he directed the magical yuan into that birthmark.

When the magical yuan entered it, Han Shuo could clearly feel that another strange element was present within the birthmark, but it had thoroughly melded with Belinda's face and so there would be some difficulty if he wanted to remove the mark.

After all, this black birthmark would've been present at her birth and not been present in her body for only a short amount of time like this medicine.

Although he still had methods to deal with it, Belinda's beauty had nothing to do with him. It would also expend a lot of his magical yuan to do so for her, so Han Shuo naturally wouldn't help beautify Belinda.

When he'd absorbed the entirety of the medicine agent from Belinda's body, Han Shuo knew she would wake soon. His mind thought furiously as to how he would interrogate the awakened Belinda. A notion suddenly floated to the top of his mind as he chuckled coldly. A purple flame jumped into existence from his left finger tip, and he used the Demonslayer Edge to slightly cut open his index finger, forcing a drop of blood into the flame.

When this little bit of Han Shuo's essence landed on the purple flame, the flame suddenly brightened painful and then collapsed into the size of a pinky fingernail.

Under Han Shuo manipulations, the little ball of purple flame suddenly sank into the back of Belinda's neck and formed into a small, black mole.

Since reaching the true demon realm, Han Shuo could use his magical yuan to form a wondrous connection with the blood in his body. Using a secret art, he could seal a bud of frosty air into that drop of essence, and use the infant demon within him to control the level of cold within that essence.

Whenever he wanted to, the infant demon could activate that drop of essence and invade Belinda's body with frosty air, immediately deciding her life or death. In addition, he'd also be able to sense her proximity through that drop of essence as well.

Because of the loss of a drop of essence, Han Shuo made use of this time to sit down and meditate not too far from the soon to awaken Belinda, silently circulating his magical yuan to recover himself.

His blood essence resided near the infant demon and was nutrition for the demon infant. Each drop of essence contained arduously trained magical yuan.

Certain special arts would require this blood essence as a catalyst. Each drop was just as important as the demon infant. Using too much of it could make his magical yuan decrease in training at the least, or move him into cultivation deviation at the worst.

However, using only one drop wouldn't lead to any serious problems. He'd be able to fully recover after a day or so if he meditated carefully.

A soft sound suddenly sounded from beside him after a while. Deep in meditation, Han Shuo could feel that Belinda was about to awaken, even with his eyes closed.

Her long lashes fluttered as Belinda's bright eyes began to look around her surroundings. Several torches burned in this secret room, so she could clearly see everything as she looked around.

Apart from being spacious, there was nothing particularly noteworthy in this secret chamber. Han Shuo sat coolly in one corner, immediately drawing all of Belinda's attention. He presented a stern and grave face at the moment, the angles on his handsome face quite apparent. He looked quite masculine as he sat there aloofly, cross legged and back straight.



Curling her lip, Belinda breathed out softly and tugged at the ropes on her body. She discovered that it was indeed tough to struggle free from them. Her lively eyes darted to and fro, seeming to be weighing up something.

“You better not make any careless moves. Otherwise, if I discover something’s wrong, I’ll immediately kill you.” Han Shuo spoke coldly when he heard the friction of the ropes.

His sudden remarks startled Belinda and she stared angrily at Han Shuo. Belinda said, “Just who are you and what grudges do our Calamity Church have with you for you to capture me and not let me go?”

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo opened his deep eyes and flicked a glance at Belinda, taking out Clarendon’s white bone staff and saying faintly, “The seventh work of the Calamity Church’s alchemist Belinda. You personally refined this staff. I obtained it when I killed Clarendon. It’s very useful, so I should rather thank you!”

“So you’re the one who killed Clarendon. You must be one of Bob Ascher’s men!” Belinda’s gaze focused on the white bone staff before shifting to Han Shuo a while later.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo responded. “I’m not of the Gryphon Legion. On the contrary, I actually have a bone to settle with them. If it hadn’t been for my help when Clarendon came to assassinate Clark, Clark might not have died, but Clarendon was killing whoever he saw. I happened to see him summon the three eyed demon god Ansidesi, and was forced to defend myself when he wanted to kill me.”

“You’re really not one of Bob Ascher’s men?” Belinda was very surprised when he heard Han Shuo’s words and urgently asked for confirmation.

“Of course, you’re now my prisoner and I have no reason to lie to you.” Han Shuo nodded his head in confirmation.

“You said just now that you also tried to kill Clark. This means you’re enemies with Bob Ascher?” Appearing a bit excited, Belinda’s soft voice charged with emotion as she asked urgently.

Nodding his head again, Han Shuo responded with a smile. “That’s right, to be more accurate, Clark died by my hands and not Clarendon’s. My goal in coming to Valen City this time is also to move against Bob Ascher.”

“That’s wonderful! Since our goals are the same, I don’t think we should be enemies with each other. The Gryphon Legion has enormous influence in Valen City. I think it’ll be easier for us to reach our goals if we work together.” Surprise appeared on Belinda’s face as she looked at Han Shuo with great interest.

“However, I killed Clarendon and your three mage swordsmen as well. What should we do about that?” Although Han Shuo had long since planned to do so, he was still rather surprised to hear Belinda voice these words so straightforwardly.

“Sacrifice is unavoidable in order to attain any goal. There’s no big deal in a couple people dying. I promise we can let everything be history as long as we cooperate against the Gryphon Legion!” Belinda spoke carelessly, not caring about the life and death of her men.

Han Shuo was a bit surprised by this cavalier attitude, but still chuckled when he saw that his goal had been met, “Since this is the case, that’s wonderful!”

# Chapter 170: Violation during sleep

When Emily saw that Han Shuo and Belinda were actually having a conversation when she returned to the secret room, she was flabbergasted and looked suspiciously between Han Shuo and Belinda. She pulled Han Shuo aside and asked with a disbelieving voice, “You didn’t really sleep with her, did you?”

Han Shuo didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as he quickly shook his head. “Of course not. Miss Belinda’s goal is also to kill the chief of the Gryphon Legion and can fully forgive all our past transgressions. She’s willing to cooperate with us against Bob Ascher. I felt that there was a benefit in cooperation between our two sides, so I agreed to her proposal.”

“You agreed just like that and even released her from her bonds?” Emily was startled and stared fixedly at Han Shuo as she interrogated him.

Throwing a significant look at Emily, Han Shuo smiled openly and said to Belinda, “We have a special relationship. Although we are cooperating with each other, there are still secrets between us. If you don’t mind, I’d like to blindfold you before we let you go.”

“Of course, I understand.” Belinda accepted readily and forthrightly.

Han Shuo blindfolded her again and had also placed the veil back over her face. He led her out of the Dark Mantle stronghold beneath Emily’s taken aback gaze and only let her off a carriage when they were a far ways away. He said, “You can come find us at the agreed place after you make contact with your people. We can talk about the details of our cooperation then.”

“Okay, it was very nice to meet you.” Belinda responded softly and left after alighting from the carriage.

Emily hastened to ask after her figure had vanished, “Just what is going on? Why did you let her go just like that?”

Han Shuo quickly summarized what had happened. “There wouldn’t be much of an effect if we tried to force the truth out of her, but we can get a

lot more information out of her if we let her go like this. I can take her life immediately if she tries to do anything disadvantageous towards us, so there's no need to worry about anything. “

“She'll reach out to the Calamity Church after she leaves and we'll obtain more information from her if we work together. We can also team up against Bob Ascher together. Isn't this killing multiple birds with one stone?”

“Do you know that you're engaging in very dangerous acts? The Calamity Church isn't an ordinary faction. If we aren't careful, not only will we lose everything we've worked for up until now, we'll lose even our lives as well! You're playing with fire!” Emily still found it hard to accept his actions even after listening to his explanations and sighed with emotion.

“Alright alright, I know my limits in this matter. Taking risks is necessary sometimes. Only with great risk comes great reward. We can handle it.” Han Shuo paused here and asked Emily, “Right, you went out just now... did you get any useful information?”

“The Phoebe that you accompanied to the finance minister's banquet last time just arrived in Valen City. You'll never guess what she's here for.” Emily frowned when she saw Han Shuo ask about business.

Starting, Han Shuo asked, taken aback, “What's she doing in Valen City?”

“Because the McGrady Guild failed their mission halfway through last time, Bob Ascher no longer trusted them, but approached Phoebe instead. As the owner, she was tempted by the high price that Bob Ascher offered to transport the siege weapons and used the channels of her guild to bypass some cities and bring them to Valen City. I didn't think that she'd actually do it, and now that she's arrived in Valen City with them. If nothing goes wrong, she'll hand them over to the Gryphon Legion tomorrow.” Emily smiled ruefully as she explained.

Han Shuo's mind spun rapidly after he heard these words and suddenly ask, “Will this matter bring Phoebe down as well?”

“It’s difficult to say. If she helped Bob Ascher even after knowing what this equipment was, then I’d be hard pressed to cover up this matter, but if she had no idea and was kept in the dark, we may have some wiggle room then.” Emily thought for a moment and responded.

“Where is Phoebe staying now? I’m going to find her immediately.” Han Shuo’s forehead creased as he looked at Emily.

Pouting, Emily glared at Han Shuo and said huffily, “And you say you have nothing to do with her! Look at you, all worried when you hear that she’s in danger!”

“I have a lot of materials that depend on her procuring them for me. Nothing can happen to her, please tell me her address?” Holding Emily in his arms, he kissed her strongly and begged with a cheeky grin.

Emily snorted lightly and pinched Han Shuo harshly before finally giving him Phoebe’s address. She reminded him as he left, “There are Gryphon Legion members guarding the premises around her hotel. You must be careful!”

“Thank you for your concern, I’ll take care of myself, just for you.” Han Shuo chuckled and shot out from the carriage like a cheetah, moving swiftly to where Phoebe was staying.

The hotel that Phoebe was staying at was on a street close to the entrance of the city. When Han Shuo reached it, he discovered that there were indeed a lot of soldiers stationed around it. It was obvious that they cared greatly about what Phoebe was transporting.

Making use of the cover of night, Han Shuo activated the Art to fly into the air and slowly descend onto the roof of one of the nearby buildings.

One had to say that the Dark Mantle did indeed possess incredible intelligence networks. Emily had known which hotel Phoebe had checked into as soon as she entered the city. She even knew which room Phoebe was in.

The last room on the west side was the quietest and most expensive room in the hotel. There were three Gryphon Legion soldiers guarding it

as well. Han Shuo observed the surroundings from the roof and made use of someone dozing off to crack open a window and sneak in soundlessly.

The room was quite spacious as it had a separate living room, bathroom, and bedroom. Phoebe was fast asleep, so she was naturally in the bedroom. Han Shuo held his breath and quietly tiptoed to the bedroom, not making any sound.

A soft, big bed was located beneath purple bed curtains. A brazier, by the side of the bed, burned softly, warming the entire room. A body on her side was on the soft bed, wrapped in satin sheets and a head full of long hair spilled over the pillow. A pale, translucent shoulder was exposed to the air and she moaned deeply as if dreaming.

Waking soundlessly to Phoebe, Han Shuo's body twisted as he lifted a corner of the purple curtains, planning to wake her up. He suddenly heard a deep moan and a shy protest come from Phoebe's lips, "Oh... no, you villain. Bryan, you villain!"

### NSFW Part

Han Shuo started, thinking that she had discovered him. He couldn't help but raise himself a bit higher to look at Phoebe, but noticed that her eyes were tightly shut and her cheeks flushed red. Low moans sounded from her mouth as her arms seemed to move over her body and rub herself beneath the sheets.

She was having a wet dream! And he seemed to be the male lead!

Han Shuo was flabbergasted as he looked at Phoebe in shock. Phoebe's face and nape were a patch of red as her luscious, red lips parted slightly. A hand kept traveling between her chest and lower body beneath the sheets as she emitted low moans, calling out his name every now and then.

Han Shuo felt his mouth and tongue dry out when such a shocking, incredible scene was presented in front of him. His lower body immediately stood at attention. He'd planned on waking Phoebe, but forgot everything at this moment. His body slowly lowered itself into Phoebe's bed and he even lifted a corner of the sheets to slip in.

He spooned Phoebe from behind as his stiffly alert lower body inserted itself into the rounded arc of Phoebe's bottom. He could even feel the slippery wetness of her body down there through the thin fabric.

No man was able to resist such strong stimulus. Han Shuo panted lowly once and slowly crept his hands up to Phoebe's pert and full breasts from behind, rubbing them through the silk pajamas. His mouth moved to Phoebe's neck and his passion filled mouth and lips licked at Phoebe's flushed neck.

"Oh... you pervert!" Phoebe obviously felt the same level of strong impetus in her sleep as she couldn't help but moan as well. One of her hands unconsciously covered the hand that was ravaging her breasts as her other hand guided Han Shuo's other hand along her breasts.

Phoebe's bottom also seemed to feel Han Shuo's intrusion as well as she clenched her slender legs together, seeming to want to feel Han Shuo's invasion even more clearly. This kind of soul wrenching stimulus made Han Shuo start to pant and lick Phoebe even more fiercely.

Just as this feeling became more and more acute, Phoebe's neck suddenly turned as she opened her sleepy eyes to look at Han Shuo, the expression of enjoyment plastered all over his face.

# Chapter 171: You're my woman from now on!

Han Shuo was immediately gobsmacked as his heart pounded rapidly, his mouth opening and closing, not knowing what to do.

No matter how one looked at it, he had barged into someone's room in the middle of the night, climbed into her bed and committed such ridiculous acts. These were all unexplainable and unforgivable. The drowsy Phoebe was looking at him with such hazy eyes that Han Shuo had already made his preparations to welcome the advent of the storm.

Contrary to his expectations, just as he was stunned and didn't know what to do, Phoebe actually turned her body to face Han Shuo. She then snaked her arms around his neck and moved her luscious lips towards Han Shuo's wide open mouth. Her small, lithe tongue reached voluntarily into his mouth.

As she lay there face to face with Han Shuo, Phoebe's long, slender legs also entangled themselves with his legs. One of them crept around his waist she started squirming against his body like a snake.

Phoebe wore thin, satin pajamas to sleep. When the two of them were so tightly meshed together, this kind of satin material was almost nonexistent against skin. Such a perfect body was enmeshed against his body and this fragrant tongue was voluntarily offering itself for his sampling. Han Shuo immediately forgot his panic from just now and responded enthusiastically.

His two hands rested on Phoebe's chest and butt as he unceremoniously started playing with them, feeling their smooth roundness. As they changed shapes beneath the ministrations of his hands, Han Shuo's panting became rougher and rougher as he finally couldn't take it anymore and pinned Phoebe beneath his body. He roughly ripped apart her thin pajamas and started kneading her breasts roughly with his bare hands.



“Eh... that hurts!” Phoebe cried out with pain as her ardent tongue retreated. A pair of hazy, almond shaped eyes slowly became to gain a bit of clarity.

Han Shuo blanked and panted, “I’m sorry, I’ll be more gentle later on!”

Phoebe had been a bit perplexed until he spoke, and her flushed cheeks immediately changed greatly. She pushed Han Shuo off her with extreme fear and quickly pulled up the thin sheets, wrapping them tightly around herself. She screamed, “You speak, this isn’t a dream!”

Han Shuo finally reacted after hearing Phoebe’s words. It looked like Phoebe had kissed him back just now because she hadn’t been fully awake and thought that she was still in her dream. As their bodies entangled in that hazy and indistinct circumstances, as well as Han Shuo’s slightly rough movements and his response, Phoebe finally woke up and realized the truth of the situation.

“Miss Phoebe, is something the matter?” Phoebe’s scream had attracted the attentions of the three Gryphon Legion guards standing guard outside her door. One of them stood in front of it and called out to her.

“No, nothing. I just had a nightmare. Don’t worry about me. Just keep guard outside.” Although Phoebe was currently in a state of panic, she didn’t even give a moment’s thought to concealing Han Shuo’s presence when she heard the guards call out to her.

“Alright, it will be daybreak soon. Miss Phoebe can rest for a little while longer!” The guard outside the door returned to his station after saying a word.

Her face flushed red because of her shock, Phoebe’s eyes stared directly at Han Shuo as she looked at him silently, a bizarre expression apparent on her face.

Han Shuo really wanted to find a hole to bury himself into in his current state of awkwardness. Even though he had a thick face, he still couldn’t help but burn in embarrassment. He stammered out nonsense as he tried to explain, “Um... eh... I had some business with you and you were having this weird dream. And then you hugged me. Hah, I’m a normal guy, so

we... that... that's how things happened..."

Han Shuo's explanation was feeble and even he himself felt a bit ashamed as he spoke. His presence weakened greatly with these words, and he looked like a prisoner on death row in his final struggles.

He looked deeply at Phoebe as her face became redder and redder. Han Shuo's frantic motions to find an excuse seemed to irritate her even more as she huffed out lowly, "Shut up!"

Han Shuo immediately shut up upon hearing these words and sat with a wry smile on the corner of the bed. He hung his head quietly, looking like a kid who had done something wrong and was waiting for the teacher to punish him.

"You dared violate me in such a shameless way while I was asleep. Bryan, oh Bryan, you're even more despicable than I had originally thought!" Phoebe looked like she wanted to kill him as she bit off her words.

"I didn't, you hugged me first! To be honest, I was the passive one here." Han Shuo hung his head and snuck a peek at Phoebe out of the corner of his eye as he spoke with some aggrievement.

"Wah!" sounded out as Phoebe sobbed lowly, a hand tugging on the thin sheets to cover herself and using the other to fiercely hammer Han Shuo's chest. She cursed lowly like she was crying, "How dare you, you despicable, shameless rogue! You've always treated me like this and never take responsibility. I hate you, I hate you!"

Although Phoebe's fists sounded out dully as she beat Han Shuo, he didn't feel any pain at all because she hadn't used any fighting aura.

Thinking rapidly, Han Shuo remembered that Phoebe had first called out his name in her sleep and connected it to the sometimes strange actions she would make towards him sometimes. Add to that what he'd just said, a moment of brilliance flashed through his mind and he suddenly understood something – Phoebe liked him!

Once he sorted this out, Han Shuo's thoughts spun even more rapidly,

but even with the nimbleness of his mind, it wasn't that easy to find a rational explanation for what he wanted to do. He thought for a moment and then made up his mind viciously, deciding to just take her then and there.

He had been passively accepting the blows from Phoebe when he suddenly gripped her hands with one hand, the other striking out and lifting the thin sheets covering him and pressed her down on the bed beneath him. Wild kisses rained down on her as he started kissing and licking her neck, cheeks, shoulders, and breasts.

As he did so, he used the weight of his body to keep her pressed down and strong arms to restrain her, keeping her immobile and leaving her only able to cry out through her mouth.

"Damn it, let go of me you jerk. Um... not there, don't lick there. Stop, you evil jerk! Oh... no..." Curses and sounds of struggle continued to spill out from her mouth, but because there were guards outside, Phoebe didn't dare alarm them, so she kept her voice down, having no effect on Han Shuo at all.

Phoebe soft calls became more and more urgent beneath Han Shuo's strong kisses and her face flushed redder and redder. Her struggles became more and more weak until they finally turned into low moans. Han Shuo suddenly felt the refreshing feeling of victory and began licking and kissing even more strongly.

"Oh... why did you bite me?!" An enormous cry of pain suddenly emitted from Han Shuo's mouth. Phoebe could only move her mouth and so decided to bite Han Shuo's ear when she realized she couldn't move her body.

"You bite me and so I bite you as well!" Phoebe's face was filled with a strange light after biting Han Shuo. Her eyes sparkled and she seemed to be repressing a certain sweetness.

"Then, let's bite each other together!" Han Shuo chuckled devilishly and his mouth that had been kissing Phoebe's shoulder suddenly moved to her mouth.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Phoebe didn't struggle this time, but panted as he met her mouth.

A slippery tongue moved voluntarily into Han Shuo's mouth, entangling with Han Shuo's fiercely.

When he sensed Phoebe's response, Han Shuo's heart lurched as his hands and feet started acting up again. His large hands caressed Phoebe's full and firm peaks, squeezing them unceremoniously. His strictly at attention lower body rubbed restlessly against Phoebe's.

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Giving off a soft "oh", Phoebe panted roughly as she exerted force to push Han Shuo off her. A bit afraid to look at Han Shuo in her shyness, "That's enough now, the sky's about to brighten."

Seeing that it was indeed light outside and that sounds of conversation were coming in, Han Shuo tampered down his desires when he thought of the danger Phoebe was in and moved off her body. He tenderly picked up the thin sheets, wrapped Phoebe in them and held her close.

A strange light flashed through Phoebe's strong eyes as Han Shuo did so, appearing quite content and gentle. When Han Shuo finished doing all this, she lowered her head and said softly, "You violated me again today, what are you going to do about it?"

Chuckling devilishly, Han Shuo tightened his grasp and said in a dominating fashion, "You're my woman from now on!"

Phoebe's reddened face gleamed with an uncommon light when she heard these words, as if she'd waited a long time for this day and these words. She became shy when the truth arrived in front of her, but the sweetness on her face depicted the joy in her heart.

Her face trailing to her neck, Phoebe was quite bashful as she docilely said in a mosquito level voice, "Alright."

# Chapter 172: Refining the yin demons

Perhaps because they'd touched each other intimately, but the cold and arrogant Phoebe now blushed often, and her attitude towards Han Shuo had changed drastically.

Women were like this. Before they gave you their heart, they would have many reservations and hesitations. However, once they gave their heart to you, they would involuntarily let the man take charge. Even a swordmaster like Phoebe was no different.

"Speak. How did you know I was staying here? What did you sneak in here for?" Phoebe lifted her head to look at Han Shuo with a slight smile as she lay on Han Shuo's broad chest.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo's naughty hands and feet all stopped. He frowned as he gave Phoebe a basic overview of what was going on. However, he didn't speak of some of the more sensitive topics, including his identity in the Dark Mantle and the interference from the Calamity Church.

"Do you know what you were transporting when you were handling this batch of goods?" Han Shuo looked at Phoebe and gravely asked.

Shaking her head, Phoebe's slender brows creased as she responded, "I don't know. Those in my line of trade sometimes need to take on unknown risks. However, I hadn't thought that this time's matter would encompass so much."

Han Shuo did indeed breathe a sigh of relief when he learned that Phoebe had no idea what she was moving. He thought deeply for a moment and said, "The chief of the Gryphon Legion had the heart to rebel, so you must cooperate with us for the safety of the Boozt Merchant guild. Otherwise, once the senior levels of the Empire learn of this operation and of your guild's involvement, I'm afraid your guild will be subjected to unmeasurable danger, even as strong as it is."

Nodding her head in understanding, Phoebe hugged Han Shuo and laughed softly, "I'll do as you say. I think you'll be quite earnest in helping

me.”

Phoebe was completely trusting of Han Shuo as she spoke, making him quite flattered by her trust. He quickly weighed some things up and once again coalesced a drop of essence blood, placing it in a small flask. He gave it to Phoebe, “Try to drip a drop of this blood onto those siege weapons as you transport them.”

“If you’re unable to open the containers, then drip it on the containers themselves. Then, try to accompany the shipment as far as you can tomorrow. Don’t be in a hurry to leave after you’re done, I’ll come find you again. Oh, right, Candice is in Valen City too and she’s staying at a hotel owned by Elaine. You can go find her.”

“No problem, I’ll do as you say.” Phoebe agreed and then lightly laughed, taking out a bunch of items from her storage ring. Her clear eyes looked at Han Shuo like she was showing off a treasure. “This batch has the all items that you wanted. I collected all of them in the course of helping Bob Ascher transport his items over.”

She handed the list over; looking over it, Han Shuo realized that all these items were what he’d needed to refine the yin demons. It looked like Phoebe had paid a lot of attention to his matters and had collected all the necessary materials for him in a short period of time.

He pulled Phoebe over and landed a kiss on her blushing, beautiful cheek, delighted. “Heh heh, thank you so much!”

The guard’s voice sounded again from outside at this time, “Miss Phoebe, the sun has completely risen. You should get ready to leave.”

“Mm. I’m awake. I’ll be out in a moment.” Phoebe responded, pushing Han Shuo away, bashfully changing her clothes within the thin blankets and pouting, “It’s all your fault. You ripped my undergarments, you savage brute.”

Han Shuo chuckled evilly and left Phoebe’s bed. “Alright, alright, I’ll make it up to you. Remember what I said. I’m leaving here for now, but I’ll come find you again soon.”

Han Shuo slowly made his way to the window. Just as he reached it, Phoebe suddenly called out softly. He looked back at her in surprise as she reminded softly, “Be careful.”

“I will!” Han Shuo responded dashing. Taking a quick peek out the window, he took advantage of a guard blinking to shoot out from the window like a wraith.

Han Shuo concealed his body in the light of the early morning and flew to the Dark Mantle stronghold. He discovered that Chester was already waiting when he arrived. It looked like he’d come from Elaine’s hotel.

“What’s the situation?” Han Shuo asked when he saw Chester.

“I was unconscious in the hotel. A druid told me that we’d fallen victim to a drug when I woke up and didn’t say anything else.” Chester looked a bit confused as he looked to Han Shuo for an explanation.

Han Shuo briefly went over what had happened while Chester had been unconscious. “Did that druid chat about anything with the female leader of the mercenary band? In addition, is Lisa back safely? How are things within the hotel?”

“It looks like that the druid spoke with the female swordsman Candice for a bit, but he evaded our hearing so I don’t know what they spoke of. I personally took Lisa to Lawrence, he said that he’ll be in touch shortly. The hotel is rearranging Belinda’s room with Elaine’s guidance and should be back to normal operations soon. The druid and everyone from the mercenary band are still there. They haven’t left!” Chester replied.

“So I see. Right, have you seen Emily since returning?”

“No, I just came over and saw the two that work for Madame Emily, but she’s not here at the moment.” Chester responded.

“Ah, I see. I don’t have anything going on at the moment. If you’re free, why don’t you head out and see what’s going on around town.” Han Shuo smiled and walked past Chester to head for the secret room.

When he set up the magic formation, Han Shuo once again entered the cemetery of death. The little lewd dragon Gilbert immediately bounded

over with enthusiasm when he saw Han Shuo appear, thinking that Han Shuo was taking him out.

“Now isn’t the time, but I’ll take you away from the cemetery of death in a few days; don’t be in a hurry.” When he saw Gilbert rush over, Han Shuo immediately proceeded to throw cold water over him and ignored the rest of Gilbert’s mutterings, heading to where the yin demons were being refined.

Refining the yin demons was similar to refining the original demons. Apart from making a few adjustments to the formation and substituting in more precious ingredients, as well as three drops of essence blood, there were no other differences.

Han Shuo took a deep breath and quickly went over the details he needed to pay attention to in his mind. He then took out the Demonslayer Edge and started to change the cave in which the original demons had been refined in, changing it to the formation that could be used for the yin demons.

When the yin demon cave formed, Han Shuo placed all the ingredients that Phoebe had collected in the proper order in the yin demon cave. He had needed eighteen wraiths to be the catalyst to refine original demons, but the yin demon refinement required double. While 36 wraiths were needed, the time for refinement was decreased to 18 days.

Since Han Shuo had reached the true demon realm, he now possessed essence blood. Add that to the improved quality of his magical yuan, he’d be able to have the 36 wraiths finish battling each other in a short 18 days. The strongest wraiths that seized the three drops of essence blood would have the right to absorb the power within the yin demon cave and be refined to yin demons even more powerful than the original demons.

When the three yin demons finish forming, not only would they have all the power of the original demons, they would have even stronger life forces than the original demons. They would be able to lay in wait once they invaded a body until they rose to land a fatal blow at a critical moment.



If someone becomes possessed by a yin demon, then Han Shuo would be able to see everything they saw and felt through the yin demon within them. The yin demon lying in wait within their body could suddenly explode to action when the victim was deeply asleep or fighting others, and make its attack when the victim was otherwise distracted.

It'd be best if it could kill his enemy, but if the opponent was particularly strong, the yin demon could continue to lay low within his victim's body, or leave it and flee back to Han Shuo.

When the three yin demons were completely formed, they could even briefly transform into Han Shuo and create illusions of him for a short period. If Han Shuo suddenly created three copies of himself during battle, he'd be able to turn the situation around by befuddling his enemies.

When Han Shuo dripped in his essence blood and saw that the 36 wraiths had started furiously attacking each other within the cave to fight over Han Shuo's three drops of essence blood, he understood that the yin demon cave had started operating successfully and didn't continue to watch. He left without listening to Gilbert's complaints.

# Chapter 173: Not enough right to

After returning from the cemetery of death, Han Shuo discovered that Emily was standing next to him as soon as he reappeared from the secret chamber.

“So you’ve seen your little lover?” Emily immediately asked when she saw Han Shuo.

“Regarding those siege weapons that Bob Ascher asked for, Phoebe is completely out of the loop. Moreover, I told her everything and she will cooperate completely with our work. I think, we can conceal the fact that Phoebe is implicated in this.” As he walked out of the transportation matrix, Han Shuo retrieved the six magical sticks one by one while explaining to Emily.

“If Phoebe is truly ignorant of the situation, then she won’t be implicated in this matter. We of the Dark Mantle will definitely not treat a good person with injustice. In the future, you will know of this,” Emily resolutely replied. Then she smiled tenderly and said, “You entered her room in the middle of the night, did she not mistake you as a rapist and beat you up?”

“Of course not,” Han Shuo replied with a straight face.

Emily stared intently at Han Shuo, trying to decipher something, but she realized that Han Shuo’s expression was bland with absolutely no particular changes.

“Alright alright, let’s leave this matter as it is. I just received a message. That Belinda that you released contacted me using your method. I don’t know what happened.” After Emily realized that she could not read anything from Han Shuo’s expression, she dropped the matter and continued to talk about proper business.

Before he released Belinda, Han Shuo had left her a means to contact him and told Emily about it so that she could keep an eye on it for him. Now, when he heard her say this, he immediately replied, “That’s good. Then let’s go meet Belinda right now to see what she wants.”

Han Shuo traveled with Emily to the Dark Forest where he had previously killed the two Gryphon knights. Although he had already left some insurance on Belinda's body, Han Shuo continued to be very cautious. He had been utmost vigilant on the way here, afraid that he would fall into one of Belinda's schemes.

When Han Shuo entered the forest, he suddenly felt an enormous presence concealed inside.

This energy clearly did not originate from Belinda. Han Shuo immediately focused his attention and spoke softly to Emily who was right beside him, "Be careful. There's something unnatural inside."

Emily nodded her head and replied, "Indeed. It seems that Belinda isn't in the forest alone. It'll be better if we take precautions to avoid being lured into one of her traps."

"Relax. If Belinda dares to raise a finger against us, I will make her suffer the consequences," Han Shuo's expression was calm. He retrieved the Demonslayer Edge from his space ring and walked towards the depths of the forest.

Suddenly, a streak of blinding lightning, as thick as a man's arm, violently launched towards his body like a soaring dragon, zig-zagging in midair as it exploded with brilliant radiance. As it moved, some large trees around its path began to smoke with a chaotic creaking noise.

Han Shuo's brows furrowed as the Demonslayer Edge shot out at will. With a whoosh, it leapt past the trees that blocked his path and instantly stabbed towards the top of the streak of lightning.

Amidst a string of thunderous explosions, Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge could sense a storm of vengeful sword aura infused with the power of lightning. Not even the Demonslayer Edge infused with Han Shuo's demonic power could continuously withstand this kind of incredibly violent and chaotic energy. In the blink of an eye after making contact, Han Shuo was visibly unsettled as he hurried to compel the Demonslayer Edge back to his palm.

"Who's there?" Emily, who was also very cautious at this point, called

out delicately. She gripped her magic staff, her bright eyes affixed to the soaring lightning overhead.

“Calamity Church Thunder Magic Knight Johnny! I only wanted to see if the two of you have the qualifications to work with me!” From the mysterious depths of the forest, a deep voice suddenly shouted.

After this shout, a middle-aged man in black armour with with ash-silver hair emerged from deep within the forest alongside Belinda. An ugly scar ran from his forehead to his nose, adding even more harshness to his already ugly visage.

The moment he stepped out from the Dark Forest after speaking, his body had already launched rapidly towards the soaring lightning. With a luxurious flourish of his right hand, a milky white fighting aura flashed into existence. The suspended lightning seemed to be steered by a titanic force into the palm of his hand.

After the lightning had receded, Han Shuo realized that it was actually a long silver sword. Only, even now the sword was still covered by electricity that had yet to disperse, sparking occasionally with light.

The milky white fighting aura of this man spoke of the strength that he had as either a swordmaster or an Earth Rider. Combining this kind of potential with the lightning demonic arts that this person had cultivated, it was no wonder that this person was so powerful to the extent that even Han Shuo’s Demonslayer Edge couldn’t handle it.

From behind thunder mage swordsman Johnny’s figure, the veil-adorned Belinda walked out slowly. When she reached Han Shuo, she first apologized briefly before turning around to Johnny. “Uncle Johnny, I already told you. Their potential qualifies them to work with us. Otherwise how could I have miscalculated?”

This man, Johnny, of the Calamity Church looked to be an extremely egotistical person, but he was still somewhat respectful towards Belinda. When he heard her say that, he could not help but nod and say, “Their potential can be considered passable, but cooperating with them will not benefit us much. Bob Ascher of the Gryphon Knights is a sky rider. These

two people are no match for someone of his potential. Our only opportunity is if you can only use your golem to obstruct the surrounding people while I execute him.”

Emily couldn't help but speak up when she heard this person's arrogance, “Apparently, apart from the Gryphon Legion Chief being a sky rider, there are five earth riders by his side. Add to that Clark's master, great swordmaster Gabriel, and two other water and earth archmages.”

“Just based off of this alone, it has to be a divine swordmaster and a magister, or a divine knight acting in concert, or it'll be an empty dream to try to kill him alone. Heh heh, I see that although Mister Johnny is a thunder mage swordsman at the level of swordmaster, it won't be that easy for you once you truly start fighting Bob Ascher, not to mention the followers on his side.”

Most people would know that Bob Ascher had a few followers by his side, but wouldn't know to the level of detail that the Dark Mantle was aware of. When Emily started describing all of Bob Ascher's followers in detail, even the arrogant Johnny's face changed drastically.

“Then, what aid can you bring us?” Johnny stood there silently with a stone-cold face and looked at Emily.

“No matter your goals in fighting Bob Ascher, I just want to tell you not to make moves lightly. Otherwise not only you, but even we will be dragged in as well. If we work together, we can provide you the intelligence on the people by Bob Ascher's side and can help you distract them for a short period of time, creating the appropriate moment for your assassination attempt.” Emily revealed a confident smile and softly described what the Dark Mantle could do for Johnny.

“Uncle Johnny, this is precisely what we need!” Belinda suddenly spoke up beside Johnny.

“You're likely members of the Lancelot Empire?” Johnny wasn't an idiot and naturally made out Han Shuo and Emily's identity at this point.

Nodding, Emily admitted, “That's right. I hope you can keep this secret for us if we work together.”

‘Humph. You people are so fake. You’ll cooperate with us when you need us, but will pretend you don’t even know we exist when the matter passes. You’ll come at us with everything you have.’ Johnny sneered with utmost sarcasm.

“Then the matter’s settled then. We’ll tell you if we find a suitable time to kill him in the next couple days. We’ll let you know when the arrangements are made. You can make use of the time to find more helpers, otherwise it won’t be that realistic in wanting to kill Bob Ascher.” When Han Shuo saw Johnny’s experience, he knew that although the latter didn’t care for those who worked for the country, he seemed to be used to using others. He looked like he’d agreed to work together.

With the Calamity Church’s current level of strength, it wasn’t feasible to assassinate Bob Ascher alone. Han Shuo and Emily had agreed to work with them not because they hoped they could kill Bob Ascher, but they wanted to make use of the chaos to slip into his manor and obtain the information they needed, and then use the Dark Mantle’s power to take him down.

“Alright, then this matter is settled. I hope you two don’t get up to some tricks, or you’ll regret it.” Johnny finally agreed with a darkened face.

# Chapter 174: Cover is blown

After leaving the Dark Forest, Han Shuo and Emily split up, making his way towards Lawrence's new place of residence.

When Han Shuo saw Lawrence, the latter immediately thanked Han Shuo, "Thank you so much for last time, otherwise Lisa might have been put in danger."

"No problem, considering my relationship with Lisa, this was something I should've done. Right, how is Lisa now?" Han Shuo sat down and asked Lawrence with a smile.

"Don't worry, I've already sent her back to Ossen City. As strong as the Gryphon Legion is, they wouldn't dare to do anything in the capital."

"That's wonderful. Oh right, your junior sister Phoebe is also in Valen City. She has some dealings with the Gryphon Legion." Han Shuo started talking about Phoebe with Lawrence.

Surprise on his face, Lawrence was quite shocked and looked at Han Shuo in confusion, "What is she doing in Valen City? What's going on?"

Due to his previous understanding, Han Shuo discovered that Lawrence and Phoebe had a tight relationship. As the third prince, it'd be better if he knew everything that Phoebe had done. Therefore, after Lawrence started asking, Han Shuo sketched out what had happened.

After Han Shuo finished, Lawrence thought deeply with a furrowed brow for a bit and then looked deeply at Han Shuo. "It looks like I have you to thank for helping Phoebe in this matter. Your Dark Mantle is truly all powerful!"

Han Shuo started in fright after hearing these words. His eyes focused on Lawrence and he looked deeply at Lawrence for a bit. Han Shuo sighed softly, "When did you discover my identity?"

"When we left the slave trading house." Lawrence smiled in response and hesitated before speaking again, "More accurately speaking, I've just found out of your identity now. Ever since we left the trading house last

time, I began to suspect Madame Emily's identity. I found someone to confirm it for me and then started investigating you."

It wasn't something ignoble to work for the Dark Mantle. Within the senior ranks of the Empire, the existence of the Dark Mantle wasn't a secret. Its mission and operations wouldn't harm ordinary people unless this person did something that harmed the Empire. He didn't think there was anything wrong with what the Dark Mantle was doing.

Musing silently for a moment, Han Shuo's expression returned to normal as he smiled, "That's right, I've just joined the Dark Mantle, but I've truly recognized its strength!"

"Then, you must know a great deal about me?" Lawrence suddenly asked Han Shuo with a faint smile.

Starting, Han Shuo laughed heartily, "Of course, you're Lawrence, the son of the finance minister. Everyone knows this!"

Even though Han Shuo knew full well of Lawrence's identity, he couldn't voice it, otherwise the relationship between him and Lawrence would change. At the very least, Lawrence would probe Han Shuo's thoughts or invite the latter to exert effort on Lawrence's behalf. This was a conundrum that Han Shuo currently didn't wish to face, so he felt that playing dumb was the smartest move.

Lawrence had a strange smile on his face after Han Shuo's declaration and he looked deeply at Han Shuo for a bit before responding, "Alright, let's not talk about this for now. With your visit to Valen City this time, you have surely come to understand that Bob Ascher has the desire to rebel and are here to collect evidence. I've come here for similar purposes in taking down this Gryphon Legion Chief. Can you tell me your current progress?"

Han Shuo hesitated a bit and quickly weighed the gains and losses in his mind before mentioning that he had laid hands on evidence regarding the siege weapons and had given it to his superior in the Dark Mantle to officially arrest Bob Ascher. But Han Shuo remained silent on anything regarding the Calamity Church, he didn't want Lawrence to know of what



was happening in this regard.

“It looks like our goals are the same, I think we can work together. What plans do you have? How can I help?” Lawrence asked Han Shuo.

Han Shuo eyed Lawrence and asked, “Then, what can you help us with?”

Smiling mysteriously, Lawrence looked deeply at Han Shuo and said, “I have someone inside the Gryphon Legion, second to only Bob Ascher. He can directly deploy some of the Legion for us at certain times and do much for us.”

Han Shuo’s mind worked furiously, there was much to mine from these words. It looked like Lawrence was here not only to take down Bob Ascher, but likely to raise his own person as a replacement and thoroughly take control of the Gryphon Legion, paving the way for his future attempt on the throne.

“That would be for the best. Let me consolidate things a few things. We’ll make a move in the next two days and I’ll be in touch to discuss how to coordinate!” Han Shuo responded after thinking for a moment.

“No problem, I’ll wait for your good news. Heh heh, we’re friends now, and I have utmost confidence in your style. I know you’re prudent enough and trust that you won’t make any large mistakes in your plans. Let me know when you’ve settled everything and I’ll do my best to coordinate with you. It’s a win-win situation for us.” Lawrence laughed heartily and spoke forthrightly to Han Shuo.

“Alright, then I’ll be going now.” Han Shuo took his leave after Lawrence finished speaking and walked over to Elaine’s hotel, not too far off in the distance.

When Han Shuo arrived at the hotel, he discovered that Belinda’s wrecked room had been mostly repaired, and looked like it would be open for business again soon. Han Shuo hadn’t checked out of Emily’s room yet, so he returned to it after arriving in the hotel.

The chubby, middle aged lady Elaine walked out not too long afterwards and closed the door with a smile, “Thank you so much for your aid,

otherwise my hotel would've been destroyed in the hands of that woman from the Calamity Church!"

"It looks like Emily's already told you everything that's happened." Han Shuo said.

Nodding, Elaine said, "Yes, Madame Emily came by once to tell me everything, and told me to keep an eye on the guests. Do you have any instructions for me?"

"Of those within the hotel, who has yet to leave? In addition, has the female mage swordsman of the mercenary band been in touch with anyone else?" Han Shuo couldn't help but ask when he thought of his agreement with Phoebe.

"There's been no changes in the guests here. The great druid and little female elf still temporarily occupy their rooms. The two of them went out earlier today and returned not too shortly after. Apart from the girl called Candice, those of the mercenary band have all gone out once, seemingly to look for new missions and haven't returned yet."

"I observed for a bit and no one suspicious seems to have walked into Candice's room, and I haven't seen her leave either. Apart from this, there has been nothing out of the ordinary within the hotel. The Gryphon Legion has sent men once to patrol and asked about the collapsed room. I covered it up." The frightening events that had just taken place in the hotel hadn't seemed to affect her as Elaine spoke calmly of what had taken place, describing everything in great detail.

"Those of the Gryphon Legion don't suspect this place, do they?" Han Shuo asked with a frown after remaining silent for a while.

"Don't worry, I don't think there's any trouble. I've been in Valen City for many years and have known long ago how to handle the Gryphon Legion." Elaine guaranteed with confidence.

Han Shuo wasn't able to say much else after her words, otherwise it would appear that he didn't trust her. He nodded, said "You've done well", and indicated for her to go about her business.

He thought for a moment after she left; he should still tell Candice that Phoebe might come looking for her, just in case she suddenly left.

Walking out of his room, Han Shuo contemplated how to broach the subject with Candice. As he walked towards her room, he suddenly heard, “Bad guy!”, and saw the little elf Angelica point and yell at him from Caspian’s room window.

He smiled wryly and made a face at Angelica, ignoring her and continuing towards Candice’s room. However, he soon heard running footsteps from Angelica’s direction. It was obviously Angelica in hot pursuit.

“Bad guy, what are you doing here?” Angelica had already rushed up and spoke with some happiness.

“Why, here to kidnap someone like you, of course!” Han Shuo winked and chuckled devilishly.

# Chapter 175: Conversation between three girls

“Pssht, I don’t believe you!” Angelica wrinkled her exquisite little nose in disdain.

“It’s up to you whether you believe me or not. Alright, I still have some other things to do, so you can go back to whatever you were previously doing.” Saying these words with a smile, Han Shuo didn’t entertain Angelica any longer, and was about to continue his way to Candice’s room.

Right at this moment, a “creak” sounded from the door Angelica had ran out from, with the great druid Caspian walked out. He glanced at Han Shuo and cried out in surprise, “Why is it you? Why are you here?”

Han Shuo smiled at Caspian and nodded amicably, then bowed and said, “Hello great druid elder Caspian; Trunks and I previously met you in the Dark Forest previously.”

“Huh, you’re acquainted with grandpa?” Angelica watched Han Shuo greet Caspian and appeared to be surprised. She looked towards her grandpa Caspian, then turned back to stare at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo laughed and was about to reply, when Caspian’s eyes lit up, and inspected Han Shuo’s body. With a smile of having figured something out, Caspian said, “So it’s you, but we should have met very recently as well, haha!”

Not long ago, Han Shuo wore a black hood, but despite that, his physique and voice hadn’t been altered. In addition, when the matter ended Han Shuo even called out Caspian’s name. Just based on these three flaws, it was not at all strange for Caspian to be able to quickly recognize Han Shuo.

With regards to Caspian’s vague tone, Han Shuo didn’t try to justify or explain anything, he just gave Caspian a profound smile and said, “I’m busy right now, so I will see you later.”

“Little Angelica, you shouldn’t disturb others when they’re busy. Come back into the room with me.” Caspian nodded understandingly, then went up to grab hold of the little elf, about to carry Angelica away.

Right at this moment, Candice, who’d heard Han Shuo speaking, opened her door to look at Han Shuo, then looked at Caspian, who was chatting with Han Shuo, in astonishment. She gave an amicable nod towards the other two, then said to Han Shuo, “Are you here to look for me?”

“Sister Candice, I’m also looking for you. Let me come in as well!” Angelica on the other side sweetly called out towards Candice.

“If our cute little elf really needs me for something, then I’ll come over and look for you in awhile, older sister is busy right now.” Candice said with a smile. She opened the door, leaned back and said, “Come on in!”

“Alright, no more playing around, come back to the room to study magic!” Great druid Caspian rebuked Angelica, then dragged her back to the room.

Han Shuo entered Candice’s room, with her closing the door afterwards. She thought of something and asked Han Shuo, “The person who previously saved us was you, right?”

There was no need for Han Shuo to deny this matter. He nodded and replied, “This matter is rather complicated, has your employer Belinda paid your commission yet?”

Candice forced a smile, then shook her head and said, “She’s someone from the Calamity Church. This church has always done things in a sinister manner. I’m already very lucky that nothing happened to me, how could I possibly get any commission out of it?”

After some consideration, Han Shuo gazed at Candice and replied, “Promise me one thing, do not try to create trouble for Belinda. You guys definitely won’t gain a thing from doing that. As for the commission you’re promised, I will help you get it back.”

Once these words were spoken, Candice was evidently surprised. She looked at Han Shuo in bewilderment and said, “I heard from Caspian that

you and a woman brought Belinda away. Just what is your identity? Since you've captured Belinda, why do you say this?"

"This matter is a little complicated right now, I'll explain it to you both once Phoebe arrives. However, don't think about dealing with Belinda. I understand how strong she is, and she's not at a level that your mercenary band can handle." Although Han Shuo hadn't known Candice for a long time, he knew that she wasn't someone who would give up so easily. He also understood that despite her knowing the risks involved, once she set her mind upon something, it would never sway, so he had to placate her.

"Huh, why is Phoebe coming over too?" Candice was first surprised, then staunchly replied to Han Shuo, "You've said this a little too late, I've already dispatched the others to search for Belinda's tracks. This time there was a problem with the employer, so the Mercenary Union should bear our losses, I will deal with Belinda my own way."

"Consider this as me begging you. Older sister, let Belinda go. That woman is in my hands, I need her for some matters, please give me face." For a woman like Candice, who wouldn't listen to reason, the more one tells her of the dangers, the more obstinate she would become. Out of options, Han Shuo could only use this method to placate her.

Once Han Shuo said this, Candice no longer remained so persistent. Her resolute eyes stared at Han Shuo for a while, but unwillingly nodded, and said: "Since you're begging me, then fine. I promise I won't persist on this matter, but Belinda must pay the commission she owes, otherwise I have no way of answering to the chief."

"No problem, that's no problem at all. She said she'd send the commission in the next two days after I questioned her." Seeing that Candice had loosened up, Han Shuo quickly agreed.

While Han Shuo and Candice were chatting, the sounds of two people's footsteps could be heard, Han Shuo then heard the hotel owner, Elaine's voice: "This is Miss Candice's room."

"Thank you very much." Phoebe's cold and arrogant voice sounded from the outside.

Candice was pleasantly surprised. She quickly stood up and walked to the door. When the door was opened, Phoebe, in an elegant dress and a coldly noble expression, could be seen. However, once she saw Candice, the coldness instantly receded and a brilliant smile took over, she cried out, "Candice, you're really here!"

"Not just me, there's also someone who you definitely want to see here!" Candice laughed cheerfully, then leaned back to let Phoebe walk in.

Elaine had taken this chance to skillfully shift her head to peek inside, when she realized that the one inside was actually Han Shuo, she was incredibly astonished. Phoebe had already walked in by this time, and the room's door was quickly closed by Candice.

Having experienced last night's twisting of sheets, when Phoebe saw Han Shuo, her beautiful cheeks blushed. Perhaps it was because Candice was right by her side, Phoebe's body became a bit stiff and she didn't even dare to look at Han Shuo too much. She only took a side peek at him before she started chatting with Phoebe herself, her clear eyes surreptitiously looking at Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo saw Phoebe, he also felt a little awkward because there was someone else present, but his skin had always been thick, so he wasn't really affected by this. He remained properly sitting there while drinking his tea, and looked rather at ease.

The two ladies chatted, briefly narrating what they had gone through since they had last met, and focused on Valen City. As both of them had bumped into Han Shuo, Han Shuo naturally became a topic of discussion.

"Go on, why are you here in Valen City, and why do you know where I stay? Also, Candice said that you've been together with another woman, explain yourself!" After Phoebe and Candice had chatted for a while, Phoebe finally set her sights on Han Shuo, and she inquired him.

Candice was evidently astounded as well, so she supplemented, "Belinda is from the Calamity Church, and should have no relation to you. Why did you have her captured, and what use do you have for her? Just who on earth are you?"

The two ladies were filled with doubt, and they stared at Han Shuo hard, attempting to get a reasonable answer out of him.

Han Shuo had a prepared story, but when it was time for him to explain it, he had a headache trying to go about saying it. However, such a matter was not something that he could easily trick them with, because there were indeed many complicated matters involved.

Right at this time, Han Shuo's brows creased, he heard another person coming from the outside. He lightly coughed, then made a hand gesture telling the two to keep quiet.

The footsteps got closer, and the room was lightly knocked on a few times, Emily's soft voice was heard from the outside, "I know you guys are in there, can I come in?"

Phoebe and Candice both had an expression of suspicion. They turned towards Han Shuo at the same time and asked, "Who is she?"

"She's the woman you guys have been asking about!" Han Shuo revealed a bitter smile. He could never have expected that Emily would come and stir the pot at this time as well.

If it was yesterday, when Han Shuo hadn't done something so intimate to Phoebe, Han Shuo wouldn't be afraid of the two of them meeting each other, but now, Han Shuo was really caught between a rock and a hard place. He thought at a rapid pace as to how he could handle the relationship between the two.



# Chapter 176: It's enough to know that I'm in your heart!

“What are you doing here?” Han Shuo couldn't make out Emily's intentions. Although his expression was the same as usual, his heart was in a panicked mess as he smiled apologetically at Emily.

“I'm just here to discuss things with you on how we should handle the chief of the Gryphon Legion.” It was unknown whether Emily was doing this on purpose, as she didn't even glance at Han Shuo after entering, but rather gave an expectant look at Phoebe while talking to the other two.

“Eh, are you not Madame Emily? How do you know Bryan? What exactly is going on here?” Phoebe found the relationship between Emily and Han Shuo to be quite interesting, and she was much more intrigued about this than dealing with the Gryphon Legion. Since the person in question was here, she couldn't resist the urge to bring it up.

Phoebe sneakily glanced at Han Shuo after uttering these words. Her good looking face blushed all the way, and she even extended her hand towards Han Shuo's arm as a way of trying to look good in front of Emily.

If this were yesterday, Han Shuo would still be able to give Phoebe no face and explain that the relationship between the two of them was fake. However, due to last night's flirtations and her charm, he wasn't sure how to explain this now. He could only look at Emily with an awkward face, wearing a wry expression and not saying a word.

A pair of clear eyes glittering with complicated emotions, Emily watched Han Shuo carefully. However, this look only made Han Shuo feel even more guilty as he resolutely made up his mind, took in a deep breath, and said to Phoebe, “Actually, the relationship between me and Emily is...”

“We are that of a subordinate and superior in the same assassination organization. We happened to be assigned to the same target this time, so please do not think too much about it Miss Phoebe!” Just as Han Shuo was about to make a thorough explanation, Emily, who'd been staring at Han

Shuo, suddenly interrupted Han Shuo's words, obscuring the original words he had been going to say.

Han Shuo was flabbergasted. He had no idea why Emily was saying all of this, but when he looked at Emily in surprise, he saw Emily give him an understanding smile. It was as if Emily had only wanted to be recognized by Han Shuo, and his actions to reveal the truth had been what she wanted, instead of competing for a title with Phoebe and gaining a momentary victory.

Since Emily had put it this way, Phoebe felt a bit awkward. It rather appeared that she had been petty. It was a good thing that Phoebe was a superwoman in charge of a guild, so she only spent a moment in awkwardness. Phoebe immediately let go of Han Shuo's arm, making her way towards Emily's side. "I apologize, sister Emily. It was just me thinking too much. When taking into account your position and identity, it's hard to imagine you looking upon this villain with any sort of favor!"

Phoebe's censure of Han Shuo as a villain met with Emily's approval. However, Emily's heart gave a slight sigh, saying that unfortunately she'd already hopped onto this villain's pirate ship and was so deeply entrenched that there was no way to get off now.

"Indeed. I would never like such an uneducated and ill mannered fellow like him. Besides, I'm already married, and so that would be even more impossible. Please don't think any wild thoughts" Emily sighed in her heart, a smile still on her face as she reassured Phoebe.

"I should have known after seeing how that jerk is so secretive. To think that he is actually part of the Dark Mantle! We should have guessed that earlier." Candice looked at Han Shuo with interest, speaking with a gentle laugh.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, both Phoebe and Candice didn't seem particularly surprised after his identity had been revealed by Emily. It seemed that they had long since suspected that his actions were the result of a secret organization, and Emily's revelation only served to confirm their internal suspicions.

“I already told you didn’t I? He really is very secretive. As part of the necromancy major at the Academy, he’s always doing weird things on the side. It turns out that he has another identity within the Dark Mantle, so this completely explains all of his previous odd gestures.” Phoebe also laughed. She flung Han Shuo an eyeroll from Emily’s side, apparently faulting him for keeping everything a secret.

Han Shuo shrugged his shoulders and spoke, “Alright, now is not the time for this. We should be checking how we can help Phoebe shake off the implications of this matter and take down Gryphon Legion chief Bob Ascher. This should be the final matter in the end?”

The two girls decided to drop the topic about Han Shuo’s identity after he spoke. Since Emily did not know how much Han Shuo had told the two girls previously, he was still the one explaining matters this time and also explaining a few things about his identity to the two girls.

“My senior brother Lawrence is also in Valen City?” Once Han Shuo mentioned Lawrence’s existence, Phoebe seemed to be surprised as she exclaimed softly.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo said, “Indeed. He will help us with this time’s matter as well. He came to Valen City because of his cousin Lisa and their family matters. The downfall of her family was caused completely by the Gryphon Legion. Lawrence wants to avenge them and will be helping us wholeheartedly.”

In their previous discussion, Han Shuo understood that Lawrence had come with a primary motive not just to avenge Lisa, but to kill the chief of the Gryphon Legion and prop up his own man as well. However, Han Shuo couldn’t reveal Lawrence’s identity to the two girls and thus he could only just say that Lawrence was willing to help only for Lisa’s sake.

“With regards to the siege weapons, I’ve already surreptitiously dropped a bit of your essence blood onto one of the siege weapons. We will keep escorting the shipment until it reaches the western part of the city and before handing it over to the Gryphon Legion. I think the Gryphon Legion’s weapons warehouse is definitely there. We can look around for it

there.” Phoebe spoke after Han Shuo, recounting what she had done after Han Shuo had left.

“Very good. That location is definitely where all the weapons of the Gryphon Legion are being stored. I will visit the place myself so that we will have a grasp on what direction it is in. As long as we obtain records that the Gryphon Legion has bought these siege weapons, as well as the shipment itself, we’ll be able to pin the crime of rebellion onto Bob Ascher if we report it to the leaders.” Han Shuo immediately said excitedly after hearing Phoebe’s words.

After saying this, Han Shuo and the three women discussed things a bit further, then left with Emily using carrying out the mission as an excuse.

“I feel that his relationship with Madame Emily is a bit off. The way they interact and speak with each other is a bit too intimate.” Candice immediately said with a furrowed brow after Han Shuo and Emily exited the room.

“Heh, don’t think too much about it. Madame Emily is a widow. Besides, she is a member of the Betteridge family, nothing is going to happen.” Phoebe spoke with a content smile and soothed Candice.

“Um, have you two gone from putting on an act to doing this for real? Why do you have this expression on your face otherwise?” Candice suddenly spoke with astonishment when she saw Phoebe’s face change to that of a young woman in love.

Upon hearing this, Phoebe blushed even harder, stammering in embarrassment. “Last night... last night we already...”

“My goodness, Phoebe, you are too easy! How could you end up sleeping with him so fast?” Candice exclaimed in surprise with an open mouth without even waiting for Phoebe to finish her words.

“Peh! What are you saying? We only... only confirmed our relationship last night!” Phoebe’s face was now a deep shade of red as she scolded Candice in a low voice.

“Oh really, I don’t think it’s was just confirming your relationship. Your

expression is obviously trying to hide something else. Out with it now!" Candice watched Phoebe attentively, having waited for Phoebe to say those words before effectively checkmating her with a ruthless demand for an explanation.

After Han Shuo and Emily left the room, they didn't immediately go to carry out their mission. Rather, the two of them went to the hotel room that Emily stayed in.

The two of them entered the room, and Han Shuo immediately hugged Emily, tenderly asking, "Why?"

"I know you have me in your heart. That is enough for me. The age gap between us is too large, and I have the identity of a daughter-in-law to the Betteridge family as well. If you attempt to expose our relationship, this would have drastic consequences for both me and you." Emily buried her face within Han Shuo's chest, speaking in a soft voice and recounting with great sorrow.

Before Han Shuo reached the full peak of his strength, exposing their relationship would have drastic consequences. Particularly for Emily, not only could this affect her brother's career, but also stain the family's reputation. There was no other way, so Emily could only complain and stay quiet about this matter.

"Phoebe is a good girl. Though her birth is not very high, she is pretty and clean and doesn't have many strings attached. You should be together with her. Her merchant guild would benefit you so much more. I would understand!" Emily burrowed deeper, murmuring softly.

"I promised you that we won't have to sneak around for very long. Some day, when there is no one else left in the empire who can dictate what I can or cannot do, I will give you what you deserve!" Han Shuo had a firm expression as he declared this in a low voice, fiercely kissing Emily's body and carrying her towards the bedroom. Emily responded to him with a degree of warmth she never had before, perhaps wishing to extinguish the bitterness that she had been feeling with happiness.

# Chapter 177: Devising strategies

After a tumble in the sheets with Emily, Han Shuo left alone, heading for the Gryphon Legion's warehouse on the western side of the city. Thanks to the Dark Mantle's intelligence network, Han Shuo had a pretty good idea as to where the exact location of the warehouse was.

Under the cover of night, Han Shuo left no traces behind as he moved. He made use of the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven" to sneak into the warehouse from above, hiding himself in an isolated corner and silently circulated the magical yuan to compel the demon infant to sense where the drop of essence blood was located.

When Han Shuo did so, he felt the demon infant jump as it sensed the drop of essence blood's exact position. He evaded the thick infestation of Gryphon Legion patrols and stopped not too far from a low house. He made use of his sharp vision to see that apart from being under heavy guard, it was completely sealed with no windows.

After observing for a while, Han Shuo silently sensed and clearly felt that the drop of essence blood was beneath the house. This meant that there was definitely a secret room used to store things underneath this house.

It was a pity that the earth elite zombie had yet to be fully formed. Otherwise, with its power of earth, the earth elite zombie could tunnel into the ground and scout ahead. Without the earth elite zombie, Han Shuo could only take out all the guards at the front door if he wanted to enter and look inside.

Although the guards weren't that weak, Han Shuo was still confident that he could take care of them with no one being the wiser. However, he'd alarm his enemies in this way and the siege weapons may get moved again. Therefore, he didn't take any action after thinking for a while and returned back the way he'd come.

Within the Dark Mantle stronghold, Emily and Han Shuo met up to weigh all the powers within Valen City as well as the Calamity Church and Lawrence. They then carefully estimated Bob Ascher's strength, and

the two of them began to brainstorm strategies to take care of Bob Ascher with furrowed brows.

Through the Dark Mantle's intelligence, Han Shuo learned that there was a secret chamber hidden within Bob Ascher's manor. The two of them discussed for a bit and became generally certain that Bob Ascher's siege weapons were likely within the secret chamber. There might even be other evidence.

After the two had discussed, they decided to sneak into the Ascher manor when the guard was lax during Clark's funeral tomorrow night. They were going to make use of Lawrence's key man to make the guard even more loose that night and divert some of the men away from Bob Ascher's side. The Calamity Church would also attempt to assassinate Bob Ascher, whereas Han Shuo and Emily would make use of the opportunity to sneak into the secret room and see if there was any useful intelligence.

When the operation had been more or less settled, Han Shuo and Emily thought carefully about what problems might crop up and brainstormed corresponding strategies again and again.

Han Shuo only started moving when the two of them felt that it was more or less settled. He went off to visit Belinda and Lawrence, thoroughly discussing the operation with them.

This matter had to do with Phoebe as well, but she didn't have to help him with this. However, once Emily learned that Phoebe was a swordmaster, she went ahead and counted Phoebe as part of their team. Her excuse was that Phoebe was now involved anyways, so it was the best way to resolve this matter.

As Han Shuo went to find Belinda to discuss things, Emily also sought Phoebe and Candice's assistance. No one was sure what she said, but Phoebe and Candice both agreed readily to join this mission.

When Han Shuo returned to Elaine's hotel from Lawrence's place, he was planning on going to find Phoebe when he ran into the druid Caspian along the way. Han Shuo didn't think much of it and just nodded at Caspian, planning on passing him by.

“A moment of your time please.” Caspian suddenly said at this time.

Han Shuo was taken aback and turned to look at Caspian with confusion. He smiled, “Does the elder need me for something?”

Nodding with a smile, Caspian said, “If you don’t mind, can you come to my room? I have a favor to ask.”

It had been thanks to Caspian that everyone had been saved last time, otherwise Han Shuo would’ve been hard pressed to rescue everyone with his own strength. Things wouldn’t have been that easy, not to mention capturing Belinda in the end.

He nodded straightforwardly and smiled, “Of course.”

Han Shuo walked with Caspian as they arrived at his room. There was nothing out of the ordinary in his room, but Han Shuo could feel the extraordinary life exuded from the plants within the room as he walked in.

“Eh? The big bad guy, what are you doing here?” The little elf Angelica seemed to be meditating on the bed and was quite surprised to open her eyes and see Han Shuo walking through.

“Don’t be so rude Angelica. You need to understand to respect others, or no one will respect you.” Caspian glared severely at Angelica and admonished.

“Understood, grandpa!” Angelica stuck her tongue out after these words and spoke a bit fearfully as she made a face.

Han Shuo randomly picked a seat within the living room according to Caspian’s instructions. Angelica didn’t continue her meditations at this time and jumped off the bed, walking to the living room, staring at Han Shuo with eyes bright with interest.

“Elder, do you have any instructions?” Han Shuo looked at Caspian with a faint smile after he sat down.

“You’re too polite. It’s not instructions, but rather a favor I’d like to ask. I wonder if it’ll be too much of a bother.” Caspian looked at Han Shuo with a benevolent smile.



Han Shuo was planning on commencing the operation tomorrow night with Emily, so if Caspian wanted anything that would affect his plans later, there was no way he could possibly agree. Therefore, Han Shuo spoke honestly, "Please go ahead and speak first. I will certainly help you if I can, but I also have some matters to attend to. Please understand if I don't have the time to this time."

Caspian nodded with an understanding smile and mused silently for a moment, pointing at Angelica, "I need to run an errand and will be back tomorrow at the latest. However, I can't bring Angelica with me. I hope you can take care of Angelica during this time and promise that she won't be in harm's way."

Han Shuo wouldn't undertake his mission until tomorrow night, and he had made all his preparations already. He actually didn't have much to do between today and tomorrow. Even if something urgent came up, Emily, Phoebe, and the others could handle things. Thus, Han Shuo only thought briefly after Caspian spoke and agreed readily, saying, "No problem, I don't have anything pressing during this time. Valen City is quite chaotic, so be careful when you venture out."

With Caspian's strength and his need to leave the hotel immediately without bringing Angelica, it must be an exceedingly dangerous matter. He must have been afraid that he would endanger Angelica's life, and that's why he didn't take Angelica with him. This was why Han Shuo had spoken up in reminder.

"Grandpa, you must be going to fight that enemy. Take me with you! I've practiced magic for a very long time and can help you!" Angelica obviously knew some of Caspian's matters as her little face changed immediately when she heard these words. She stretched her hands out to wrap them around Caspian's arm and started pleading anxiously.

"No, you can't go. A duel is between two people. I would be breaking the rules if I brought you." Caspian truly doted on Angelica and would patiently not give way on this matter. He resolutely turned her down.

In actuality, Han Shuo could understand why Caspian didn't want to

take Angelica with him from his tone and words. He didn't want Angelica to take the risk with him, and so breaking the rules was just an excuse he was using to distract Angelica.

"But, the enemy doesn't necessarily follow the rules!" Angelica cried out anxiously and then looked at Han Shuo. "Although this person is bad, he's strong. Why doesn't he help you? I can protect myself."

"No matter what the other does, grandpa will not break the rules. Do you not listen to grandpa's words anymore?" The druid Caspian frowned ferociously as he stared at Angelica.

Angelica and Caspian stared stubbornly at each other for a while before the former backed down. Her face scrunched up with worry, she said, "Then, you must be careful!"

"I will." Casian agreed and then turned to Han Shuo, "Then I leave her in your hands."

Caspian nodded gratefully towards Han Shuo after these words and walked towards the door, leaving through it.

# Chapter 178: I'm happy to be captured by him, what can you do about it?

"Big bad guy, will my grandpa be alright?" The little elf Angelica looked at Han Shuo with great worry when the Caspian left.

Caspian obviously possessed no allies in Valen City, otherwise he wouldn't have given Angelica over to the care of a relative stranger. If his enemies were in Valen City and decided not to follow the rules and fight him, then the danger to him would be greater. However, in order to relieve Angelica's worries, Han Shuo could only smile and say, "Relax, your grandpa's strength is great, so there definitely won't be any dangers."

Angelina, who'd originally been carefree and without worry, suddenly became worry stricken because of her grandpa's matters. The eyebrows on her charming face were knit together as she suddenly became taciturn.

Tomorrow night, Han Shuo would have to face the Gryphon Legion with the others, but for Belinda from the Calamity Church and Lawrence, today was a special day, so they had to use the resources at hand to prepare in advance.

After staying here for a short while, Han Shuo decided that just waiting in Angelica's room wasn't the thing to do, so after thinking for a bit, he turned to the sulky little elf and said: "Let's go find big sister Candice and play."

"I don't want to go anywhere! I want to wait here for my grandpa!" Unexpectedly, Angelica, who always wanted to play, did not acknowledge Han Shuo and even firmly refused his suggestion.

Momentarily stunned, Han Shuo stared blankly before opening his mouth, "You waiting here is not a good option either. I think your grandpa will be fine, so why don't you talk to big sister Candice? Maybe you will feel less worried?"

"I know that you want to find sister Candice yourself, you big evil person, so if you want to go then go by yourself! I'm not going!" Angelica

resentfully glared at Han Shuo, snorted, and then proceeded to ignore him.

Han Shuo did not know whether to laugh or cry at her words, but he'd already given Caspian his promise, and Valen City was indeed not safe at this time, so he couldn't possibly leave her alone. Otherwise, if Caspian's enemy took this opportunity to seize Angelica and used her to threaten Caspian?

Looking at Angelica's stubborn expression, Han Shuo muttered to himself before fiercely glaring at her and said: "Who cares if you are willing to or not? I already promised your grandpa, so I won't let you leave my side."

After speaking these words, he didn't wait for Angelica's reply before his body flashed like lightning, arriving next to Angelica. His left hand extended and hooked Angelica's body before lifting her up into the air with hands that were like steel claws.

"Let go! You big scoundrel, you big pervert. Hurry up and let me go!" When Angelica reacted, she found that she was unable to move her body even a little bit. Her two little feet kicked in the air while her mouth spewed out curses.

Han Shuo paid no attention towards Angelica's shouting. Han Shuo didn't care at all as he kept his hand hooked around her body while he pushed open the door and made his way towards Candice's room.

Once he was outside the door, Han Shuo discovered that Angelica was still screaming. In order to prevent her from attracting too much attention, he reached out with his right hand and covered her small mouth. Angelica's loud screaming was suddenly diminished to low grunting, and she looked as if she was being coerced by Han Shuo.

"Put her down!" Just when Han Shuo was close to Candice's room, several members of the Battlefire mercenary band suddenly stepped out from two doors down as they stared at Han Shuo. One of whom had a fierce body shook a head full of hair like it was like iron needles, and shouted with a sword strapped to his back.

"Eh, isn't he the man who was talking to the vice chief outside the city?"

One of the journeyman mages said in shock as he recognized Han Shuo with a glance.

“I don’t care what his relationship to the vice chief is. This kind of public coercion of a little girl infuriates me. I cannot possibly stand by and watch with wide eyes as he takes this poor little elf away.” The fierce-looking senior swordsman spoke with extreme righteousness. His bronze eyes stared at Han Shuo while he slowly reached behind him to draw his longsword to point it at Han Shuo.

Not knowing what was going on, a pair of eyes concentrated on Han Shuo’s body, and Candice asked with astonishment, “What happened Bryan? Why are you grabbing ahold of little Angelica?”

“It’s nothing, something happened to her grandpa, so he asked me to protect her. I am keeping her by my side so I can ensure her safety.” Han Shuo shrugged his shoulder and replied easily.

“Davis, this is just a misunderstanding, there is no need to be so nervous!” Candice gently smiled and said towards the fierce senior swordsman.

“His words are useless. Only that beautiful little elf’s words can prove his innocence.” For some reason, Davis was still quite obstinate upon hearing Candice’s words, as he stared straight at the little elf Angelica, who had her mouth covered by Han Shuo’s hand.

With those words, Han Shuo immediately loosened his hand from Angelica’s mouth and said, “Okay, stop playing around now and tell him that I am only protecting you.”

When Han Shuo loosened his hand, Angelica loudly cursed and continued once again to make a ruckus before staring angrily at Han Shuo and saying fiercely: “You big evil person, you’re kidnapping me! You’re kidnapping me!”

As soon as Angelica’s words left her mouth, Davis, standing off to the side, immediately flew into a rage. He was pointed his longsword at Han Shuo, and proclaimed righteously, “Let her go immediately, otherwise you will definitely regret it!”

“Enough, Davis can you really not see that the little girl is just messing around? If you really have nothing to do, then it would be better for you to return back to your room and recover your strength, and not to poke your nose into other people’s business!” Candice said with an imposing aura, her eyes bright and expression cold as she glowered at Davis.

Maybe he was used to Candice’s berating, as Davis was timid at first, but regained some courage after he looked at Angelica. He straightened up, puffed out his chest and said, “Master Candice, if your suggestion is wrong then I will not listen to you.”

By now, it was Han Shuo’s turn to be amused as he could tell from Davis’ gaze when he looked at Angelica that there was a different kind of fire within them. Han Shuo’s heart moved as he already had a grasp of the situation.

With a weird chuckle, Han Shuo remarked, “So this is the case hmm? It seem like this valiant mercenary wants to appear to be a hero in front of a little beauty, or maybe there’s yet another reason for him to be acting like this.”

With these words, Candice and Phoebe, along with the other mercenaries off on the side, all of them turned to look oddly at Davis. Even the little elf Angelica measured up Davis with an astonished look. At this time, Davis’s face turned red as he awkwardly tried to explain, “No, no. It’s not like that!”

Han Shuo loosened his grip on Angelica and put her down, as he spread out his hands and said, “Alright, I won’t hold onto you any longer since this hero wants to save the beauty so badly. Angelica, you are now saved and the hero can take you away. I won’t care about you.”

After speaking, Han Shuo calmly walked towards Candice and Phoebe, not sparing a single glance at Angelica, as if he’d completely forgotten about the promise he made to her grandpa.

“You, you, you are safe now!” Davis said as he walked towards Angelica. The righteous aura he’d boasted before was gone as he stammered.

“What does this have to do with you, you stupid dumb dumb! I’m happy

to be held by him, big deal!” When Angelica saw that Han Shuo didn’t even acknowledge her, her heart suddenly shook. When she saw the approaching Davis lick his lips, she became even angrier and replied angrily.

Davis’ expression suddenly became peculiar, as if someone had just stepped on him with a dirty shoe. His face was unspeakably embarrassed and bitter.

“Big bad guy, you promised my grandfather that you would take care of me, so you’re not allowed to leave!” The little elf Angelica hollered at Davis before picking up her small flower skirt and quickly charging toward Han Shuo. She reproached loudly while running, fearful that Han Shuo would ignore her while she didn’t even deign to give Davis a glance.

Davis stood to the side with a bitter face as Candice glared at him, saying without any good feelings: “Scram back to your room. Stop making a fool out of yourself. If you want to be a hero who swoops in to save the beauty, then first look carefully whether or not the beauty is willing to let the fiend kidnap her. You deserved to make a fool out of yourself by acting so ignorantly!”

With Candice’s words, the heart-broken and inconsolable Davis let out a long sigh and gloomily returned to his room. This kind of situation was indeed complicated to his brain and he didn’t quite understand it even until now. How come Angelica, who’d had on a face full of mistreatment and injustice, start to implore Han Shuo when he’d let go of her hand and turned to leave?

# Chapter 179: Officially starting the mission

In the end, Angelica went into Candice's room with Han Shuo. They chatted with Phoebe as well and learned that Emily had gone out on business.

With Emily and Phoebe here, Han Shuo didn't need to worry about Angelica's safety as much, and left with the excuse that he had something to do. He returned to his own room to quietly practice another high level necromancy magic – summoning hate warriors.

Clarendon's years of knowledge, combined with Han Shuo's own spirited fortitude, meant that he struggled for a few hours' worth of time before he became well versed in the art of summoning hate warriors. Eventually, he managed to summon before him from the other dimension, a hate warrior holding a metal club.

This summoning consumed most of Han Shuo's mental energy. As he meditated, he felt his mental strength quickly recovering after using the transportation matrix to return to the cemetery of death.

"Evil master, are you finally going to take me away now that you've come?" As soon as Han Shuo appeared, dark dragon Gilbert began to make a ruckus in a loud voice.

"That's right, this time I'm really going to take you away from here," Han Shuo smiled as he spoke, seeing Gilbert looking especially crestfallen.

As soon as he heard that he could finally leave the cemetery of death, Gilbert's dejection was replaced by ecstasy in a flash, as he started a continuous stream of fawning compliments.

"Enough, you should get ready. We're going to leave soon!" Han Shuo said impatiently as he quickly walked to the place where he was refining the earth elite zombies. He discovered that the qi of earth streaming towards the center seemed to flow slower and slower from when he had first started. It seemed that the elite earth zombie had absorbed nearly all



of the earth qi from the cemetery of death.

The yin demon cave was on the other side and its resentful spirits were still struggling over who would swallow the three drops of essence blood that Han Shuo had dropped in before. Because his actual strength was comparable to the true demon realm, Han Shuo's magical yuan had changed fundamentally. Not to mention the fact that it had three drops of Han Shuo's essence blood to sustain it, the yin demon cave could actually operate for quite a long time. It wasn't like the time when he was only refining the original demons and had to infuse it with magical yuan everyday.

Seeing that everything in the cemetery of death looked normal, Han Shuo didn't linger, but instead attended to the entreaties of the dragon Gilbert and brought him out of the cemetery of death.

After returning to Elaine's hotel, Han Shuo told Gilbert to stay in his room while he practiced magic the entire night to ensure his best performance.

The afternoon of the second day, Han Shuo stayed in his room. He also forbid Gilbert to take a single step outside while he spent the entire day mastering the adept level necromancy magic corpse explosion.

Towards evening time, Gilbert finally couldn't take it any longer. He made an uproar towards Han Shuo from inside the room. "What kind of lame place is this? After we left the other place, we've stayed here the entire time! I'm about to get ill from being so stifled."

The meditating Han Shuo suddenly exhaled, opening his thoughtful eyes to look at Gilbert. "All right. We'll leave this place immediately. When we do, you have to keep your mouth shut the entire way and do as I say. If you dare to try anything without my permission then I'll leave you in the cemetery of death forever."

"What is it? What kind of things are we doing at night? Haha, esteemed master, don't worry, I'll definitely pull my own weight!" Gilbert immediately became incredibly excited when he heard Han Shuo's words.

Footsteps sounded from outside at this moment as Emily's voice rang

out, “Are you inside?”

Han Shuo immediately stood up when he heard it was Emily and opened the door to ask, “How are things? Did you manage to take care of everything?”

The open door revealed Emily’s voluptuous body, making Gilbert’s eyes widen in appreciation. He suddenly whistled and said excitedly, “A beauty, it’s a great beauty!”

“Shut up!” Han Shuo turned back to glare ferociously at Gilbert. Gilbert didn’t dare say anything after this, but he kept looking at Emily up and down and looked at Han Shuo with a face full of envy.

“Who is he?” Emily wasn’t aware of Gilbert’s existence and looked at Han Shuo in surprise when she suddenly saw him appear.

“One of us. There won’t be any problem with him at all. He’ll take action with us and he’ll be able to help us quite a bit.” Han Shuo explained.

Although Gilbert was still a young dark dragon, he possessed great destructive abilities when he transformed into his dragon form. If a dark dragon added to the chaos in a critical moment, this would greatly increase the success of Han Shuo and the others missions.

Emily had never doubted anything Han Shuo said, so Gilbert’s appearance only made her get to know him that much better. She didn’t question Han Shuo’s methods.

“The great druid Caspian has yet to return and even Angelica is quite worried. Forget the Battlefire mercenary band this time. Candice and the others don’t know our identity and planned a mission. I just saw that Candice asked the other members of her band to temporarily take care of Angelica, and that senior swordsman Davis was quite happy about that. You don’t need to worry about Angelica’s safety for the time being.” It looked like Emily had learnt of the conflict between the two from Phoebe, which was why she was saying this to Han Shuo now.

“Alright, since this is the case, let’s leave it to them.” Han Shuo thought for a bit and opened his mouth to say.

Since Caspian had yet to return, that meant something must have happened. However, Han Shuo wasn't great friends with Caspian, so he wouldn't alter his long laid out plans for Caspian.

The middle aged Bob Ascher had lost two of his sons in the span of a few months. This matter had been a matter of great shock to him. As the true master of Valen City, Clark's funeral had to be conducted with all due pomp and ceremony.

All sorts of luxurious carriages were parked in front of the Ascher manor, with no one of any importance in Valen City daring to miss such an important occasion. No matter how busy things were at home, they would always manage to squeeze out the time to come comfort old Ascher's injured soul.

"So we're here to participate in a funeral!" Gilbert stood in a quiet corner next to Han Shuo and Emily as he spoke with disinterest.

"No, we're here to make a mess." Han Shuo chuckled lowly and said, "If the mission is successful, I'll award you, so work hard."

When he heard that they were here to cause a mess and that there might be rewards later that night, Gilbert's interest was hugely sparked once again as he laughed heartily. He was about to walk inside when Han Shuo grabbed him back with a hand again.

"We can't go in through the front door since we're here to make a mess, stupid!" Han Shuo hectored Gilbert with ill temper and nodded towards Emily. The three of them circled around the manor and arrived at a high wall where no one else was present.

"Ascher's even set up some magical protection at some key parts of his manor, but there shouldn't be a problem if we enter through here. Be careful though, I'll go up first to take a look." Emily spoke softly and used a levitation spell to slowly rise into the air, taking a look around when she got to the top before making a gesture towards Han Shuo.

"Can you still fly?" Han Shuo looked at Gilbert by his side as he prepared to make a move.

Shaking his head, Gilbert answered honestly, “Only if I transform back to my original form. Otherwise I won’t be able to fly.”

“Being a burden from the very beginning!” Han Shuo looked disdainfully at Gilbert and grabbed his nape, using the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens” to fly into the air and land beside Emily, the three of them descending together.

Han Shuo and Gilbert followed behind Emily after descending as they passed through two corridors and an artificial mountain, appearing in the crowded manor with bland expressions.

The three of them had changed clothes earlier, and Emily had applied some magical solution to her face, completely altering her appearance. Even Han Shuo barely recognized her. The three of them was dressed like the rest of the guests at the manor, so no one gave them any trouble when they appeared within the crowd.

“Wow, so many women! So many beautiful women!” Gilbert was a bit excited as his eyes spun lustfully in all directions, speaking to Han Shuo lowly.”

“Mind your image Gilbert!” Han Shuo cursed lowly as his eyes also darted to and fro. He finally located Belinda and Johnny from the Calamity Church, noting that they had also arrived.

In a distance not too far away, Lawrence had also used a magical solution to alter his appearance and waved at Han Shuo when he saw their group arrive.

Emily had arranged for Phoebe and Candice to be elsewhere. They would set things on fire as soon as the Calamity Church made their move, utterly throwing the manor into chaos.

Add to that a schedule adjustment from Lawrence’s man, the defensive capabilities of the manor at that time would certainly be at its weakest. Han Shuo and Emily would then take advantage of the confusion to sneak into the Ascher secret room.

# Chapter 180: Complete chaos

Everything was proceeding according to plan. Lawrence had first made arrangements to alter the protective detail from the Gryphon Legion. Emily then used the power of the Dark Mantle to restrain three out of five great earth riders by Bob Ascher's side.

Belinda and Johnny from the Calamity Church walked in and out of the crowd for a bit before disappearing without a trace. Belinda nodded at Han Shuo and Emily from afar, indicating that she had made her preparations.

"Let's go. Be careful and let's head for the secret room." Seeing that they had done all that needed to be done, Han Shuo didn't continue to linger, but avoided the guests and made his way to Bob Ascher's bedroom.

There would've been a heavy guard along the way, but Lawrence's man had made arrangements beforehand, so the three of them had an easy stroll down.

When the three of them paused behind an artificial mountain and peered at Bob Ascher's room, they discovered many Gryphon Legion soldiers standing in front of the door.

Each had solemn expressions, and the faint scent of those who had weathered multiple battlefields emanated from their tall, well built bodies. It was easy to tell from a glance that they wouldn't be easy to handle.

"Lawrence said that the soldiers around Bob Ascher were all his most trusted men and have overcome many battles and skirmishes with him. All of them are unafraid of death and won't listen to anyone else's commands apart from Bob Ascher himself. Therefore, Lawrence's man had no way to do anything about them either." Han Shuo glanced at those men and explained lowly to Emily.

Emily nodded, "Mm, the Dark Mantle knows of this as well. We must personally take out this group of people ourselves, or we'll be unable to enter at all."

Soldiers were standing on top of the roof and at every window. Unless

they could fly through the dirt, even with Han Shuo and Emily's extreme abilities, they would find it impossible to avoid these people's eyes.

"Alright, we'll wait for a bit. The entire manor will be engulfed in chaos as soon as the Calamity Church makes their move, regardless of their success." Han Shuo thought for a moment and then responded to Emily.

"Honored master, what should I do in a moment?" Gilbert's face was filled with excitement as he looked towards Han Shuo.

"Master?" Emily asked in astonishment and looked at Han Shuo with considerable confusion. She then looked at Gilbert, "How can he be your master? Did he buy you as a slave?"

Looking at Emily with immense disdain, Gilbert said proudly, "A brainless bimbo alright. As a legendary dark dragon of the mighty Dark Dragon City, I, Gilbert, would never become a slave!"

"Dark... Dark Dragon City? You say you're from the Dark Dragon City beneath the ground?" Emily was greatly taken aback.

"Haha, you've heard of our great name as well?" Gilbert was quite happy to see that Emily seemed to know of the Dark Dragon City. He puffed his chest out and said solemnly, "Indeed, I am the future legend of the Dark Dragon City."

"Mm, he's not my slave, but more like my magical pet." Han Shuo smiled faintly at the flabbergasted Emily.

Gilbert immediately deflated when those words were said. As a dark dragon, it wasn't an honorable thing to be someone's pet. But that was the truth, and there wasn't much he could refute. He could only hang his head and sigh, "So darned unlucky that I was besieged by so many people the first time I left home. How would I have been afraid of you otherwise?!"

Emily had been a bit disbelieving, and the shock on her face only deepened when she heard Han Shuo and Gilbert speak thus. Her bright eyes fixed upon Han Shuo as she asked shakily, "He, he really is a dark dragon?"

Nodding, Han Shuo confirmed very firmly for her, "Absolutely. This

stupid dragon was being attacked on all sides from a dark elf clan, and they paid a heavy price to wound him deeply. I was going to take advantage of it and harvest his core or something, but he was the one without the slightest bit of dark dragon dignity and shamelessly wanted to sign a master and servant contract with me, becoming my magical pet!”

“Hehe, dark dragons are the most shameless and evil of all dragons, what kind of dignity do they have?” Emily was delighted by Han Shuo’s explanation and looked at the dejected Gilbert, chuckling with sarcasm.

“Beautiful women can sometimes be so hateful!” Gilbert was thoroughly incensed as he glared at Emily and spoke with gritted teeth.

A shrill scream sounded out at this moment as all sorts of panicked footsteps suddenly exploded into hearing. The sounds of horses screaming were mixed in, as well as all sorts of weapons clanging against each other.

“The Calamity Church has made their move, but we still don’t know anything as of now. Why does the Calamity Church want Bob Ascher dead? Just what kind of grudge exists between them?” Joy blossomed over Emily’s face as she said excitedly.

Han Shuo chuckled coldly with a sinister face, “According to my thinking, it doesn’t matter whether or not the Calamity Church succeeds this time. Johnny and Belinda will be grievously hurt, if not dead. We’ll capture them as well and slowly interrogate them.”

“Master, you’re too ruthless and despicable!” Gilbert couldn’t help but cry out with excitement when he saw that Han Shuo was ready to move against his allies

“Gilbert, are you mocking me?” Han Shuo’s brow creased as he flicked a frosty glance at Gilbert.

Shaking his head ferociously, Gilbert hastened to protest, “No, no! I’m complimenting you! Your methods are the same as the teachings of my wise and courageous grandpa, thoroughly embodied with the essence of the superior heritage of us dark dragons!”

Emily had just said that the dark dragons were evil and despicable

dragons, but Han Shuo finally understood her words after he'd heard Gilbert's praise. It sounded like he's both praised and cursed Han Shuo.

Several places within the manor suddenly lit up in flame before Han Shuo had a chance to lecture Gilbert. The manor had already been engulfed in chaos beforehand, and now it was suffused with all sorts of panicked screams. The guards from the Gryphon Legion appeared as well, frantically trying to deal with the situation.

"Phoebe and Candice have also made their move, it's our turn now." Han Shuo stopped bickering with Gilbert and set his sights on Bob Ascher's room with a serious expression.

Emily's charming face was equally grave as she took out a magic staff and lowly sang out a dark magic spell. Several shadows that looked like demons started soundlessly approaching the guards.

The Demonslayer Edge danced through the air according to Han Shuo's thoughts, swiftly approaching a man at the door. Just as it reached the point where the person might discover the weapon, Han Shuo's magical yuan suddenly exploded and greatly increased the Demonslayer Edge's speed. A howling sound rose as it punched through the neck of the now alarmed guard.

"Assassins!" Someone screamed shrilly. The eight Gryphon Legion guards hastily raised the longswords and spears in their hands, planning on handling the danger that would appear at any time.

Emily's dark magic spell landed into the two guards it first encountered, causing them to bleed continuously and then fall down bonelessly after a while. The five guards behind them released their fighting auras in time, destroying the effects of this spell and weren't injured.

Because of Lawrence's man, the immediate surroundings had been cleared. No matter how the guards called out, no one answered them. Han Shuo and the three others didn't continue hiding after this blow and directly rushed out from the darkness.

Contrary to Emily's expectations, Gilbert's speed was the fastest. Even though he was in human form, the ferociousness of a dark dragon wasn't



something that an ordinary person could imagine. Gilbert rushed out excitedly and acted like a bulldozer, grabbing the spear of the first guard Han Shuo had killed and charging the other people.

Although his target was a journeyman swordsman and was releasing an uncommon fighting aura. Gilbert stabbed through him with a single thrust, sending him flying to one side, dead before he hit the floor. When his fighting aura crashed onto Gilbert, Gilbert only grunted softly and wasn't injured at all.

Emily was sorely surprised by this blow, and finally truly accepted Gilbert's identity as a dark dragon. Han Shuo knew of this already and so wasn't surprised, walking over leisurely and directing the Demonslayer Edge to dance wildly, using a bewildering pattern to kill another two Gryphon Legion soldiers.

These soldiers were mostly journeyman or senior swordsmen and knights, and were actually not terrible. Their job was to thoroughly defend this place, and to summon greater experts when enemies came knocking.

If it hadn't been for Lawrence's man within the Gryphon Legion, the first cry of "assassin!" would've been enough to summon vast troops of the Gryphon Legion. If this had been the case, Han Shuo and the others would only be able to flee for their lives.

As Emily attacked once again with dark magic, the remaining two guards finally fell down. Seeing that the obstacles had been cleared, Han Shuo spoke to Gilbert, "Stay here on guard, notify us if anything happens."

Han Shuo flung a look at Emily after speaking and the two of them carefully pushed open the door, walking into Bob Ascher's room.

Bob Ascher's room was exceedingly opulent and luxurious. Expensive furniture dotted the room, the carpet was made from the fur of a rare magical creature, and the paintings on the walls were all worth cities.

"This Bob Ascher knows how to enjoy life alright. The decorations of this house are already enough to prove that his sources of income aren't clean." Han Shuo immediately said after walking in and looking around at the surroundings.

“Of course, otherwise with his identity as the chief of the Gryphon Legion, he never would’ve been able to afford such a place.” Emily nodded and headed towards the inner chamber as she responded.

There was a secret doorway to another room within his bedroom. This was a bit of intelligence that the Dark Mantle had spent a lot of effort before finally obtaining. Han Shuo and Emily immediately made for the inner chamber as soon as they entered the bedroom.

Emily immediately lifted the covers on the bed in the room and ran her hand along the edge for a bit, looking for something when the boards of the bed suddenly split open to reveal a cave with stairs.

“Within the Lancelot Empire, the Dark Mantle can manage if we absolutely must learn of some intelligence. Although the secret chamber is hidden quite well, we still learned of this place’s existence and how to enter because Bob Ascher would bring his mistress in to exult in his glory.” Emily smiled at Han Shuo in explanation before they went down.

Nodding, Han Shuo expressed his understanding. “Indeed, someone like Bob Ascher would find it hard to control his desire to show off. If someone wants to keep a secret hidden, they’ll have to pass through their own hurdle first.”

“Come, let’s go and see what lies in Bob Ascher’s room?” Emily said.

Han Shuo followed behind her and suddenly heard soft, breathing sounds from someone before they’d reached the bottom.

“Someone’s there, be careful!” Han Shuo’s heart tightened as he grasped Emily, proceeding forward with even more caution.

When the two got to the bottom, Han Shuo looked towards the source of the breathing and suddenly discovered that Caspian was being held tightly within a cage enclosed by a magical boundary. Caspian was likewise looking at the two with a face full of surprise.

# Chapter 181: Found it

Metal chains entangled all four of the great druid Caspian's limbs in a cube-shaped cage, around which lightning was crackling and sparking off of. An icy mist was hovering about the chains, freezing the man stiff to the bone and making even his breathing obviously labored.

When Han Shuo and Emily found Caspian in this room, they rushed towards the druid, shocked. Emily only took one glance before diagnosing quietly. "There are both electric and water element magical boundaries at work here. In addition to this, the cage is restricting his power. I need some time to disassemble the spells."

Glancing quickly at the ice beginning to form on tips of the druid's hair, Han Shuo said, "I'm confident that my weapon is sharp enough to penetrate the cage directly."

Emily reached out a hand to stop Han Shuo, shaking her head sternly and explaining, "This is a magic boundary made of both electric and water elements that has been set up quite intricately. If you don't know the proper technique and attempt to break through the cage with brute force alone, you might kill him through electrocution or hypothermia."

Han Shuo was far from being Emily's equal in the knowledge of magic in general since necromancy magic differed from the other paths of magic. After hearing her explanation, he didn't continue pressing his own thoughts, "All right. You work on releasing him from the boundary, and I'll look for evidence against Bob Ascher."

With that said, he left Emily and began to investigate their surroundings. Crowded with numerous shelves of various sizes holding many strange, fascinating items, the room did not seem very spacious.

There were many glistening badges marked with certain symbols describing its meaning on one of the shelves. These were the awards which Bob Ascher had received through his many years of service, which helped him rise to the position of chief of the Gryphon Legion, becoming the items that he could flaunt for the rest of his life.

There was another shelf that housed a few cavalry helmets and weapons. Some were shiny, while others were patently damaged. There was a small slip of paper under every piece that detailed which battle the helmet or weapon had been used in.

The rest of the shelves of assorted sizes held either old books or obviously exorbitant swords and spears, not the pearls, jewels, and jade that Han Shuo expected.

Emily had been working on dismantling the druid's confinement in the distance when she happened to see Han Shuo bored by the items on the shelves, his mind even wandering a little. She couldn't help but chide, "A man such as Bob Ascher wouldn't place run-of-the-mill jewels in his secret chamber, so rid yourself of thieving thoughts. Wealth hasn't been his goal for a long time. The things here represent his glory and memories, nothing that gold can compare to."

With that reminder, Han Shuo sighed dejectedly. "Here I thought I would find a ton of gold and wealth in his secret chamber. I was even planning to reward Gilbert after this mission, but I suppose I was ignorant and ill informed."

"Go look through the other things." Emily rolled her eyes and urged Han Shuo. "We need enough evidence to pin him for good!"

Taking a deep breath to help himself focus, Han Shuo quickly walked around the shelves searching for any hidden items, but after going around once and looking through every single shelf, he still didn't find anything of value.

"Seems like we're out of luck!" Han Shuo walked back to Emily with his palms open and said with some resignation.

"Just a second." Emily was at a crucial part of her work. A shadowy cloud of magic pulsed between her hands, and she pressed it firmly against the cage.

Snap! Crackle! The cage began to sizzle and fizz once Emily's magic cloud came into contact with it and vanished in an instant. Caspian's trembling eased, as well.

“All right. Now that the magic boundary has been broken, you can rescue him with your weapon.” Emily breathed out a light sigh and turned around with a graceful smile before sashaying towards the shelves. “Leave finding evidence against Bob Ascher to me. My experience in the Dark Mantle has made me an expert at this kind of work.”

“Thank you!” The druid shakingly expressed his gratitude towards Han Shuo as he slowly regained his body heat after the magic boundary was dissolved.

“Heh heh, you’re just lucky that we came across you!” Chuckling, Han Shuo took Demonslayer Edge into his hand into which he directed his magical yuan and swung it in the air.

With a loud crack, a few obsidian metal bars snapped under the Demonslayer Edge’s swing. Han Shuo reached out and forcefully bent the bars to the side, allowing the druid to step out.

Upon leaving his confinement, Caspian stretched his body and took in a few deep breaths before asking Han Shuo, “Where’s Angelica? Is she in danger?”

“Rest assured. We left her in the care of the Battlefire mercenary band before we left. I don’t think she will run into any trouble, but she’s very worried about you.” After answering, Han Shuo looked at Emily, not asking why Caspian was imprisoned there in the first place.

Meanwhile, Emily took out a particular magic item and played with it in her hands until she forced open a hidden compartment in the corner. After rummaging through it, she fished out a small book.

“Ah hah, I found it.”

“Hidden compartments are common in secret chambers, but are concealed with space magic that an average person can almost never discover. Only a space grand magus is able to sense these magical ripples and disable the disguise, but the Dark Mantle does this kind of stuff so often that we’ve come up with a specialized magical tool. With it I could detect even the slightest magical activity in this room and obtain everything we need.” Emily proudly explained with the book now in hand.

“So, does that mean our mission is complete?” Han Shuo asked with a grin after a pause.

Nodding rather happily, Emily replied, “That’s right. As long as we can leave Valen City, Bob Ascher is a dead man!”

It was then that they heard a series of hurried knocks coming from above.

Expressions tensing, Han Shuo and Emily shared a quick look before the former finally spoke, “That was Gilbert’s signal. It means that somebody has noticed our existence and is heading here. Let’s go back up and depart from this place.”

With that said, Emily ascended the way they had come. The great druid had yet to recover from his recent escape from the cage. He was still pale in the face and his steps were stiff and awkward.

Nimbly maneuvering himself to flank Caspian, Han Shuo threw the druid onto his back and dashed out behind Emily, returning to Bob Ascher’s bedroom.

Just as they arrived, they heard the sounds of battle from outside the door. Emily shared a quick, worried look with Han Shuo before she reached out for the bed. Reverting the bed to its original form, the two of them raced out the door.

On the other side, Gilbert was holding off an attack from several soldiers of the Gryphon Legion with a spear in hand. Another squad of Gryphon Legion troops was drawing near. Some were equipped with bows and arrows and had positioned themselves appropriately to shoot down Gilbert.

“You’re finally out, honored master. I’m afraid I can’t hold them off for much longer.” Spotting Han Shuo, Gilbert jumped back after fending off a strike with his spear and shouted to his master.”

All three of them, Han Shuo, Emily, and Gilbert, had their faces and identities concealed, unmistakably the appearance of no-good-doers. Even the great druid had been disguised with black mask before Han Shuo

carried him out. The party appeared more like a group of sneaky bandits.

“Let’s get out of here!” Han Shuo exclaimed as the flow of Gryphon Legion soldiers converged on them. He sprinted out through an opening before the enemies could seal them in.

The bowmen and crossbowmen had finished loading their weapons by then. If Han Shuo and Emily were to take flight, they would become clear targets without any cover, and thus they were forced to take shelter behind the artificial mountain and plants in the villa.

Without wasting words or even a nod, Gilbert charged behind Han Shuo. Flames had completely swamped the manor and screams now filled the air. Belinda and Johnny had stormed through a wall using the three-eyed golem and were running as if their lives depended on it. Johnny even appeared to be wounded, as an arrow stuck out from his butt and his chest was dripping with blood.

“This way!” Spotting Han Shuo’s party, Belinda rather loyally waved and signalled for them to join up with her. However, Han Shuo ignored her and dashed for the opposite wall. He yelled back, “Are you kidding? I don’t want to die fighting all those soldiers on your tail, thank you very much!”

# Chapter 182: A fierce battle

Everything was incredibly chaotic within the manor as fires licked at all the houses. Groups of black robed people scurried hither and thither amidst waves of panic as Gryphon Legion soldiers chased them everywhere, completely throwing the manor into wild disarray.

“Wait for us!” Two shapely black figures suddenly rushed out as Han Shuo, Emily, and Gilbert were running in another direction.

Han Shuo knew this should be Phoebe as soon as he heard the voice. It went without saying that the other person was Candice. The two of them had set fire to everything when the mission had just begin. As a fire mage swordsman, such matters came naturally to Candice. She had engulfed the entire place in a sea of flames after a short while.

There were a few Gryphon Legion soldiers behind them, and another awe inspiring elder wielding a longsword that flared with silver fighting aura.

The man quickly dashed over, and his imposing presence made it hard for one to look directly at him. He lightly waved the great sword in his hand and thoroughly pulverized all trees, shrubbery, and rocks in the silver fighting aura’s path. Even the ground split open with various cracks, demonstrating the frightening ferocity of the fighting aura.

“He’s Clark’s master, great swordmaster Gabriel! We need to get out of here!” Candice grew extremely worried as she called out and fled towards Han Shuo with an even faster speed.

Gabriel was extremely swift as he’d flung the Gryphon Legion soldiers with him far behind. As a great swordmaster, Gabriel possessed extreme strength. Han Shuo needed to take one glance at him to know that there was no one beside him who could fight Gabriel alone.

As they witnessed Gabriel picking up speed, about to overtake Phoebe and Candice, Han Shuo’s heart clenched as he looked at Gabriel, suddenly remembering the might of Gilbert’s transformation and immediately shouted, “Damn it, hurry up and transform!”



Han Shuo concentrated like he never had before and, at the same time, compelled the Demonslayer Edge to fly wildly at great swordmaster Gabriel. Infusing the Demonslayer Edge with magical yuan, a thick magical aura flared out from it, with a bizarre sense of fire and frost interspersed within it.

The Demonslayer Edge howled and slashed through the air, appearing directly in front of great swordmaster Gabriel, stabbing directly towards him. That odd sense of heat brought an exceedingly dangerous presence and rather surprised Gabriel.

Snorting coldly, Gabriel waved the longsword in his hand and suddenly gave birth to a silver firework in the distance, as resplendent as the shattered stars. Han Shuo suddenly felt an enormous force explode out of the glorious silver sparkles and attempt to firmly hold the Demonslayer Edge in place.

A burst of tremendous energy surged violently into the Demonslayer Edge. Gabriel's silver fighting aura was incredibly overbearing, rumbling on the surface of the Demonslayer Edge as though it wished to ravage everything. The enveloping silver light caused the Demonslayer Light to emit humming noises.

This tyrannical power wound its way around the Demonslayer Edge in an instant, chaotically mixing with the fire and frost energy that Han Shuo had created inside the blade with his magic. The magical energy from the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" that had coalesced in the blade rapidly disappeared.

Muttering a quick curse, Han Shuo knew that his magical training had been too brief. No matter how fantastical his magic was, with such a short amount of time spent on training, he was still unable to measure up to Gabriel's decades spent coalescing his fighting aura. In the moment they'd connected, the magical yuan within the Demonslayer Edge completely dissipated, and the result a foregone conclusion.

However, because of the Demonslayer Edge's obstruction, it slowed down Gabriel's pursuit of Phoebe and Candice. Han Shuo felt that things

weren't right when he couldn't resummon the Demonslayer Edge back to his hand.

He thought quickly as his heart clenched. Han Shuo swiftly sang out a magic spell as two bone spears suddenly flew towards Gabriel. In the instant that Han Shuo made his move, Emily also released a dark magic spell.

At the same time, Han Shuo used his entire strength to quickly circulate the magical yuan within the Demonslayer Edge and used Gabriel's distraction in fending off their magical attacks to wrest the Demonslayer Edge away from the ball of silver light. Because he'd spent too much energy and the speed of the circulating magical yuan was beyond Han Shuo's limits, Han Shuo couldn't help but spit out a mouthful of blood, having already been injured.

"You're injured, let me down, I think I've recovered!" Caspian, on Han Shuo's back, could clearly feel Han Shuo's body tremble violently and immediately spoke when he saw Han Shuo spit out a mouthful of blood.

Gabriel had already destroyed Han Shuo and Emily's magics in this short amount of time and his cold, grey eyes once again swept towards Han Shuo and Emily. His gaze on Han Shuo in particular was infused with some surprise, as he seemed to be incredibly curious about Han Shuo's magical yuan and the Demonslayer Edge.

Bam! sounded out as Han Shuo turned his head to see that Gilbert had finally transformed back into an enormous black dragon. His body was covered with black scales and he'd already crushed the wall in front of Han Shuo and the others.

"Everyone, on his back!" Han Shuo was delighted to see Gilbert reveal the body of a black dragon and roared out loudly, throwing Caspian over to Gilbert as well.

He used a certain amount of force when he did so, so that when Caspian arrived where Gilbert was, the momentum around his body would lessen and it wouldn't cause too much harm to the druid.

Apart from Emily knowing Gilbert's identity in advance, Gilbert's sudden

transformation shocked everyone senseless. They stared, open mouthed, at the enormous Gilbert and couldn't really react for a while.

"All Gryphon Legion soldiers gather here! Archers and spear throwers, prepare your arrows, spears, and crossbows! You can be dragonslayers today!" Gabriel's loud call suddenly rang out and spread throughout the manor.

"Why aren't you getting on yet?!" Han Shuo couldn't help but roar furiously when he saw that Candice and Phoebe were still dithering about on the ground in shock.

Dark dragons were also labeled as the most evil and greedy amongst the dragons. They liked to live in the gloomy underworld, and were lustful, shameless, and greedy. They were practically the materialization of evil on the earth. That such a dark dragon had suddenly appeared in front of them, it was no wonder that Phoebe and Candice didn't know how to react.

But when Han Shuo urged them on a second time, the two girls finally recognized the dark dragon's relationship with Han Shuo and looked askance at him, leaping up to land on Gilbert's back.

When he saw that Emily, Phoebe, and Caspian had all leapt until Gilbert's back, Han Shuo relaxed and activated the Art to also fly towards Gilbert. "Leave immediately, but don't take to the skies, or you'll become a flying target."

"Honored master, you must block the spears and arrows that fly my way." Gilbert had a mouth full of sharp teeth now and his dragon's breath was filled with a piercing odd smell. His voice also appeared to have an additional layer of dignity in it.

"I know, all is a mess here anyways. Just destroy anything that gets in your way. Don't pay heed to anything else as long as we can get out of here." Han Shuo didn't put any restrictions on Gilbert now as long as they could make it out of this sticky situation alive.

When Caspian heard Han Shuo's orders, he seemed to want to protest, but when he thought of how Han Shuo had helped him numerous times

already and that he was trying to get everyone out alive, he said nothing in the end after moving his lips a few times.

“Wahahaha, then alright, I’ll do as I see fit!” Gilbert spoke excitedly with his dignified voice.

That heavily fanged mouth suddenly yawned open and sprayed a gout of acidic poison into the distance. Dragonbreath accompanied this spray, and the archers, who had just set up their formation, hastily retreated. Those who didn’t back up in time were reduced to melting flesh after their bodies had come into contact with the acid. Death was the only way out for them.

After this breath went out, scores of Gryphon Legion soldiers appeared suddenly. They wielded silver spears and gleaming silver armor as they flew in on the backs of gryphons. The person in front was fierce and stocky. He looked middle aged as the silver fighting aura from the spear in his hand shot out two to three meters tall, making that silver spear, carved with mystical patterns, appearing even longer.

“Hurry and go, Bob Ascher has arrived! It looks like the Calamity Church has failed indeed!” When he saw that the dark dragon still wanted to rampage around, Han Shuo quickly kicked him in the side and hastily gave this order.

# Chapter 183: The swift and fierce silver spear

Ten Gryphon Legion soldiers and Bob Ascher, as well as the swordmaster Gabriel, – little dark dragon Gilbert would be courting death if he attempted to face this enormous amount of strength head on.

Beneath Han Shuo's urging, Gilbert realized the magnitude of the situation they were in and didn't waste time with cheeky remarks. He charged over from the now obliterated wall, while the archers and spear throwers on Gabriel's side found their footing once more in a newly formed formation. They suddenly shot out in unison and filled the blotted out the skies with arrows and spears, targeting Gilbert.

Han Shuo and the others had long since made preparations. Emily shot out a dark magical spell and formed a grey, semi-circle protective barrier in the air. Han Shuo also chanted the incantation for Dark Mist, covering the entire area in darkness. Candice, Phoebe, and Caspian also used a variety of methods to smash the arrows and spears that came their way.

Han Shuo had already been injured when he had crossed blades with Gabriel earlier. It was a good thing that he could call upon his necromancy magic without his magical yuan. When Han Shuo chanted out a magical spell, several zombie and hate warriors suddenly appeared on the ground, in addition to dozens of skeletal warriors, forming a blockade in the gap in the wall that had been made by Gilbert.

The summoned dark creatures played the roles of meat shields, filling up the gap so that the attacks fell only on them.

Add to this Emily's magic shield and Han Shuo's Dark Mist, as well as Phoebe and Candice's efforts, Gilbert didn't suffer any injuries in the end.

The dark creatures that Han Shuo had summoned were shot full of arrows and spears, and he once again began chanting, but this time it was the "Corpse Explosion" spell that he'd just mastered when the soldiers of the Gryphon Legion drew near, making two hate warriors explode, sending

flesh and blood flying through the sky. The ten soldiers were caught off guard and were all sent crashing backwards.

“Take to the sky and get us out of here!” Han Shuo yelled out as he made use of this chance in which the dark creatures were blocking all the arrows and spears.

Gilbert didn't hesitate when he heard Han Shuo's order and swung his enormous body around, crushing two houses by his side. Boulders hurtled through the air as trees snapped. Gilbert roared as his body, previously hovering close to the ground, suddenly shot towards the dark sky.

“Halt right there!” Bob Ascher suddenly shot over magically at this moment, the silver spear in his hand suddenly shooting out like a silver comet. A splendid tail followed behind it as it aimed for Gilbert.

As a sky rider, Bob Ascher had weathered many battles over the years and had seen all sorts of situations. Not only was he himself quite fierce, but his breadth of battle experience was even more rich. He understood that it would be difficult to catch up to Gilbert with the gryphon's speed, so the only way was to injure Gilbert first. Otherwise, even though he had a large amount of troops following close behind him, it would be impossible to keep Han Shuo's group behind.

Bob Ascher's abundant fighting aura was concentrated into the spear as it drew a magnificent, almost piercing, arc in the dark night sky. It embodied a severe presence within it, giving Han Shuo and the others immense pressure. The spear flew towards them, as if hunting prey, whistling through the night and seeming to be making use of the wind as well.

Han Shuo hastily chanted another bone spear spell, and two bone spears suddenly materialized in front of the silver spear according to Han Shuo's will. They broke apart as soon as they touched the spear, and the spear continued, unabated, on its path.

As Han Shuo was reeling in shock, Emily chanted out a dark magic spell as a Grim Reaper's blade once again formed in the night sky. As the magic staff in Emily's hands drew an arc downwards, the Grim Reaper's blade

shot swiftly towards the oncoming silver spear.

Another exploding sound rang out as Emily suddenly stumbled on Gilbert's back. She couldn't help but take a few steps backwards as the blade formed out of her mental strength dissipated in the blink of an eye.

However, because of her attack, the fighting aura coalesced on the tip of the silver spear had decreased noticeably. Whether it was the flare of its silver light, or its speed, both had been suddenly decreased.

Although Han Shuo's heart went out to Emily at this time, he didn't have the time to comfort her. He stared unblinkingly at the spear, prepared to summon the Demonslayer Edge and meet it in combat.

Two crossbow bolts suddenly flew out from Phoebe and Candice's hands. Candice's bolt missed, but Phoebe's bolt solidly smashed into the slowing silver spear.

Because of this bolt, the spear's speed decreased once more. Gilbert had increased his speed at this time and was making for the horizon. He increased the gap between the group and Bob Ascher's gryphon, and continued to pull ahead.

"Convey my orders! The entire city is under martial law. Only entrance is allowed, exit is not. All transportation matrixes traveling to other cities are to be closed! No one can activate them without my order. All trespassers will be killed without exception!" Bob Ascher's fierce yell could be heard in the distance, with even Han Shuo and the others hearing him clearly.

"Are you alright?" Han Shuo relaxed when he saw that they were temporarily out of danger, but his expression tightened as he hurriedly rushed to Emily's side and held her up.

Emily took off her mask and displayed a face drained of color, but when she saw that Han Shuo was asking after her so urgently, sweetness flooded her heart as she gave a weak laugh, "No worries, this is what happens after I exhaust my magic. Don't worry about me, how are you?"

"I'll be fine after a few days of rest as well!" Han Shuo also comforted Emily with a smile.

Phoebe was now wearing a stiff expression when she saw how intimate Han Shuo and Emily were, but Emily was wounded and had gotten her injuries just now from protecting them all. She wasn't in a position to say anything about Han Shuo's concern for her.

Coughing lightly, she braved the chilly wind to walk up to Han Shuo, worry also appearing on her stunning face. She reached out a slender, jade hand to wipe the blood from Emily's lips, admonishing her, "You spit out blood, so how can you say that you're alright?!"

Phoebe's light cough and her motions immediately made Emily realize something. She pushed away Han Shuo's support with a nonchalant smile and maintained a distance of two arm lengths from him, only saying then, "What do we do now?"

"I'm beginning to worry about the safety of the others now that Valen City is on lockdown." Han Shuo's face darkened as she looked at Emily.

Nodding, Emily said, "That's right, he was incredibly enraged just now and won't be easily pacified. Valen City has never closed its transportation matrixes to other cities before. In doing so, he's cut off all chances of communication with the outside world. Whether it was the Empire or news from any other places, Valen City will be unable to receive any of it. Bob Ascher must have hardened his heart and won't give up that easily since he's taken this step."

"The target I'd come to fight this time was water magus Howard by Bob Ascher's side. I had originally been confident of handling him, but he found someone to help him who doesn't play by the rules to capture me. He wanted something from our druid order after he captured me, but I didn't give it to him even when threatened with death. Before you came tonight, he said he was going to capture little Angelica to threaten me with, so I'm concerned for her safety." Caspian finally came clean with everything at this time.

"Honored master, where are we flying to? If you don't make a decision soon, we'll be leaving Valen City!" Gilbert's voice suddenly rang out in the frosty winter air.



Valen City was a mess at the moment and so the best and wisest course of action was to leave. However, if they left now, those still in Valen City would likely be in great danger. Hesitation showed on Han Shuo's face as he looked uncertainly at those assembled in front of him.

"My cousin is very good to me and I cannot leave him in danger!" Phoebe resolutely expressed her stance when she saw Han Shuo look at her.

"I can't give up on my battle comrades!" Candice also spoke up.

When Han Shuo looked at Emily, Emily smiled charmingly, "I'll go with whatever you decide!"

"Gilbert, return to the hotel!" Han Shuo stomped down on the back of the dark dragon after thinking for a while.

# Chapter 184: An incredible memory

Having finally increased the distance between himself and Bob Ascher and seeing that he was about to clear the danger zone, Gilbert complained when he heard Han Shuo's instructions telling him to turn back. "Honored master, even the mighty Gilbert cannot take on an entire Gryphon Legion! We'll surely be discovered if we go back to the city like this!"

"Shut up and fly back to the hotel. We need to pick up whoever we need to pick up." Han Shuo snorted lightly as he spoke to Gilbert.

In his dark dragon form, there wasn't much space on his back for people to stand on. Han Shuo wouldn't be able to take everyone away in one go, so he started to contemplate what to do.

Thoughts racing furiously, Han Shuo's sharp eyes saw Gryphon Legion soldiers patrolling the skies as Gilbert was returning from the outskirts of Valen City.

Gilbert was such a large target that it was impossible to surreptitiously sneak back into the hotel. Han Shuo thought silently for a moment before suddenly saying, "Gilbert, land immediately since the Gryphon Legion has yet to spot us. We'll be returning to the hotel by foot."

Under Han Shuo's commands, Gilbert didn't say anything pointless and traveled stealthily at a low altitude, with everyone getting off his back in succession shortly after. When everyone had gotten off, Gilbert's huge body gradually shrunk, entombed in a dark radiance before once again transforming back into that tan-skinned, handsome, young man.

"When we were within Asher's manor just now, we had masks on. Now that we have returned under our true appearances, it's likely that they won't be able to recognize us." Han Shuo glanced over at Emily as he spoke to her.

"Right, however, if a group of strangers suddenly appears at the same time and are somehow discovered by the Gryphon Legion's people, we will definitely raise suspicions. I think we should split up, and by doing that, other people won't think that we acted together!" Emily looked at their

group as she spoke.

“Alright, then let’s do this. Everyone should be familiar with the way back. We’ll split into two groups, and if there’s danger within the hotel, we’ll meet up at the block behind it.” Han Shuo nodded, agreeing with Emily’s plan.

Once Han Shuo had spoken, Phoebe immediately moved matter-of-factly to Han Shuo’s side. As a magical pet, Gilbert naturally couldn’t be separated from his master either. With the situation developing like this, Emily quickly looked at everyone and spoke again. “Since things are like this, I’ll be with Miss Candice and Elder Caspian.”

“Elder Caspian has entered the city before, so we need you to use magic to adjust his features. Otherwise, it will be extremely easy to recognize him.” Han Shuo warned. He then turned towards Phoebe and Gilbert, saying, “Let’s go.”

Currently, Valen City was even more chaotic than during the day that Clark had been assassinated. The chief of the Gryphon Legion used the invasion and assassinations of the Kasi Empire as an excuse to seal off the entire city. The Griffon Legion’s men whistled through the skies. and immediately carried out a severe interrogation as soon as any stranger appeared.

Under Han Shuo’s sensitive eyes and ears, his group of three focused on taking small, winding paths. They scuttled under the shadow of the eaves, avoiding many troops from the Griffon Legion along the way.

Regardless of whether it was Gilbert or Pheobe, they were both extraordinary characters. Since Han Shuo’s brain had developed, his powerful ability to recall things was fully deployed during this return trip. There were all types of complicated small passages that existed in Valen City, and it seemed as if there was a map imprinted into Han Shuo’s heart. As Han Shuo made his way back, he moved erratically in all directions.

In the end, even Phoebe began to feel as if they were getting farther and farther away from the hotel. If it wasn’t for her knowing how mysterious Han Shuo was, she definitely would have questioned whether or not Han

Shuo knew where he was going. After going through many small roads and traveling through a few curved routes, the back door of the hotel suddenly appeared before their eyes.

Han Shuo's had actually managed to completely avoid the airborne Griffon Legion and soldiers on the ground. By using a few smaller, more complicated roads, the three people actually didn't encounter any danger as they appeared at the the hotel doors.

"This is too amazing!" Phoebe couldn't help but exclaim when she saw Elaine's hotel, lights dancing in her eyes as she complimented Han Shuo.

"Honored master, I'm super dizzy. How were you able to memorize such complicated roads?" Gilbert was also looking at Han Shuo with incredulity.

Pointing at his head, Han Shuo chuckled. "I'm just that good!"

It was like he'd said nothing with that statement, but even if he'd explained the bit about his brain being developed, the two of them most likely wouldn't have understood regardless, so he didn't bother.

Han Shuo took a deep breath after speaking and concentrated his gaze on the hotel. His eyes sparkled with dark gleams and his sensitive ears also turned towards the hotel.

Contrary to his expectations, there wasn't anything out of the ordinary in the hotel. Han Shuo heard that everything was normal inside. There were no panicked sounds of fighting, nor was there any sounds of interrogation from the soldiers of the Gryphon Legion.

"You and Gilbert head over first, I'll go find Lawrence and tell him to leave the city immediately!" Han Shuo spoke to Phoebe beside him.

Phoebe's stunning face turned to look at him as she reached for his hand. She grasped his broad, coarse hands tightly and said softly, 'Be careful!'

"Don't worry! Nothing's going to happen to me!" Han Shuo said with a smile and turned to Gilbert, "Protect her well if anything happens!"

Han Shuo was like a shadow in the dark night after he spoke. He melted into the darkness and vanished without a trace.

On his way to Lawrence's place, Han Shuo heard a bizarre sound. He quickened his steps and landed on a tree branch. Han Shuo saw a disguised Lawrence, Lucky, and the two swordsmen he'd seen before making for the direction of the hotel with Belinda and Johnny from the Calamity Church.

Coughing lightly, Han Shuo called out softly from the tree, "Lawrence!"

The group below was greatly frightened by Han Shuo's cough. They all grasped their weapons tightly and swivelled to look up into the tree, almost sending out attacks as they turned.

"Bryan, what are you doing here? Shouldn't you have left the city long ago? We saw you take the dark dragon out of the manor and leave Ascher behind!" Lawrence spoke with confusion.

"We came back again. Cut the blather and gather at the hotel. We are going to be leaving immediately. You can't stay in Valen City for a second longer." Han Shuo had no time to explain anything and responded carelessly, landing on the ground and convening with Lawrence and the others.

When he drew near, Han Shuo discovered that Johnny had not only taken a hit to his buttocks, but there was a large patch of blood on his chest and it looked like he was injured quite severely. Although Belinda still had her veil on, her gaze wasn't as sharp as before. She looked a bit weak and had also likely been wounded.

Lawrence and the others had only been involved in logistics and cleanup in this operation. They hadn't taken part in the actual battle, and so they were in relatively good spirits, with no one being injured. What Han Shuo didn't understand was why he was with Belinda. Han Shuo hadn't introduced the two to each other and so they shouldn't know each other.

Hesitating, Han Shuo couldn't keep back the questions in his heart. He looked at Lawrence and then at Belinda, "How do the two of you know each other?"

“Oh, we discovered that our two groups were going the same way when we were retreating earlier and ended up walking together!” Lawrence glanced noncommittally at Han Shuo and explained faintly.

Belinda also nodded, “It’s because of Mister Lawrence’s aid and that such a large number of his men went after you that we were able to make it out.”

“So that’s the case!” Han Shuo still felt that things weren’t this simple, but since Belinda and Lawrence had the same story, he wasn’t able to get anything else out of them either.

Just as Han Shuo and Lawrence were almost at the hotel, Han Shuo could hear a group of Gryphon Legion soldiers interrogating Elaine inside. He could hear her hearty laughter from a distance away, seemingly to not have a care in the world.

However, his superior vision saw that as this troop was talking to Elaine, another soldier seemed to have received some instructions and surreptitiously left the hotel, walking swiftly towards the street and waving his hand up at the two Gryphon Legion soldiers hovering in the sky.

“Damn it, we must’ve been made!” Although he didn’t know why, Han Shuo knew that Elaine’s hotel was no longer safe. He called out softly and didn’t bother concealing his tracks anymore, making for the hotel like a streak of lightning.

# Chapter 185: The great escape

“Has there really not been any suspicious characters nearby lately?” A Gryphon Legion officer asked Elaine.

“Honored sir, our hotel has always had good ratings in Valen City and have always cooperated with the Aschers. We would’ve immediately reported to you had we discovered anyone suspicious.” The chubby Elaine was still merry and promised with a smile that nothing was wrong with the hotel.

“Mm, I feel that nothing would be wrong with your hotel anyways!” The officer’s expression was calm as he spoke gravely.

A severe whistle sounded at this moment as a streak of faint red cut through the dark sky, making straight for the officer.

The officer, who’d been putting on a show in talking to Elaine, had long since been on his guard. He wouldn’t have sent his men out for help otherwise. He pulled out the sword by his side with an audible clang as soon as the whistle had sounded. Dark green fighting aura suddenly flared across it as it immediately flew out towards the descending red light.

Ding! The sounds of weapons clashing into each other rang out. The Demonslayer Edge bit viciously into the officer’s blade and extinguished his fighting aura, causing a nick in the officer’s blade.

A figure flashed at the same time as a hard fist pummeled towards the officer. The officer started in shock and he lifted his left hand, blocking his chest and attempting to stop Han Shuo’s punch.

It had seemed to be an ordinary punch, but suddenly flared up with purple spellfire when it reached the officer’s chest. A biting cold presence suddenly rushed to the front, and it surged into his body when Han Shuo’s fist landed on his chest.

The officer felt like he’d fallen into an icy cavern in a single instant. Frost immediately formed on his hair and eyebrows, and ice pierced through his body as well. He didn’t even have the strength to lift his

hands.

Han Shuo retraced his tightly clenched fist and snatched the Demonslayer Edge out of the air. He turned his head to yell at Elaine, “This place has been compromised. Tell everyone to leave the hotel immediately!”

Elaine quickly sized up the situation after recovering from her shock. The cries of the gryphons were sounding out from the air at this time. This meant that Han Shuo’s judgment had been without error, and that the soldiers circling in the sky were already closing in.

“However, Madame Emily has yet to return!” Elaine was about to leave when she suddenly recalled that Emily was the true leader of this mission, and couldn’t help but speak up at this moment.

“You don’t need to worry about this, she will return soon.” Han Shuo grasped the Demonslayer Edge and charged into the soldiers, quickly responding to Elaine.

Elaine had no other reservations after Han Shuo’s words and she nodded as she turned. She yelled out as Angelica, members of the Battlefire mercenary band, as well as Phoebe and Gilbert all emerged from the hotel.

When they came outside, they joined in the fray without another word from Han Shuo, killing all the Gryphon Legion soldiers.

“Go! Leave through the back!” Although these soldiers were dead, this location had already been compromised. Along with the soldier’s previous report, this place would quickly become a prime target. The two hovering soldiers high up in the air had also discovered the abnormalities over here.

The group of people didn’t pack anything under Han Shuo’s orders and had just fled the hotel, running towards the back. Although Elaine didn’t possess any fighting aura, she was quite quick on her feet and didn’t become a burden.

A loud outcry of yells suddenly sounded from the distance. Han Shuo ran and jumped up, landing on a nearby roof. He looked into the distance and noticed that Emily, Candice, and Caspian were fighting their way over



here.

A dozen cavalry members were behind them, riding armored battlesteeds and wielding sharp spears. They pursued Emily fiercely, seeming to have discovered their identities.

“Hurry, come this way!” Han Shuo suddenly called out loudly, his voice making it over to Emily’s location like a sharp weapon.

Lawrence’s group also bumped into Phoebe and Candice at this time, making all those who had participated in the Bob Ascher operation gather in one place.

“Form up! Let’s make it out of here before the entire Gryphon Legion arrives!” Standing on top of the roof, Han Shuo had become the leader of this mission as he called out sternly.

“Steal the horses!” Emily suddenly hovered in midair on her way over as she lowly chanted a dark magic spell.

The dozen fiercely charging knights suddenly floundered into a dark vortex along the way. The battlesteeds’ lightning fast speed suddenly became incredibly slow, and their hooves made no sounds on the ground.

The trees in the surroundings suddenly became alive as their branches danced liked snakes, entangling the slowing horses, forcing them to stop where they stood.

Caspian’s old tree branch of a magic staff rested on a nearby tree. He concentrated and released the magic of the druidic order, restraining all twelve horses and confining even the legs of the knights on the horses.

“Hurry up!” Caspian also suddenly roared out.

“Grandpa! Are you alright?” Angelica broke down into tears of joy when she saw her grandfather appear from the vantage point of being protected by the Battlefire mercenary band members.

“Take the horses, come on!” Han Shuo had already charged out in the air and turned his head to yell back.

Lawrence waved his hand and didn’t bother speaking to Phoebe. Those

beside him, including Belinda and Johnny of the Calamity Church and even Phoebe and Candice, dashed out and made for the dozen trussed up horses and knights.

Han Shuo had Caspian, swordmaster Phoebe, magus level Emily, thunder mage swordsman Johnny, as well as fire mage swordsman Candice, and finally Lawrence by his side. With such a group of experts coming together to take care of the ordinary knights tied up on the backs of their horses, it was easily a slaughter.

Everyone displayed their abilities in the span of a few breaths and killed the twelve ordinary knights in a few seconds. They threw the bodies down and claimed the horses.

“Hurry and get out of here. We escaped this way because there’s more than a hundred similar cavalry behind us.” Emily tugged on the reins and shouted.

Just as her words sounded, the cries from the gryphons in the air became more and more numerous. Han Shuo lifted his head and suddenly discovered a few black dots converging on their location. His sensitive ears could hear random hoofbeats. It seemed that they would be surrounded before long.

“Come with me, we’ll make it out soon!” Han Shuo yanked on the reins and turned the horse around, charging in the direction that Emily and the others had just come from.

“You’re crazy! There’s more than a hundred knights back there!” Emily was immediately shocked by Han Shuo’s about face and called out in surprise.

He turned back and looked at Emily with a wry smile. “I think that’s the only path available to us that will get us to the city walls as soon as possible! If we don’t leave immediately, there will be countless troubles that follow behind us, so we must take that risk!”

Han Shuo didn’t hesitate after speaking and charged off on the back of his steed, shooting for the location where the hoofbeats were converging. Emily was stunned for only a second before she immediately followed Han

Shuo's battlesteed.

Phoebe and Candice had worked with Han Shuo before and trusted his judgment greatly. Gilbert had no objection of course, and charged out after Emily. Caspian and Angelica, on the same horse, also followed quickly after a moment of hesitation.

The last group was more hesitant, but they too followed Han Shuo's direction one by one after a short while.

None of them knew whether or not this path would lead to life or death. They could only hope that Han Shuo's judgement had been correct.

# Chapter 186: The “Demonic Art of Assimilation”

It was the dead of winter, and some ice had already formed on the surface of the streets. The frosty wind cut through the air like a knife, as if a demon was walking the streets, giving pedestrians an awe inspiring feeling, which sank into the depths of their soul.

The hooves of Han Shuo’s horse pounded against the ground of the streets as everyone followed closely behind. Everyone had severely grave expressions pasted on their faces, having already made their preparations that they would be charging head on into great trouble.

A dense concentration of hooves sounded in front of Han Shuo. The presence of ten thousand fiercely charging horses assaulted him before he even seen anyone.

The Demonslayer Edge was gripped loosely in his hand right now as a coolly composed Han Shuo discarded all the stray thoughts in his mind. He focused his concentration like he never had before, adjusting his breathing and heart rate to his most ideal condition. Even the pain originally emanating from some of his wounds began to fade away.

When he focused his attentions and planned on carving out a path of blood, he suddenly felt a bit lightheaded, as if he’d suddenly sunk into some strange state of mind. His mind shook at the same time as a profound incantation slowly crystallized in his heart.

The “Demonic Art of Assimilation” was a demonic art that could be grasped only after one reached the true demon realm. Its effects were evident from the word “assimilation”. A demonic practitioner in the true demon realm would have formed a demon infant at that time, and once injured, the practitioner could use the “Demonic Art of Assimilation” to swallow the enemy’s blood, flesh, and soul to heal their own injuries.

If the demon infant wanted to grow quickly at this time, it could use the “Demonic Art of Assimilation” to swallow the enemy’s soul or demon

infant. However, because there was no one else in the same school of study as Han Shuo in this world, there were no other demonic infants for him to swallow.

Before a person died, the energy in their soul wouldn't fade away. If one used the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" to absorb a living person's soul and fortify the demon infant, that would be the fastest way for Han Shuo's training to advance to the next level.

The power of one's soul would quickly fade upon death, and the remnants of energy would completely dissipate in an exceedingly short while. It was also impossible to summon the vengeful spirits known as wraiths to fill the void, because those were creatures from another dimension and had been dead for an indeterminate amount of time. The energy of their souls had long since vanished, leaving behind only the simplest traces of life.

In actuality, Han Shuo's use of the original demon and yin demon cave to refine the original and yin demons was actually using his blood essence and magical yuan to imbue these wraiths with the energy of a soul again. These original and yin demons would regain their powers, in addition to incredible abilities after they managed to absorb Han Shuo's blood essence and large amounts of magical yuan.

A mystical incantation magically imprinted itself into Han Shuo's brain as he sped forward on the back of the battlesteed. He quickly reviewed the incantation in his state of concentration and continued to gallop forward.

The sound of hooves were even more densely packed ahead, pounding into Han Shuo's heart like a war drum. When his sharp eyes looking straight ahead, he calmly circulated his magical yuan according to how to deploy the "Demonic Art of Assimilation", trying to see if it would have any effect.

To his surprise, Han Shuo discovered that he could circulate the magical yuan smoothly according to the requirements of the "Demonic Art of Assimilation", not meeting any obstacles at all.

Han Shuo finally realized that since he'd reached the true demon realm,

many of his meridians had been carved out by his magical yuan, and the meridians that the “Demonic Art of Assimilation” was circulating through happened to be similar to the ones needed for the “Mystical Glacial Spellfire. Although they weren’t the exact same set of meridians, the current set was clear and without obstacle at all. Han Shuo’s thoughts raced as he immediately sensed the changes in his body.

As he circulated the “Demonic Art of Assimilation” and focused his concentration on his empty left hand, a thick, black cloud of magical mist materialized as a spinning black hole, full of an eerie and hard to define presence. There were many black flecks sparkling inside, giving off a frightening feeling.

The vortex hovering over the palm of his hand wasn’t that large, but Han Shuo understood that this meant he’d fully grasped the “Demonic Art of Assimilation”, and he would only know its effects when he actually tried using it on someone.

“You in the front! Halt for questioning or be killed without exception!” A fierce roar sounded out from in front of Han Shuo at this time.

A dense collection of knights whipped forward with battle rage. The silver spears in their hands flared with dark green fighting aura, appearing quite piercing in the darkness.

“Heh heh, I just so happened to want to see who’s going to kill who!” Han Shuo laughed wildly as he clenched with his legs. His horse shot forward even faster as it made for the knight.

In the moment that they were about to crash into each other, Han Shuo chanted a necromancy spell and the knights who were about to attack Han Shuo suddenly found bone spears materializing out of nowhere and hurtling towards them instead. They hastily raised their weapons to defend themselves as one of their silver spears was blocked by a white bone shield that had formed on Han Shuo’s left shoulder.

Beneath the cover of necromancy magic, Han Shuo pointed at the lofty knight who had shouted. When the sharp Demonslayer Edge connected with the knight’s spear, the latter immediately broke apart in accordance

with Han Shuo's expectations. Making use of the knight's momentary shock, Han Shuo suddenly reached out a hand when he was passing by the knight and grabbed the latter.

Han Shuo's physical body was perversely strong now. When his left hand grabbed the knight and squeeze severely, the knight's shoulder blade immediately fractured. The Demonslayer Edge then nicked the knight's head, causing an immediate fountain of fresh blood.

The knight had been howling in pain when his cries of agony intensified after the Demonslayer Edge's blow. Strength drained from his struggling body and he was knocked senseless.

Han Shuo's left hand once again activated the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" at this time. The knight's flesh and blood, as well as lifeforce, swiftly flew from the knight's neck into Han Shuo's left hand.

A vigorous, strange power suddenly surged into Han Shuo's body thanks to the demon infant consuming it. His previously injured body recovered miraculously from this injection of strength, as if he'd obtained some sort of magical elixir or pill. Han Shuo could even clearly feel that some of his broken blood vessels had bizarrely reconnected themselves beneath the nurturing effects of this force.

At the same time, the knight in Han Shuo's hands was slowly deflating and turning grey because his flesh, blood, and lifeforce was being absorbed. When Han Shuo was finished with that, his remaining strand of soul was also sucked away like a drop of water.

When Han Shuo let go, a cold wind blew up and the corpse, now an empty husk, disintegrated in a cloud of dust. A life had been demolished in the span of a second, leaving not a single trace behind, thanks to the "Demonic Art of Assimilation".

As the caster, Han Shuo had received the nourishment from this knight in a short amount of time. Not only were his injuries healed, but he felt greatly alert and energetic at this moment as well.

The effects of the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" scared even Han Shuo himself. He'd never thought that it would be able to suck away all of the

knight's life force in such short amount of time.

This was a typical case of harming others to benefit oneself, and it rather fulfilled the true principles of a demonic practitioner. Helping one recover and advance through slaughter and careless abandon of other lives, making use of other's soul and life force. These were the methods that demonic practitioners had long since grown accustomed to in the past hundred, thousand years.

"Demon, he's a demon!" The knights in front of Han Shuo stopped in their tracks with shock after seeing their leader die in such a horrifying fashion. One of them yelled in panic.

Han Shuo's methods had obviously surpassed the limits of their understanding, particularly when Han Shuo's left hand devoured their leader. The blood and bone fragments flying everywhere made his left hand appear like a man-eating demon. It made all this very difficult for the knights to accept.

Han Shuo had now charged deep into this group of knights. Due to the narrowness of the streets, the way forward was completely blocked.

He was forced to lower his speed due to the crush of people around him. Han Shuo had been ready for a cruel round of attacks when he realized those around him had all fallen into a stupor. They were all looking at him in horrified fright, and no one dared make the first move.



# Chapter 187: Flying

Emily and the others took advantage of these people's stupor to unceremoniously rain attacks down upon the knights.

Dazzling spells and fierce fighting aura exploded at the same time, smashing into the knights like bombs and causing great injuries and casualties.

Faced with extreme threat to their lives, the previously shell-shocked Gryphon Legion knights started fighting for their lives. Javelins, arrows, and sharp spears all shot towards Han Shuo's groups.

The knights had completely blocked off the street, and so Han Shuo's group would have to meet them in head on battle if they charged over. When the Gryphon Legion knights shrugged off their fear and fought desperately, they immediately became a great hindrance.

However, Han Shuo's group was created of all experts with strong martial arts techniques and magic. They fought on the narrow streets since it wouldn't allow the Gryphon Legion soldiers to spread out. Only ten or so soldiers could face Han Shuo and the others at any given time.

These soldiers were naturally no match for Han Shuo and the others in this regard. The soldiers were all struck down from their horses in an exceedingly short period of time. It was a pity that there were roughly a hundred or so soldiers with the Gryphon Legion crew, and they were all experienced soldiers who had weathered many battles. They charged forward without heed for their own lives, greatly obstructing the group's speed.

The cry of gryphons came from the direction they had come from. Han Shuo took one listen and immediately understood that a larger portion of the Gryphon Legion were on their way. Perhaps even Bill Ascher was amongst them.

"Charge through this group or we'll be in trouble!" Han Shuo roared furiously. He turned and looked at Gilbert, "Transform back into your dragon form and destroy everything you see."

Gilbert immediately jumped up upon hearing these words and transformed into the enormous body of a dark dragon in the air. Gilbert's body hurtled through the sky over the crowded streets, opening his maw to send out a jet of flame on dozens of soldiers.

A dull thud sounded at the same time as Belinda's ironclad golem of the three eyed demon god, Ansidesi, charged into the crowd under her orders. It caused mass destruction, along with Gilbert, dealing disastrous blows to the soldiers.

Han Shuo took stock of the surroundings and noticed that there were several noticeable marks on Belinda's ironclad golem. Although it was as powerful as ever, it seemed a bit more bedraggled and was even a tad bit slower than last time.

Han Shuo knew without much thought that the golem must've been damaged in the operation to assassinate Bill Ascher, or it wouldn't be appearing in such bad shape. Han Shuo turned his head and was about to shift his gaze elsewhere, when he suddenly saw the light of excitement shine in Lawrence's eyes. Lawrence looked at the ironclad golem in fascination, seeming to continuously emit sighs of amazement as he looked at it.

Perhaps Lawrence had wanted to save Belinda because he was targeting the value of the golem. This was an enormous entity of mass destruction. If it could be used as a weapon in war, then he would have a great advantage in besieging cities and ravaging lands. No wonder Lawrence was so excited.

Due to Gilbert and the ironclad golem leading the way, those following behind immediately felt a lot more at ease. Their charge was accompanied by howls of pain and agony from their enemies as Han Shuo and the others treaded through the devastated streets, continuing forward.

Several large earth spikes suddenly appeared towards the front at this moment. They were all several meters long and shot fiercely towards the low flying Gilbert. Two water dragons also materialized into existence also churning ferociously towards Gilbert.

Gilbert had been squalling in his excitement when he was hit on all sides in his stupor. His large body completed a forward roll and fell down again. The knights, who were still alive after all his attacks immediately shot all their weapons at Gilbert, injuring him as well.

“Damn it, you guys actually injured me. I’m going to kill you!” Gilbert shrieked after a howl of agony and spewed flames towards the water and earth archmages in front of him. His enormous body thrashed and crushed some houses around him as he once again took to the air.

“We go.” One of the archmages said coolly as both of them used the levitation spells to float into the air and leave in another direction.

“Don’t chase them, we need to get out of here!” Han Shuo immediately yelled out when he saw that Gilbert seemed to want to chase after the two magi in his rage.

Gilbert had just set foot into this world and lacked sufficient battle experience. He was also full of himself and quite arrogant, so no wonder he’d been injured by the two magi. If they didn’t have Gilbert with them, the group may not be able to destroy a section of the city wall later with only the slow moving golem by itself. Therefore, there was no way that Han Shuo would allow Gilbert to leave at this moment.

Due to the contract between Han Shuo and Gilbert, although the latter complained a bit after receiving Han Shuo’s order, he continued charging forward in the end. However, his speed wasn’t as fast as it had been. It seemed that his injuries were indeed affecting him.

The calls of the gryphons drew closer and closer as Han Shuo’s group finally made it to the closest section of city wall in their desperate flight to escape. All of the scattered soldiers they met along the way immediately vanished beneath everyone’s attacks.

“Break through that section of the wall!” Han Shuo ordered when they arrived.

Gilbert and the ironclad golem charged a section of the wall at the same time. However, this sturdy wall only creaked and trembled beneath the tremendous force and wasn’t instantly destroyed.

“Valen City used the most durable of rocks to build its walls in order to defend against invasions from the Kasi Empire. As opposed to having the dark dragon break through the wall, it’d be easier to fly over it.” Emily immediately suggested when she saw that Gilbert’s first charge hadn’t resulted in immediate effect.

Han Shuo swept everyone a glance and immediately said decisively, “Those who can’t fly over the wall, take a place on top of the dark dragon using the levitation spell and leave the horses behind.”

As a dragon, Gilbert would rather die than let a lifeform many times inferior to him crawl on top of him. To force him to carry them would make this become the dragon’s lifelong shame and disgrace. Han Shuo naturally understood this taboo and so had given up the notion of having the dark dragon ferry the battlesteeds across.

Angelica, Candice, Caspian, and members of the Battlefire mercenary band, who weren’t able to fly, immediately discarded their horses and leapt on top of Gilbert. Emily grabbed the chubby hotel owner Elaine and slowly flew up as well.

Lawrence used an expensive flying scroll and also flew up leisurely with the assassin, Lucky. His speed wasn’t that slow, so it looked like the scroll must have been the work of, at least, a wind grand magus.

To Han Shuo’s surprise, Belinda from the Calamity Church released another golem, shaped like a kite. It was made out of bizarre wood and actually brought Belinda and Johnny into the air. They weren’t as helpless as Han Shuo thought they would be.

Everyone started showing their hidden aces in this time of need, and this was also when Han Shuo suddenly realized that apart from the mercenary band and Caspian, everyone else was rich and all had objects that could allow them to fly and take them away from here.

Seeing that everyone had taken their places, Han Shuo moved to Phoebe’s side. She too was preparing to leap up to the dark dragon’s spine, but Han Shuo suddenly grabbed her by the waist and activated the “Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens” to soar into the sky, amidst Phoebe’s

panicked expression.

A faint fragrance flowed into Han Shuo's nose due to their proximity. Phoebe's breathing was a bit labored in her panic and her eyes sparkled with an odd light. Her red lips drew close to Han Shuo's ear in her incredulity, "How can you fly?"

Not only Phoebe, but even Lawrence, Candice, and the others were all looking at Han Shuo dumbfounded. Exclamations of disbelief sounded from the back of the dragon, as they too couldn't seem to understand why Han Shuo could fly.

What surprised them even more was that, despite bringing Phoebe along, Han Shuo's speed was actually the fastest. He'd soared over the city wall like lightning in the span of a second and continued his flight to the other side.

He hadn't flown as they'd run for their lives because for one, it was an enormous drain on his resources. Flying drained Han Shuo's magical yuan quickly, whereas it drained Emily's mental strength. For an archmage such as Emily, using the levitation spell was an enormous depletion of her mental strength. Prolonged flight would quickly exhaust an archmage.

In addition, for an archmage of Emily's level, her speed wasn't that much faster than a horse's, even if she flew. Long stints of flying was also quite tiring for great dragons. Gilbert had flown with everyone on his back for a while, and he'd also suffered injuries from the soldiers earlier. This was why Han Shuo only commanded him to give everyone a ride now.

Now that they had left behind the battlesteeds and the Gryphon Legion soldiers were hot on their tails, flying wasn't an easy thing for any of those in the group, but they all had to grit their teeth and bear it, hoping to get as far away from Valen City as possible.

Their pursuit didn't let up. As the group cleared the city wall and continued flying forward, Han Shuo turned back to see a thousand cavalry and a dense collection of black dots in the air in hot pursuit. It looked like Bob Ascher was truly enraged this time and wouldn't stop until he had killed them all.

The Kerlan Grand Canyon, the geographic marker that separated the Kasi and Lancelot Empire, was just ahead. There were many great and small mountain ranges around the grand canyon, with thick growths of trees and not that many people. They'd be able to shake off their pursuers if they set foot into that area.

Thus, once their path had been plot, Han Shuo once again became the leader. He explained the situation at hand and then dashed forward with Phoebe in his arms, the dark dragon following close behind.

In these moments of danger, everyone was flying full speed ahead. Lawrence and Belinda however, were looking at Han Shuo in the front with odd expressions of excitement. Their speed kept increasing, seeming to want to pull ahead of him.

"You've concealed this operations from both of them and was the person in charge from beginning to end. Those two proud people must be a bit irritated. Now that you're flying faster than them with me in hand, they must be even angrier." Phoebe looked behind her and then said softly to Han Shuo.

"That seems to be the case, but there doesn't seem to be a need for this at all!" Han Shuo abruptly understood why.

"If you weren't the person I liked, then I'd want to triumph over you as well, since you best me in all areas. Heh, such is human nature!" Phoebe explained lowly and then mischievously said next to Han Shuo's ears. "Will you beat them?"

Laughing loudly, Han Shuo felt a surge of heroism in his heart that he forgot all about the danger at hand. Looking down at the beauty in his arms, he said lowly, "Hang on tight, I'm going to make them despair soon!"

# Chapter 188: Inner conflict

Han Shuo's "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" was more than a bit faster than the levitation spells that the archmages could cast. Therefore, when he circulated his magical yuan during his flight, his speed was faster than anyone could possibly imagine.

Because he had previously used the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" to absorb the flesh, blood, and souls of one of the knights, his injuries from when he'd clashed with Bob Ascher had been completely healed. When he flew now, his speed was like a loosed arrow. He flashed through the dark sky and disappeared from view.

Lawrence and Belinda were inwardly rejoicing as they drew close to Han Shuo, only to see his speed suddenly double and disappear from their line of sight.

Shaking his head with a wry smile, Lawrence was full of agitation as he became even more aware of Han Shuo's amazing abilities.

He also made up his mind at this moment that he would recruit Han Shuo under his banner.

"Well?" Han Shuo slowed down after increasing the distance between him and the other two.

"How did you do it?" Phoebe's voice was full of surprise.

"Heh heh, don't pay attention to that. The reason I can fly through the air is not because of necromancy." Han Shuo smiled with explanation.

Dawn was about to break after a night of chase. The Kerlan Grand Canyon was bathed in morning light as the sun slowly began to rise.

As he looked back, Han Shuo discovered that Gilbert, Emily, Lawrence, and Belinda's figures were slowly approaching. When they caught up to Han Shuo, Han Shuo could also see a dense gathering of black dots in the distance.

Judging them their distance, Han Shuo discovered that his group had maintained an ideal distance from the Gryphon Legion's soldiers. When

he looked at the Kerlan Grand Canyon beneath them, Han Shuo encouraged everyone, “We’ll be able to make use of the complicated terrain within the grand canyon and use accumulated snow on the trees to conceal ourselves. The Gryphon Legion soldiers won’t be able to find us then.

Everyone knew what to do without further instructions from Han Shuo. Everyone became even more enthusiastic as they charged forward. They indeed reached the grand canyon before the soldiers made caught up to them.

The Kerlan Grand Canyon was vast. The mountain ranges, lakes, and forests within were located between the Lancelot Empire, the Kasi Empire, and the orcs. The orcs lived in the territory to the west of the Kerlan Grand Canyon, and the border of the Kais Empire was to the north. If one traveled a few days south of the canyon, one would find themselves in Zajoski City in the Lancelot Empire.

The orcs of the Lancelot Empire lived in a triangular region surrounded by the Kerlan Grand Canyon. This area didn’t belong to either empire, and the Kerlan Grand Canyon was always the focal point of conflict whenever war broke out. However, a few cities and towns still existed in such a special geographic region, with members from both the Lancelot and Kasi Empires, as well as orcs living amongst them.

They used this special geographic region to conduct mutually beneficial transactions. The merchants and adventurers from all three nations coexisted peacefully within these cities and towns before war broke out.

Of course, as runaways, Han Shuo’s group didn’t plan on hiding in these places. All of them landed as soon as they entered the Kerlan Grand Canyon. As someone who’d long since run a merchant guild, Phoebe and the highly competent Emily immediately took control of operations. The two of them discussed briefly and walked forward after settling on a direction.

Much snow was accumulated on the densely packed trees, almost completely blotting out the sky. To Han Shou’s group, this was an area



perfect for concealment, and the Gryphon Legion soldiers in the sky would be hard pressed to pick up their tracks once they took the cover under the trees.

Therefore, when everyone landed, they purposefully moved towards where the trees and grass grew the thickest. It wasn't the most convenient for Phoebe to be in Han Shuo's arms now, so he indicated for her to leave his grasp.

As a swordmaster, Phoebe first moved her body back and forth in his grasp, seeming to be greedily taking in the warmth of his body, but when she noticed that everyone was walking on foot and Candice even seemed to be looking back at her with a trace of a smile, she finally tore herself away from Han Shuo's grasp with a reddened face.

The frost winter wind pierced her bones. As mages, Emily, Angelica, and the others were all wrapped in thick furs. They'd been subjected to the cold wind for so long under the night sky and were now all shivering with cold. Thus, they were all moving a bit more slowly.

When he saw Emily half frozen and trembling, Han Shuo felt pained and looked around. He suddenly suggested, "We've made it into the Kerlan Grand Canyon already. There's a covering of big trees here and it'll be difficult for the soldiers to find us. I think everyone's tired after today. It's not a wise decision to keep going on. Why don't we find a hiding place to rest?"

Everyone agreed after hearing Han Shuo's words and Phoebe suddenly remembered something with a roll of her bright eyes. "I've walked these woods many times and remember there's a concealed cave nearby. I've stored items there before, so we can rest there."

"Alright, we'll take a look around. It's best if we're able to find this place." Han Shuo was delighted to hear this.

Phoebe thought for a bit with a furrowed brow and pointed in a direction, saying, "If I remember correctly, it should be in that direction. Let's go take a look!"

When the group arrived, they didn't see any signs of a cave other than a

thick covering of snow. Phoebe blinked, and then said resolutely, "It should be here. It looks like the cavern's been sealed off. We'll know if we dig a bit."

"Then what are we waiting for!" Lawrence roared out heartily. It looked like he quite trusted this junior sister. He took out a longsword and stabbed fiercely at the place that Phoebe was pointing at.

When they saw Lawrence go to work, Belinda and the other mages seemed to want to come help. Han Shuo called out at this moment, "Wait, don't use any magic. We should exercise caution while moving the snow away. That way, we won't leave any traces behind when we move the snow away and the soldiers will find it difficult to pick up our traces, even if they land to search of us."

Everyone agreed with Han Shuo, and it was up to Han Shuo, Phoebe, and Lawrence to carefully dig away at the snow and move it away.

"This was the place alright! Heh heh!" Phoebe called out with joy when the snow was moved away and she stabbed her sword forward."

Han Shuo and Lawrence looked at each other and moved a particularly thick chunk of snow away from the entrance, revealing a dark and looming cave entrance.

Han Shuo took a peak and discovered that this entrance was actually as large as a basketball court. It was enough for everyone on their side to enter.

"Go on in one after another. Don't enlarge the hole, or it'll be too difficult to cover up!" Han Shuo said and moved away from the entrance.

Angelica was the first to walk in, replete with teeth chattering from the cold. Emily, Candice, and the others all followed in one after another. Phoebe and Lawrence were the last ones in, with Han Shuo bringing up the rear. He set up a few branches at the entrance and shifted some of the excavated snow to cover them.

When Han Shuo felt that all was complete, he walked into the depths of the cave after taking a look around. A bonfire had already been lit at this

time and the warm wave spread throughout the cave. The originally chilly cave had become a warm zone.

Thanks to the space rings, all mages carried some firewood on them during the winter time, in case they needed warmth. All sorts of tents and soft carpets were also brought out at this time and placed next to the fire. Everyone settled comfortably into their equipment to rest.

Emily and Caspian felt their limbs slowly thawing thanks to the fire. They sighed with relief as Emily slowly got to her feet. She made for the entrance, saying, "I'm going to set up a concealing boundary to prevent us from being discovered here."

Caspian also got up at the same time and walked with her, saying, "I'm going to go help her."

As Emily and Caspian got up to set up the magical boundary, Belinda and Johnny's expressions grew a bit unnatural. Their eyes danced uneasily and they looked defensively at the mouth of the cave, seemingly afraid that Emily and Caspian would do something to the cave entrance.

This was indeed the case. Han Shuo had been walking back when he saw Emily and Caspian walk towards the mouth of the cave. He turned back absentmindedly and saw that Emily and Caspian had indeed set something up at the entrance of the cave out of wariness.

"Miss Belinda, you should pay us the fees that you still owe us!" Just as Han Shuo was looking on in astonishment, Candice was already looking at Belinda unhappily and spoke with an irritated tone.

Everyone had worked together before because they had a common enemy, and the relentless pursuit from the Gryphon Legion had made it so that they couldn't relax even for a moment. This was why they hadn't taken each other to task for debts. Now that the threat from the Gryphon Legion was temporarily abated, the already existing conflict between people began to come into play.

"You're already quite lucky to be alive! Sorry, the Calamity Church has never had the habit of paying our mercenaries!" Belinda's voice was quite soft as she flicked a glance at Candice, replying noncommittally.

Clang rang out as Candice's broadsword was unsheathed. She glared ferociously at Belinda, "I escorted you to Valen City! Not only did I not receive a single gold coin of my payment, you even tried to kill me! Looks like it's time to settle our debts."

"I think you'll regret trying to do anything!" Belinda was obviously not afraid of Candice. She turned to look at Johnny and took out a scroll with the image of Ansidesi on it.

"The cave is only three meters tall. Your golem won't be able to do much if it's released!" Candice snorted and walked towards Belinda. It looked like she was planning on making a move.

Phoebe had been standing by Han Shuo's side and was basically a sister to Candice. When she saw that Candice was about to make a move, she unsheathed her longsword without hesitation and was already flaring milky white aura from its tip.

Belinda had had a disdainful expression in her eyes when they lit up upon seeing Phoebe's milky white aura, seemingly surprised.

"Humph, you're looking to die!" Johnny's chest wound had been dressed as was now covered by gauze. The sword in his hand right now was sparkling with thunder and lightning, and he didn't seem any weaker than Phoebe.

"Give them their payment. You should've paid this, otherwise you'll die!" Han Shuo quickly sized up the situation and walked over with a cold face to Phoebe's side, looking at Belinda and snorting coldly.

Gilbert also cackled as he cracked his knuckles. Caspian and the Battlefire mercenary band also stood on Candice's side. It looked like a fight would break out as soon as Belinda refused to back down.

Although Belinda's voice was soft, her temper was quite stubborn and she didn't display any fear at this time. She seemed to be prepared for a hard fight.

"This doesn't seem to be the time for inner conflict. Heh heh. Miss Candice, how much do they owe you? I'll pay it for them, so let's not fight

over this right now, shall we?" Lawrence suddenly stood up, to everyone's great surprise and smiled to smooth things over.

# Chapter 189: You have no chance

Shaking her head, Candice rejected Lawrence's suggestion. She looked resolutely and admonished, "This isn't just about the money!"

Candice noticeably held the upper hand in this situation. With the aid of Han Shuo and the authors, Belinda and Johnny couldn't do anything at all. It was apparent from Belinda and Johnny's equipment and weapons that the Calamity Church wasn't short on money. Belinda could easily settle this matter with a bit of money, so she was being surprisingly stubborn this time.

"The Calamity Church isn't someone you can threaten!" The scar on the injured Johnny's face became even more apparent because of his rage. The longsword in his hand shone with blinding electrical light thanks to the power of thunder and lightening.

Just as Han Shuo was about to open his mouth, Johnny's body suddenly moved forward and charged at Han Shuo. He had a look of killing intent on his face and the longsword in his hand was as if an electrical dragon, exploding with the frightening power of thunder and lightning and lighting up the somewhat dark cave.

"Be careful!" Phoebe and Emily were both shocked by Johnny's sudden motions and couldn't help but cry out in reminder.

A pile of white bones suddenly gathered in the air and formed a white bone shield, blocking the longsword that was striking like an electrical dragon. Two bone spears flew out viciously afterwards, crashing into Johnny's longsword, which was wreathed in lightning before it had a chance to strike the white bone shield.

Some light cracks rang out as the bone spears exploded. The longsword angrily gave off sparks as it smashed into the bone shield beneath Johnny's thrust.

The white bone shield immediately fractured into many bone fragments as Johnny's thrust still made viciously for Han Shuo despite being thwarted twice.

The Demonslayer Edge finally howled as it made its appearance. A metallic clang exploded through the air as a cold light flashed in Han Shuo's hands. Han Shuo grunted as he was driven back for a few steps. The lightning flared once on Johnny's longsword as it abruptly extinguished.

Johnny's imposing momentum finally slowed down at this point, and when he planned on regrouping for another attack, Caspian, Emily, and Phoebe were already standing by Han Shuo's side and glaring at Johnny angrily.

"I don't think I'm your enemy, hmm?" Han Shuo steadied himself and circulated the magical yuan around his body, confirming that he'd suffered no harm before directing a cold look at Johnny and asking faintly.

"You lied to us during the Bob Ascher operation and made us cannon fodder. Apart from distracting a few people for us, you didn't go to any other efforts. Now that everything's over, don't think I don't know what plans you're making in your heart. You're the one who deserves to die the most!" Johnny grimaced as he looked frostily at Han Shuo.

Since Bob Ascher was the chief of the Gryphon Legion, whether or not Han Shuo and Emily had concrete evidence, they had no right to condemn Bob Ascher to death, not to mention engaging in an assassination attempt like this.

If Han Shuo and Emily had colluded with the Calamity Church to kill Bob Ascher, then there would've been severe consequences from the Dark Mantle's side afterwards. Not to mention that Han Shuo knew full well the exact strength of his intended victim, and that it was impossible to kill Bob Ascher in Valen City. Only fervent religious followers would do something that held such a high risk.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled faintly. "Since things are out in the open, don't blame me for cutting our relationship here then. You've already made a move against me, don't blame me for doing the same."

Han Shuo turned to look at the wryly smiling Lawrence after speaking, "You still want to help them now?"

Spreading his hands, Lawrence took a few steps back. He smiled ruefully, “I’d been quite interested in the Calamity Church’s golem and wanted to obtain the method to make one through peaceful means. It looks like that’s not too likely now.”

Lawrence’s words also confirmed Han Shuo’s earlier speculation. For someone concerned with only his matters, he must have had something else on his mind to suddenly give Belinda and Johnny a helping hand. Lawrence’s words were an obvious indication that he was standing on Han Shuo and Phoebe’s side.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled slightly at Lawrence. “Many thanks!”

“Do you think you’ve got us?” Standing behind Johnny all this time, Belinda finally spoke up and took out the item she’d used to seal the golem. It looked like she was finally going to make a move.

“Heh heh, you won’t have the chance to use that!” Han Shuo laughed for a long while and used the demon infant to manipulate the drop of blood essence hidden within Belinda. A mere thought was enough for the frosty air within the blood essence to invade Belinda’s body. She felt her neck grow numb and fell backwards in a dead faint.

“What, what did you do to her?” Belinda’s sudden faint shocked Johnny as he looked at Han Shuo in great panic.

“She’ll live, but there’s no need for you to continue living. It’s too dangerous to allow you to live.” Han Shuo smiled coldly and suddenly opened his mouth to chant a necromancy spell. A hate warrior appeared out of thin air along with three other zombie warriors standing in front of Han Shuo.

Johnny knew that Belinda wouldn’t be able to help him now that things had deteriorated to such a stage. He hesitated only slightly and immediately turned to run, trying to leave from the only entrance. Both Emily and Caspian suddenly started chanting and several thick branches snaked over adroitly, as well as a cloud of black mist.

“You can’t escape!” Emily chuckled and chanted another spell. The cloud of black mist seemed to be some kind of restraint as Johnny’s body



suddenly stiffened as soon as it neared him. The flexible tree branches then entangled his body.

Johnny was a thunder swordsmage alright. He could still barely manage to move even when restrained like this. He lifted the longsword in his hand with difficulty and planned on chopping away at the tree branches that held him down. However, the three zombie warriors and hate warrior had already closed in on him.

A bolt of lightning flashed as the longsword sliced through the air, hitting the two zombie warriors that arrived first and sending electricity through the zombie warriors' bodies. The slash of the longsword made the two halt abruptly and never move again.

As he deployed the longsword with difficulty and planned on making a move on one of the other zombie warriors, the hate warrior's club crashed downwards and connected with Johnny's sword wielding right hand. The sharp sound of a bone breaking rang out and the sword slid to the ground after a wail of pain from Johnny.

Han Shuo had been standing beside Phoebe and the others when he suddenly flashed behind Johnny, deploying the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" with his back to the others. He absorbed Johnny's wailing soul into the demon infant. When the demon infant had overcome Johnny's soul, it was as if Han Shuo had been greatly fortified and only then did he bring a punch down on Johnny's back.

A thud sounded as life drained from Johnny's eyes. He fell down listlessly, a caved in handprint apparent on his back.

After wiping out Johnny, Han Shuo's demon infant grew noticeably and began to use the magical yuan to purify Johnny's soul, turning it into nourishment for the demon infant. As a thunder swordsmage, the strength of Johnny's soul was noticeably more abundant than that of the Gryphon Legion soldier's. Han Shuo could clearly feel the demon infant grow and develop as it did so.

"He's dead." Emily slowly walked over when she saw that Johnny had died. When she saw Han Shuo stand there without moving and not

searching Johnny's body for valuables as usual, she spoke up to alert him of the fact.

Han Shuo abruptly came to himself as he was thoroughly reflecting over the changes to the demon infant. He continued to operate the "Demonic Art of Assimilation" without change in expression and nodded towards Emily. He pointed at Johnny, "Can you handle this? I need to rest for a bit."

Han Shuo sat down cross legged after speaking and focused his attention on the changes in the demon infant after it had absorbed Johnny's soul. The stronger one was, the stronger his soul. The strength from Johnny's soul seemed to be accelerating the demon infant's growth.

The demon infant was the foundation of the "true demon" realm. Han Shuo would be able to break through to the next level, the bloodlust realm, only after the demon infant reached a certain level. He would only need the power from souls in this realm. Once the demon infant was strong enough to reach the "bloodlust realm", it wouldn't require the energy from the souls anymore and it would be able to be deployed to greater uses.

Just as Han Shuo was quietly training, everyone else huddled together and chattered away. After Belinda had been captured and Johnny was killed, there were no other suspicious characters in the cave. Candice had seen Belinda mysteriously taken out by Han Shuo and didn't mention anything about compensation. She laughed as she chatted with Phoebe and Emily.

Lawrence and Phoebe finally had time to converse with each other. Caspian was also reunited with Angelica after his long absence and could breathe a sigh of relief. Angelica was pouting that he wouldn't describe the events of the past two days.

Han Shuo had been meditating with his eyes closed when he suddenly opened them and raised his finger to make a "shushing" noise.

Han Shuo walked cautiously towards the entrance of the cave without saying anything. Everyone watched him place his ear against the entrance of the cave as their relaxed emotions once again grew nervous.

Footsteps slowly grew louder and approached from the distance. The sounds of several people talking traveled into everyone's ears at this moment.

"The Kerlan Grand Canyon is so vast that there's no way we can find them after they've escaped in here. What's the point in searching aimlessly like this!" A voice said.

"I know right, but the chief is crazy with anger this time. His two sons have been murdered and someone has been so bold as to attempt to assassinate him within Valen City. They've even gotten away with it. The chief has been fighting on the north and south all these years and have seen all sorts of situations, but has never been humiliated like this before. I don't think he'll rest before he's caught these people and killed them!" Another person responded with emotion.

"I've heard that so much has happened in Valen City because the chief offended those in the capital. If this really is the case, then the chief is in for a world of trouble and I wonder if we'll be affected as well."

"Don't worry, we were just following orders. Nothing should happen to us as long as we take note of the greater picture. We're also not the chief's confidantes, and we should listen to the orders from the king. We'll just follow orders before any further developments."

"Come, there's no place to hide here anyways, let's try someplace else!"

The group of people passed by the cave in which everyone was hidden in. They didn't discover anything out of the ordinary, and the sounds of them conversing grew fainter and fainter before vanishing entirely.

Another two groups of people passed by afterwards. Thanks to Emily and Caspian's actions, the entrance to the cave was well concealed. No one discovered anything out of the ordinary and didn't spend more time there.

"Alright, it's been a tiring night, everyone take a rest!" Han Shuo waited for a while and noticed that there were no further movements outside, so he turned and smiled to those inside.

Everyone sighed in relief and nodded, before starting to meditate, or went to sleep by the warm bonfire.

Everyone rested for a day within the cave and spent a full day recovering their strength. Han Shuo mediated for the entire day and fully absorbed Johnny's soul, recovering his mental strength and magical yuan.

"It's nighttime now, I think they've forgotten after a day of searching. We can leave now!" Han Shuo got up.

Everyone else got to their feet as well and packed their belongings. Emily and Caspian took down the boundary at the door and the group walked out of the cave.

# Chapter 190: Beauties in both arms

The waning moon hung high in the sky as cold moonlight spilled down, casting a silvery white layer across the world and brightening up the night.

All was very quiet without the slightest bit of sound. Even bugs weren't willing to venture out on this cold winter night, not to mention humans or beasts.

When they walked out of the cave, they could immediately feel that the outside temperature was much colder than it had been within the cave. Even though they'd been prepared, they couldn't help but wrap themselves more snugly in their clothing and huff out a breath.

"Things shouldn't be delayed. We should leave here as soon as possible and return to the Empire." Han Shuo looked at everyone and spoke solemnly.

After such a huge disturbance, they didn't know if Bob Ascher had discovered that the important items within his secret chamber had been stolen. When his search came up empty handed, he would discover this sooner or later when he returned to Valen City, he'd be beside himself with panic then.

Therefore, Han Shuo and Emily had to use the shortest amount of time possible to deliver the intelligence to the upper levels of the Dark Mantle and take care of Bob Ascher as soon as possible, in case he got up to any trouble before they could make their report.

"Some towns in the Kerlan Grand Canyon belong to no jurisdiction. The Dark Mantle has some strongholds there and a magical apparatus to communicate with the senior executives is in the largest one. Bryan and I need to head there as soon as possible. We're in very little danger now, it looks like it's time to go our own separate ways!" Emily thought for a moment and then raised this suggestion with a smile.

"Those who were accompanying the shipment with me all left Valen City before we entered Elaine's hotel. I'm moving alone now and also left instructions previously, so the guild won't need me for a while. I'll return

to the Empire with Bryan.” Phoebe expressed her stance whilst standing next to Bryan.

Caspian and Lawrence both thought for moment and expressed their intentions to leave. Caspian thanked Han Shuo solemnly, and Lawrence’s gaze patrolled the captured Belinda before saying, “Bryan, if you can get the secrets behind refining that golem, I’d be willing to buy it from you for a high price!”

Nodding, Han Shuo indicated his understanding and smiled, “I’ll ask her, but I’d say don’t get your hopes up. I feel that even if we obtained the method, you wouldn’t be able to mass produce them. Otherwise, with the Calamity Church’s deep pockets, they would’ve produced a golem army a long time ago!”

Lawrence started and once again opened his mouth to say, “It would be of great help if I can even refine one or two of them.”

“Alright, I’ll try my best!” Han Shuo said with resignation when he saw that Lawrence wasn’t giving up.

“Big bad guy, will we meet again?” Angelica suddenly turned to speak to Han Shuo when Caspian was about to leave.

Shrugging, Han Shuo said dashingly, “I think we will, we’ve already met up twice in not too long of a period. We seem to have quite a bit of shared destiny!”

“Alright, many thanks to you this time. If you have a chance to, come be a guest at the elf tribes within the Dark Forest in the future. Angelica will host you well!” Caspian bowed towards Han Shuo and smiled.

Lawrence and the others didn’t linger after Caspian and Angelica had left. The former left in the opposite direction of Caspian and Angelica. Han Shuo started worrying what might happen if Caspian and Angelica learned of his identity as the leader of the forest trolls. What if the two of them hated him? It was probably best not to pay the elves a visit then.

The Battlefire mercenary band’s senior swordsman Davis was saddened after Angelica had left. The fierce warrior’s gazed still stared dumbly in

Angelica's direction.

"Candice, how much does that Belinda owe you? How about I pay for her? We have use for her and can't give her to you!" Emily looked at Candice at this moment and took out her crystal card, seeming to want to pay Candice's fees.

"Forget it sister Emily, we're not short on money anyways. We'll treat this mission as a failure, no worries!" Candice immediately responded hastily when she saw that Emily wanted to pay and looked at the mercenaries behind her. "Alright, alright, we're going to leave as well. We have more missions to execute!"

Candice didn't wait for Emily to transfer the gold coins after she'd finished speaking and hastily left with the mercenaries. Only Han Shuo, Phoebe, and Emily were left in front of the cave, as well as a bizarrely quiet Gilbert.

"Eh, why are you so quiet?" Han Shuo finally remembered that Gilbert hadn't spoken up in quite a long time when he saw this and couldn't help but ask in surprise.

Gilbert had been standing there with closed eyes and immediately spoke with a long face after hearing Han Shuo's question. "Disloyal master, I was injured on the way and have been recovering whenever I had time. Why have you only thought of me now?"

Han Shuo finally recalled that when they'd rushed out of Valen City, Gilbert had been hit by attacks from two archmages and a horde of knights. He'd then dragged along a group of people and flown for so long, no wonder he'd been so quiet.

"No worries, you've got thick skin anyways!" Han Shuo chuckled and thought for a moment. "How about this, go home first and rest up, I'll bring you out again once you've recovered."

"I've only come out for a few days and you're sending me back already?!" Gilbert immediately complained loudly when he heard that Han Shuo was sending him back to the cemetery of death.

“Go on, be a good boy or you’ll be in for it. I have two companions now and it will be quite an inconvenience to travel with you, not to mention that you’re injured!” Han Shuo cackled as he set up the magic sticks and kicked Gilbert in whether he wanted to or not.

Han Shuo mobilized his mental strength and activated the transportation matrix. Gilbert vanished without a trace afterwards. Gilbert wouldn’t be able to emerge from the cemetery of death without the Eye of Darkness, so Han Shuo’s wasn’t worried that he’d get into any trouble.

Phoebe, on the other side, exclaimed softly in surprise when she saw Han Shuo set up a small transportation matrix and send Gilbert away. Her clear eyes looked at Han Shuo with even greater surprise.

“Heh heh, just a transportation matrix, nothing to be surprised about. Let’s go, we can leave now!” Han Shuo chuckled softly and stored the sticks in his space ring, rushing Phoebe and Emily onwards.

Having two companions on his trip wasn’t necessarily a good thing. The usually coldly aloof Phoebe seemed to have adopted a very intimate attitude with Han Shuo on this trip. Whether she was doing this on purpose or not, this made Emily cast some aggrieved looks at Han Shuo.

As a mage, Emily was wrapped warmly in thick furs but still shivered regardless. Han Shuo couldn’t help but feel a bit pained. However, Emily was purposefully keeping some distance between Han Shuo, as if deathly afraid that Phoebe would discover their relationship.

Han Shuo had been flying through the air with Phoebe in his arms along the way, and Emily had been expending her mental strength by using the levitation spell to hover above the ground. However, as an archmage, Emily could only sustain this type of flight for a limited duration of time. Han Shuo noticed that her lips were turning white towards the end of the night.

He suddenly decreased his speed and moved next to Emily, saying, “I’ll be fine even if I’m flying carrying with two people!”

Han Shuo reached out a hand and wrapped it around Emily’s soft waist, disregarding whether or not Phoebe would agree. He had Phoebe under his



right arm and Emily under his left arm as he flew through the air. He also silently started circulating magical yuan and warmed up Emily's chilled body.

Emily struggled briefly under Han Shuo's arm and attempted to extract herself from his embrace, but discovered that she was firmly pinned beneath his arm. When Emily turned her head to look at him, she noticed the pain and resolution in his eyes. Sweetness flooded her heart.

Whether it was because the warmth was flooding into her body or not, Emily's body suddenly started heating up and all of her previous chills were instantly dissipated. She seemed to be encompassed in warmth.

"I feel like your actions in holding her around the waist seem to be quite well practiced!" Phoebe brought her lips close to Han Shuo's ears and spoke lowly with a hint of jealousy, seemingly unafraid that Emily would hear these words.

"We need to hurry and make it to the Dark Mantle stronghold. We'll be in a lot of trouble if we're late, so me flying with the two of you is the fastest way!" Han Shuo's expression was remote and he didn't express anything because of Phoebe's words.

He deployed his "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" to its maximum effect along the way and also split out a portion of magical yuan to warm up Emily's body. He shot towards one of the mountain ranges in the Kerlan Grand Canyon according to Emily's instructions.

Even with Han Shuo's magical yuan, having to fly for so long and help Emily warm up meant that he suffered greatly beneath the energy drain. He was already sweating and panting profusely towards the end of the night.

"Let's take a break, you look so tired!" Although Phoebe had been a bit jealous, her feelings for Han Shuo were real and her heart went out to him when she saw him sweating.

Emily also felt quite bad for Han Shuo. She'd planned on opening her mouth to tell him to rest, but since Phoebe had already spoken up, there was no need for her to say anything.

He was indeed a bit tired now. Han Shuo had been going non stop since last night, running after the battle, using all the time within the cave to digest the strength of Johnny's soul afterwards.

A pair of sharp eyes patrolled the area as Han Shuo discovered a hole in a tree. He landed in front of it with Emily and Phoebe, brushing aside some accumulated snow and discovering that there was some space within the tree.

"Let's rest inside!" Han Shuo suggested.

The trunk itself was quite solid, with only a tall, narrow hole in the roots. The three of them discovered that the cold wind couldn't make its way all the way inside. Han Shuo plugged the hole with his body whereas Phoebe and Emily occupied the two sides.

Although there was some space inside, it was a bit cramped with the three of them. The three of them were pressed tightly against each other. Their arms and legs were pressed against the others and it was a bit difficult to move around.

Han Shuo took a deep breath in after relaxing and circulated the magical yuan in his body, recovering swiftly from his depletion just now.

Emily and Phoebe were pressed against Han Shuo's front, and Emily's chest and stomach were resting against Phoebe's back and butt. Han Shuo's chest was at their shoulders, and his hands were resting on his thighs. There was a small sliver of space between his legs and the two girls.

It was night, and the only source of light was blocked by Han Shuo's back, making the cave ink black.

Apart from Han Shuo, the two females basically had no vision of their surroundings.

Han Shuo's chest was pressed against their delicate shoulders as he started circulating his magical yuan to transport some warmth to Emily. His left hand on his thigh twitched a little as he started placing it on Emily's.

# Chapter 191: The cry of help from the little skeleton

A warm sensation drew closer as Emily and Phoebe felt it at the same time. Emily felt it on her thighs, and Phoebe felt it on her pert butt. When Han Shuo's hand landed on Emily's thigh, her body stiffened as she thought that Han Shuo was trying to do something funny at this time. She moved her thigh away in a bit of an admonishment.

In regards to this, Han Shuo's hand suddenly moved backward thanks to her movements and landed on Phoebe's pert, well rounded butt.

"Umph!" A soft cry emitted from Phoebe's mouth. Han Shuo could see her cheeks blushing furiously red in the darkness.

As a mage, Emily had extremely thick clothing on, but as a swordmaster, Phoebe was much more resistant to the cold, so her clothes weren't that thick. In addition, a swordmaster needed to be able to jump over rocks and be agile in battle. She was wearing a normal outfit on the lower part of her body, and so Han Shuo could clearly feel the fullness of her buttocks when his hand landed on them.

Phoebe's face was a flaming red in the darkness as her heart thumped rapidly. How dare this daring pervert treat me like this in such a place! How wicked!

Her heart racing, Phoebe craned her neck in Han Shuo's direction to give him a firm glare. Han Shuo was quite enjoying himself and couldn't help but turn his head to look at her as well. When their eyes met, he made a funny face at her.

There was no light within the cave, but because the three were very close to each other, Phoebe could still see Han Shuo's face. She couldn't do anything else but continue to curse at his daringness inwardly.

Han Shuo had been planning on sending warmth to Emily, but had ended up touching Phoebe instead due to Emily's shyness. Because he'd already been intimate with Phoebe in Valen City, and the two of them had

basically confirmed their relationship, Han Shuo wasn't going to be any sort of gentleman now. He decided to go with the flow and placed his hand firmly on Phoebe's butt, greedily kneading it.

It felt damn good doing so as the soft roundness of her butt still gave him a marvelous sensation through the clothing. Phoebe however, had never been so treated. Her body temperature continued to rise and her originally calm breathing began to become a bit heavier.

Emily and Phoebe's vision were both affected in such a dark place, but Han Shuo could clearly see everything around him. Not only was Phoebe's face blushing red and her eyes misty, she was breathing hot air out from her cheery red lips. Han Shuo saw it very clearly, and saw how alluring her expression was right now. He got a lot more into it and became even more bold with his movements.

His hand suddenly felt that the thin layer of clothing was an unbearable obstruction. He tugged her shirt upwards and then placed his hand on her smooth and warm waist. As Phoebe's breathing grew heavier, he moved his hand down towards her well rounded butt.

In this regard, Phoebe's neck and face were red as she found it more difficult than ever to control her panting. She couldn't help but moan softly.

Just as Han Shuo was thoroughly enjoying himself and wanted to continue, he suddenly heard Emily cough softly and a sharp pain travel from his waist, as if she'd pinched him.

If it'd been anyone else, Han Shuo likely would've felt a bit awkward, but Emily and Han Shuo had long since slept together countless times, so he had no reservations around her at all. He turned his head to look at her and moved his right leg, shifting his knee behind Emily's butt and bumping her with his knee.

Emily was completely irritated by his actions, thinking that he was simply too bold. Not only was he violating Phoebe right in front of her, but he was doing the same thing to her as well. Her slender hands had been resting on his waist after her pinch, but now she made up her mind and

slowly moved it downwards. She gave it a firm pinch when she'd reached her destination.

"Ow!!!" A weird cry suddenly burst from Han Shuo's mouth. His proud lower body had been given a firm pinch and he couldn't help but yell out in pain. He'd been planning on violating both girls, but abruptly retracted his hands and feet.

"What's wrong? What happened to you?" Phoebe had been losing her composure in her aroused state when she immediately snapped back to herself after hearing Han Shuo's cries, turning around to ask Han Shuo with some panic.

"There was a squirrel inside that probably bit him. It's probably flown out of the hole by now!" Emily's odd voice sounded noncommittally in the darkness. Han Shuo could hear the glee in her voice.

Little hussy, you dared pinch me even there! See how I take care of you next time! Han Shuo grit his teeth and started plotting on how he would punish Emily.

"Is that right, Bryan?" Emily asked happily and on purpose when she saw that Han Shuo wasn't agreeing with her.

"Eh... yes. A wicked squirrel bit me. I'm going to make it suffer if I catch it!" Han Shuo's mouth was bitter from his inability to speak the truth. Not only did he have to swallow what had happened, but he had play along with Emily as well.

"We invaded its territory, it's only right that it treats us thus. Don't think of killing people and setting things on fire everyday!" Phoebe's voice only regained its customary coolness now.

"Miss Phoebe, your body temperature is a bit high and you were panting a bit loudly just now. Did you catch a chill from traveling in the cold wind these the past two days?" Emily was quite happy to see Han Shuo's discomforted state. It was as if her repressed emotions had been vented all at once, and she gave no thought to the threat in his voice.

However, she didn't feel satisfied doing this only to Han Shuo. An evil

thought struck Emily as she pretended to ask Phoebe.

“Eh... I guess so!” Phoebe’s cheeks reddened again with Emily’s question as she responded with some awkwardness.

“Bryan, look at how you’ve made Miss Phoebe catch a cold. Why aren’t you holding her tighter to warm her up? However, don’t take advantage of her! Heh heh!” Emily chuckled.

Both Han Shuo and Phoebe were a bit awkward after hearing these words. There was an obvious intent in them, and Phoebe could naturally deduce that their embarrassing moments had been discovered by Emily just now. She couldn’t help but glare ferociously at Han Shuo.

With the way things were, Han Shuo naturally understood that it wasn’t very possible to take advantage of Phoebe or Emily again. To someone as perverted as Han Shuo, he wouldn’t feel a thing even if he stood naked on a winter night like this. In order to prevent Emily from speaking further, Han Shuo said, “I need to go relieve myself, you ladies rest here!”

He didn’t wait for them to speak before struggling out of the hole. When he was a few steps away, he sat down cross legged in a snowdrift and began to circulate his magical yuan.

When Han Shuo felt himself enter an ideal state with circulating his magical yuan, a sudden strong impulse suddenly tugged on his soul. It was a bizarre summons that was reflected in his heart, like a voice carrying a message from the depths of his soul and immediately wanted to return to his side.

Han Shuo was greatly startled and didn’t know what was going on. However, when he cleared his mind of stray thoughts and focused his concentration, he suddenly discovered a marvelous connection that had been unaffected by distance. Or perhaps it had always existed, but he’d only discovered it now.

It was a summons from the little skeleton in the other dimension!

When Han Shuo felt this cry carry with it a plea for help, he immediately used the most basic of skeleton summoning spells and followed this weak

but unbreakable connection to summon the little skeleton.

The little skeleton creaked as he stood in front of Han Shuo, still waving his bone dagger around like he'd weathered a great battle. The bones of his body were cracked and the seven boys spurs on his back seemed a bit dull, perhaps because they had been cutting through things for a long time.

Judging from the little skeleton's body condition and current motions, Han Shuo could be certain that the little skeleton had fought with creatures in the other dimension, and he knew clearly that it had been the little skeleton crying out for help earlier.

This all seemed rather fantastical!

# Chapter 192: Valley of Sunshine

Some of his bones had been broken, and the little skeleton suddenly seemed at a loss as he slowly stopped waving the bone dagger about. Han Shuo hadn't treated the little skeleton as an ordinary dark creature since the very beginning.

From the moment that he began practicing necromancy magic and summoned this little skeleton, he had become Han Shuo's indispensable companion. Before he'd learned how to fight, the little skeleton had released Han Shuo from the drudgery of daily chores and had helped him take out the trash and clean.

When Han Shuo had used magical yuan to refine him, the little skeleton was even less of an ordinary summoned creature to him. The former had assumed an essential role whenever Han Shuo met danger in the future, always assisting him in his escape.

But now, Han Shuo discovered that the little skeleton had a marvelous connection with him, similar to how he had one with it. Han Shuo had never thought of nor attempted to discover the little skeleton's matters or methods in the other dimension. If he hadn't concentrated his attention this time, he might've missed the little skeleton's cry for help and the little skeleton might no longer exist now.

A few traces of guilt grew in Han Shuo's heart when his thoughts traveled down this path. His necromancy magic would have to reach new heights before he would be able to understand what had happened to the little skeleton in the other dimension, and if there were any other existences in that world apart from regularly summoned dark creatures.

It was even more impossible for him to communicate with the other beings in the other dimension for the time being.

As Han Shuo closed his eyes and attempted to communicate with the little skeleton, he discovered that the little skeleton seemed to have realized that it was in different surroundings. His wildly flailing arms and legs slowed down as his empty eye sockets looked around in confusion,



abruptly quieting down when he looked in Han Shuo's direction.

Han Shuo could clearly feel the little skeleton's chaotic presence calm down.

It was as if the little skeleton realized that the danger was gone with Han Shuo's appearance, that he was truly safe!

It was a speechless kind of trust, an innate dependence that was similar to how a naughty child would sob endlessly in front of a fierce beast, but would think his parents would protect him, no matter if his parents actually could or not.

A baffling sensation suddenly surged into Han Shuo's heart, making his emotions complex. An exceedingly intricate emotion wrapped around his heart, giving him the illusion for a second that this little skeleton made of bones was like his child. It was a feeling that he never wanted to be apart from the little skeleton.

"Alright, it's alright now!" Han Shuo walked over to the little skeleton very naturally and reached out a hand to stroke the little skeleton's skull, speaking softly in comfort.

Han Shuo could clearly feel that this simple word of comfort brought immediate comfort to the little skeleton.

"Who are you talking to?" Emily and Phoebe walked out from the tree hole at the same time, with Phoebe out in front. She was a bit jealous when she heard Han Shuo's tender voice, thinking that Han Shuo was speaking to another woman, so she asked before she could even see who it was.

But when she saw Han Shuo pat the little skeleton's head benevolently and his tone of soft tenderness, that she'd never heard before, she immediately lost her jealousy and looked a bit oddly at Han Shuo.

Since history began, the necromancers of the Profound Continent only viewed their summoned dark creatures as tools. Phoebe had never heard of a necromancer treating a dark creature as kindly and as friendly as Han Shuo was doing.

Therefore, when she saw his actions, her heart was immediately filled with shock. Her thoughts raced as she mused that this little skeleton was likely this amazing because his master also treated him differently. It looked like Han Shuo's mysteries didn't stem from his wondrous martial arts techniques, but rather his methods were indeed a bit different from others.

He turned his head to look at Phoebe and Emily with a smile, sweeping his gaze across a stunningly beautiful face and another quietly pretty face. He noted that they seemed to be in good spirits and asked with a smile, "Did you guys get a good rest?"

"Yes, we can keep going if that's alright with you?" Emily felt that she could levitate again for a while after some meditation and so she raised this suggestion.

The senior executives of the Dark Mantle had to learn of the information she held in her hand as soon as possible. They needed to execute their plan against Bob Ascher as soon as possible. As a Dark Mantle member, Emily knew that the timing of action was paramount and that time could have a heaven and earth difference on the results. This was why she was in such a hurry.

"Alright, then let's go." Han Shuo didn't say any incessant chatter, as he grabbed the little skeleton's waist and flashed to where Phoebe was. He reached out another hand and grabbed her soft waist, that was devoid of any fat, flying through the air.

The sun was rising again and its rays dyed everything a faint red, adding some color to the silver world beneath it. It was akin to a fair skinned girl suddenly blushing from shyness.

A towering mountain and valley sprawled out beneath them. Some magical creatures, unafraid of the cold, emerged from cover and probed with their sharp claws. Life began to appear in the mountain valley beneath the warmth of the winter sun.

Last night's chill was chased out of Emily's body thanks to the effects of the sun. Her beautiful face was upturned towards the warm light as she

revealed a sweet smile. She looked with interest at the scene below her, seeming to want to imprint the view into her heart.

“It’s so beautiful!” Phoebe said softly in Han Shuo’s grasp as her eyes sparkled.

Han Shuo also took a quick glance at their surroundings upon hearing her words, grunting with agreement and then flying forward in silence. Waxing eloquently in front of a beautiful scene was something women liked to do. He only wanted to get to the stronghold as quickly as possible and complete his mission.

After several more hours and traveling over two small mountain valleys, Han Shuo cast his eyes ahead again. The sun was high in the sky at this point and the mountain valley was no longer covered in snow. The ground was clean and neat, with short buildings of all sorts of architectural styles scattered in rows in the small mountain valley.

Different looking humans, orcs, and elves were walking out of their homes onto the clean and neat streets, thoroughly bundled up in an assortment of interesting styles of dress.

“We’re almost there, let’s travel the rest of the way on foot!” Emily could easily see this from afar thanks to the bright sunlight. She called out softly in obvious joy.

This place was similar to the town of Drol, just a bit more complex. Although there were hotels and places where one could enjoy themselves, the adventurers and merchants within Drol were all basically from the Lancelot Empire and governed by the Empire’s soldiers.

The adventurers and merchants here, however, were from the Lancelot and Kasi Empires as well as the orc tribes. There were also those from further away, or minorities that called the Kerlan Grand Canyon their home. Of course, such a diverse place was naturally not under the jurisdiction of any single country.

“The one maintaining order is the greatest power within the Valley of Sunshine. They’re in charge of protecting everyone’s interests in transactions and preventing the incursion from thieves. In this regard, all

three countries have their own spheres of influence here. When one side is strong enough to the point where the other two have no objections, that sphere will take over in maintaining order and exact heavy tolls from the merchants and adventurers to run this town.”

“However, this status quo isn’t set in stone. If another side can prove that they are stronger than the other two, then the one upholding order will change. Currently, the ones upholding order is the Cairo mercenary band from the Kasi Empire!” Emily explained to the other two as they landed and proceeded on foot to the Valley of Sunshine.

“If the ones upholding order act on behalf of their country, then won’t that infringe on the rights and profits of adventurers and merchants from other countries?” Han Shuo asked after thinking over this briefly.

“Don’t worry, no matter which country they were originally from, they would never act on behalf of their own country when they become the power upholding order. Otherwise, they will be ostracized by all the adventurers and merchants and will never have the right to regain power again. There are no nationalities within the Valley of Sunshine. Not participating in conflicts between countries is the first rule that they must follow!” Emily smiled faintly as she explained this to Han Shuo.

He nodded to express his understanding, privately thinking that this was quite an interesting place. All sorts of people were here for their own interests. The fees gained from the transactions conducted between the three countries must be quite a sum indeed.

Han Shuo naturally wasn’t too familiar with these common sense rules, so Emily and Phoebe took turns in explaining them to him along the way. Han Shuo listened carefully until they reached the border control office of the Valley of Sunshine. High fences of metal were erected here as knights in gray armor patrolled behind them with distant expressions.

Han Shuo gleaned from Emily and Phoebe’s conversation that these were the members of the Kasi Empire’s Cairo mercenary band. It was rather astonishing that there were two to three thousand people in this mercenary band!

There were experts of all professions who practiced diligently day and night. Their battle strength was even stronger than the standing army of other countries. They had a strict code of conduct and proper division of duties. In the year that they'd been assigned to the security of the Valley of sunshine, they'd beaten back raids from robbers several times, displaying a competency that the merchants and adventurers within the valley were rather satisfied with.

"Where are you three coming from? Do you have passage tokens, or do you need to apply for them now?" A tall, somewhat handsome knight walked over from the metal fences and was quite polite when he saw Phoebe and Emily walk over. A trace of a mesmerizing smile played about his lips as he asked gently.

"I'm from the Boozt Merchant Guild and they're with me. This is my token!" Phoebe's expression was coldly aloof as she took out a token from her space ring, handing it over coolly.

The mature knight reached out respectfully to take Phoebe's token and took a close look at it. He handed it back with a smile and said urbanely, "No problem, the Valley of Sunshine welcomes your arrival. Our Cairo mercenary band will ensure your safety and the security of your belongings."

Phoebe took out a bag of gold coins and threw it onto a table near the fence with a thunk. She had her usual distant and reserved manner when dealing with outsiders. "Our fees!"

Phoebe turned to look at Han Shuo afterwards and reached out with her slender, jade hands to wrap them around Han Shuo's arm. The proud haughtiness faded from her face as she smiled, "Let's go, we can go in now!"

Seeing such a stunning beauty such as Phoebe paid no heed to the men around her and even gave off an aura that rebuffed all attempts to approach her, then suddenly underwent such drastic change in attitude to wait upon Han Shuo immediately drew looks of admiration and envy from the mercenaries.

However, those looks changed to ones of odd puzzlement when they saw Han Shuo tug along the little skeleton in his wake. They didn't say anything however, seeming to be used to seeing a lot of weird characters. It didn't seem too out of the ordinary that an adventurer had a dark creature in his wake.

Everyone was a bit vain at heart. When he saw the others look at him with such admiration, Han Shuo also felt quite proud. Phoebe is really showing me some face here!

"Come on, let's go you!" When Emily saw Han Shuo stop where he stood, wreathed in smiles, she knew exactly what he was thinking about and couldn't help but roll her eyes at him. She snorted in laughter and pushed him from behind.

Han Shuo laughed heartily as he crossed through the fence while being subjected to endless looks of envy, walking into the Valley of Sunshine.

# Chapter 193: Place of extreme water

Han Shuo took a stroll around the entire valley and discovered that the Valley of Sunshine was formed by interestingly shaped buildings. These buildings were built from different materials such as durable, gray rocks or wood from hundred year old trees. Some were round and others pointy with a chimney.

It was because so many merchants and adventurers from various countries co-existed here that caused the architectural style to also be heavily influenced in a multitude of different ways.

Early in the morning, inhabitants walked out of their homes to shovel away snowfall that had accumulated from the previous night, clearing the space in front of their door. This was also similar to a small city, as there were all sorts of vendors and stalls here, displaying their wares from a variety of countries.

“These stalls all belong to small merchants. The larger merchants only spend a few days here because they have long since been in contact with their business partners, and are just here to conclude the transactions.” It wasn’t Phoebe’s first visit to the valley. She held onto Han Shuo’s arm with her slender fingers and explained in a soft voice.

“Alright, you guys have fun shopping, I’m going to take care of business first. When you tire later, you can rest in the last store on this street, I’ll arrange for someone to meet you there!” Emily’s thoughts were completely preoccupied by the mission.

Nodding, Han Shuo understood that she was quite anxious and said, “Go and take care of business, we’ll come find you later!”

A thought struck Phoebe after Emily left as she suddenly recalled, “Oh right, I haven’t had time to collect the materials on the list that you gave me. There are many rarities here from other countries. Why don’t we take a look around? Maybe we can find some of the materials you need.”

Han Shuo finally recalled that he’d once asked Phoebe to help him collect the materials he would need to refine a wood elite zombie. The yin

demon cave and earth elite zombie were operating without a hitch back in the cemetery of death, but he had yet to obtain all the materials required for the wood elite zombie. Han Shuo readily agreed to Phoebe's suggestion.

Thus, Han Shuo followed behind her and started making his way through shops, starting with the first stall.

Phoebe was patently very happy to have Han Shuo's companionship. As the leader of a guild, once she started conducting a transaction, she would transform into a very shrewd person. She was able to identify the true price of ingredients that Han Shuo needed amongst the stalls they passed without a flicker in expression.

She paid seven thousand gold coins without hesitation just to get Han Shuo a vital ingredient that he had been lacking. When Han Shuo took out his crystal card to pay, Phoebe served him with a fierce glare, saying, "You still have some gold coins stored with me, what are you taking your crystal card out for?!"

Han Shuo was speechless and decided to stay out of this matter. He continued to stand by Phoebe's side and watched her barter with several merchants with a distant expression.

There were indeed many rare materials within the Valley of Sunshine. Two vendors had stock of black iron ore and black gold ore that couldn't even be found within the Empire. There were even a few items, that had been banned by the country's governments, that were openly placed on stalls to attract customers.

There were a few strong aphrodisiacs, as well as powder that could melt corpses with a pinch. There were even strong weapons that had just been developed, along with the cores and bones of some strong magical creatures. Everything that one would want could be found here.

Some of the owners of the stalls were humans, while others were orcs or elves. There was even an interesting merman laying half submerged within the water. Because they all used the human language to communicate, there were no barriers of communication. When the two



had made a full circuit of the premises, they both felt that this trip had been worth it as some rare materials had gotten added to their space rings.

“Alright, that’s good, let’s go meet up with Emily first the day. We can’t possibly finish perusing all the stalls in the valley in a single day. As long as we pay particular attention, I think we should be able to collect all the ingredients you need!” Phoebe was a bit fatigued after entering more than a dozen stalls and bargaining heatedly with all their owners. She raised this suggestion to Han Shuo after they walked out of the latest stall.

The skies over the valley had darkened due to the setting sun, unbeknownst to either of them. The entire valley was cloaked in a red light as dusk began. Han Shuo felt that Emily was most likely done reporting her matters after so much time had past and he too was eager to find out how they’d gone. He directed Phoebe to the place that Emily had mentioned when she raised her suggestion.

Because he didn’t know what danger the little skeleton had met in the other dimension, Han Shuo didn’t send the little skeleton back and kept the latter by his side. There were all sorts of unconventional characters within the valley, so Han Shuo didn’t stand out that much with a little skeletal warrior by his side.

On their way to Emily’s predefined place however, the little skeleton suddenly stopped in front of a stall without moving, its empty eye sockets staring at the door, seemingly attracted by something at that very moment.

“What’s wrong?” Phoebe also stopped when she saw that Han Shuo and the little skeleton had stopped. She paused and looked back in surprise.

“Something inside is calling out to him!” Han Shuo’s expression was quite bizarre as he looked at Phoebe and then shifted his gaze back at the little skeleton.

Phoebe had only been a bit confused when her perplexed expression immediately turned into one of shock. She looked around and walked over to Han Shuo when she confirmed that no one was paying attention to them. She looked at the little skeleton with incredulity, “You mean, he has his own thoughts?”

Nodding, Han Shuo said firmly, “Yes, I’m sure this is the case. I don’t know what’s going on either, so don’t ask me anything, because I don’t know when this happened either!”

Phoebe was even more befuddled with Han Shuo’s words as bewilderment suffused her expression. When she raised her head to look at the store, she exclaimed in surprise. Han Shuo looked back at her for an explanation. “Why is it this store? It’s not my first time in the Valley of Sunshine, but I’ve never seen this store open for business. I think that those inside aren’t willing to sell anything, otherwise they wouldn’t be concealing their front door.”

This was indeed the case. All the stores and stalls on this broad street strived mightily to invite and attract customers to visit. Only this one covered its front door, like no one was home, and appeared quite at odds with everything else on this street.

The little skeleton suddenly walked towards the store without Han Shuo’s order. He raised his hand to push open the door. Contrary to his expectations, the door lightly creaked open and revealed a stone paved hallway.

Phoebe blinked and said with some hesitation, “It’s against the rules to enter someone’s store against their volition!”

“Is there someone inside? Is there someone inside??” Han Shuo nodded and followed behind the little skeleton. He suddenly started talking loudly, as if to ascertain if someone was inside or not.

Sadly, he received no response after calling out a few times, and the little skeleton naturally didn’t understand what rules were. He hurtled deep into the structure.

Spreading out his hands, Han Shuo said, “There’s no one in here anyways, it shouldn’t matter if we go in and take a look.” He turned and shut the door that the little skeleton had opened, casting a glance Phoebe and taking her by the hand to walk inside.

The little skeleton made straight for a round well in the back garden. He stood by the well and looked inside, seeming to be looking at something.

When Han Shuo and Phoebe drew close, Han Shuo suddenly felt a frosty, evil presence exuding from the well, as if an enormous demon was inside.

“Something’s wrong.! The temperature is too low here, even I feel a bit cold!” Phoebe’s body suddenly trembled as she looked at Han Shuo.

“That’s right, this is a place of extreme water, a place that I need to refine water elite zombies. The thick water qi within has been absorbed by wraiths and transformed them to water demons!” Han Shuo was overjoyed.

He sensed closely and could clearly feel the thick water qi within and two currents of frosty, sinister water qi. Han Shuo immediately understood that the water elements within were being absorbed by the two water demons.

# Chapter 194: Battling the blood water demons

The round well was so deep that it could hide a person's body. The green colored stones that formed it were cold to the touch, the biting chill travelled deep into his bones.

Han Shuo could feel the abundant water qi within the well as he stood next to it. The two sinister presences within also stirred to action, possibly because they sensed the presence of living beings.

Han Shuo was absolutely overjoyed to discover that a place of extreme water was located at the bottom of a deep well in such a place. If he was able to refine all of the zombies of the five elements, then the "Great Formation of the Divine Zombies and Five Elements" could be formed and devastating power could be brought forth. Han Shuo had already located places of extreme earth and wood. If he added this place of extreme water, then he'd be one step closer to successfully reaching his goal.

As Han Shuo was rejoicing, Phoebe suddenly frowned, "It seems to have gotten colder. You said this is a place of extreme water, what did you mean by that?"

Two bone piercing waves of cold suddenly crept out from the deep well. The well had been calm before the water became agitated and splashed out all over. Clouds of white mist rose from the well and covered the yard.

"They're coming!" Han Shuo snorted coldly and grabbed Phoebe. He said seriously, "The water demons are coming out to make trouble, be careful!"

The qi within the place of extreme water was extremely concentrated. If anyone drowned here, their soul wouldn't disperse immediately. With the water qi sustaining it, it would have to absorb only a small amount before forming a water demon.

When water demons absorbed water qi, the strength of the soul would greatly increase and it could then use specialized powers to manipulate the water qi and attack living creatures that approached.

Han Shuo understood all of this when he researched the ways to refine the elite zombies. Therefore, when he sensed the two sinister presences within the well, he immediately understood that two water demons had been somehow created.

However, what he didn't understand was why the little skeleton could sense this. What was it that existed here that could've attracted him?

The little skeleton wielded its bone dagger and stood next to the deep well, his eyes staring into it. Han Shuo didn't know what he was waiting for and what he'd planned on buying.

The water qi crept throughout the yard in the form of a thick, dense mist. The scenery in the surroundings were also affected and grew increasingly blurry and indistinct. The water qi was encompassed in the same sinister presence. It'd been cold to begin with, and now temperature decreased even more rapidly.

"I can't see anything!" Phoebe cried out in surprise.

"This is the water demons manipulating the water qi to form a water curtain. They'll attack us through the cover of the curtain!" Han Shuo said calmly from the side, calming Phoebe's madly thumping heart.

Phoebe's vision was only on the level of an ordinary person. Even though she'd trained her fighting aura, her eyes were barely sharper than that of an ordinary person. There was a world of difference between herself and a demon practitioner such as Han Shuo.

Therefore, although her vision was obscured, Han Shuo's eyes weren't affected at all. There seemed to be silver lightning flashing through his eyes as he looked calmly through the white mist.

Suddenly, the bubbling water within the well shot out like a fountain. The clear water droplets seemed to have a life of their own as they formed columns that churned towards Han Shuo and Phoebe.

A sinister and chilly presence emanated from the well. Even with Han Shuo's durable body, he too began to feel a hint of coldness. The water-formed columns were in a state between liquid and solid, reaching for Han

Shuo and Phoebe's body like a pliable eel.

"Looking for death!" Han Shuo grinned a rather ruthless grin.

Red spellfire suddenly flared to life in his hands like evil fire looking to incinerate everything in its path, standing at attention in front of Han Shuo and Phoebe's bodies. The surrounding frosty presence immediately started cracking and popping as soon as the red spell fire appeared, and its fiery heat spread throughout the vicinity, immediately warming Phoebe's body.

The several hundred eel-like columns evaporated as they neared Han Shuo's red spellfire.

Two ugly, low roars sounded from within the well, like the final cries for help of a drowning person. Two red figures shot out from within, seemingly formed of red blood and continuously distorting in the air. They finally settled into the figure of a man and a woman, but a shade was still a shade in the end, and they possessed no visible features.

"Water blood demons!" Han Shuo started and looked askance at the two shadows.

Water demons resided in places of extreme water. If they harmed too many lifeforms, they would absorb the blood as well.

Blood was also a liquid and had the same characteristics as water. The boiling blood of a lifeform near death held another sort of wondrous power. The water demons would absorb this blood, and when enough blood was absorbed, they would be able to evolve into the more powerful and cruel blood water demon.

When the water demons formed blood water demons, not only would they be able to manipulate the water qi within places of extreme water, but they would even be able to manipulate the blood of living beings. They were very difficult to face off against, and Han Shuo was quite surprised to see two blood water demons appear in front of him.

Contrary to other bloodthirsty creatures, the blood water demon could cover the scent of blood on their bodies with the power of water. This was

why Han Shou hadn't smelled the blood even with his sensitive nose.

The two blood water demons emerged from the well and wavered in the air, pouncing towards Han Shuo and Phoebe like two bloody clouds. The evil power suddenly suffused the area around Han Shuo and Phoebe. Han Shuo immediately felt the blood in his body boil and it seemed to want to break free of his control.

He turned to see that Phoebe was in even more dire straits. Two streams of blood were already flowing out of her nose and her charming face was quite bedraggled.

Cursing under his breath, Han Shuo grabbed Phoebe and threw her outside with all his strength, roaring, "Leave now!"

Phoebe had been flung out whether or not she'd consented. As a swordmaster, Phoebe had incredible strength and Han Shuo wasn't worried that she'd be injured upon landing. He was more worried that she wouldn't even have the chance to make a move against the two blood water demons before dying of blood loss first.

The blood within his body raged out of his control and surged towards his orifices. Han Shuo brought out the Demonslayer Edge, but as it howled and stabbed into their bodies, it caused them no injury.

The blood water demons were formed of liquid, and no matter how sharp the Demonslayer Edge was, they would easily reform after he hacked them into various segments.

The two water demons continued to advance towards Han Shuo after coalescing again. With the blood water demon's abilities, they would be able to suck him dry of his blood in an instant once they covered his body, turning him into a dry husk.

As a demon cultivator, the power within Han Shuo's blood wasn't something any ordinary person or expert in this world could measure up to.

The blood water demons also seemed to have sensed this and had set their sights on Han Shuo as their greatest source of nourishment,

completely ignoring Phoebe. Not a single iota of their attention was split out for her as they all focused completely on Han Shuo, proving the emphasis they placed on him.

His blood churning madly, the magical yuan preventing blood from flowing out of his body with all its might. The two forces restrained Han Shuo's body as his blood frothed, preventing Han Shuo from moving that much.

However, the strength of the magical yuan was also demonstrated in this moment. As a swordmaster, Phoebe had no defense whatsoever and her blood was already flowing freely out of her. However, Han Shuo could use his magical cultivation to firmly prevent his blood from flowing outwards. Although the defense was a bit difficult, he'd been able to accomplish the fact that none of his blood had flowed out of his body up until now.

The greedy blood water demons were finally about to cover Han Shuo. Being confined and unable to bring his magical cultivation to bear, he could only rely on his necromancy magic. The bone spear, arrows, and corpse explosion spell were released one by one, but had no effect on the demons.

Han Shuo suddenly understood that the two blood water demons could only be harmed by high temperature flames. However, his magical yuan was completely preoccupied in prevent his blood from geysering out and none could be spared for the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire".

Freaking hell! Am I going to die by the hand of two blood water demons? I really don't want that! Forget it, I should be able to deploy the "Mystical Glacial Spellfire" even if my blood is streaming out of me. Since I've formed the demon infant, even if all my blood and body is lost, I can still be reborn using it. I'll just be gravely injured, but it'll be a lot better than dying.

These thoughts ran through Han Shuo's mind as he made up his mind and decided that he would kill the two blood water demons even if he would be left gravely injured.

A mysterious message was suddenly transmitted from the little skeleton



at this time, as if he understood Han Shuo's intentions. The little skeleton sent a conscious feeling over that anxiously asked Han Shuo to stop.

There were no concrete words or language, just a message for Han Shuo to stop that he could clearly feel. He'd planned on immediately making a move, but actually froze, thinking furiously.

There were only five or six meters separating him and the blood water demons. He couldn't move and could only stare ahead, unable to see a trace of the little skeleton.

If he didn't act now, he might be covered at any moment by his two enemies and have his blood sucked dry in an instant. His body would lose life instantly and the demon infant would likely be unable to escape as well. His entire being would vanish without a trace.

The little skeleton anxiously asked Han Shuo to stop, making him uncertain if he should proceed with his plan or not. As he watched the two blood water demons close in on him, he sighed lightly and made a decision that he didn't know was right or not – he would trust in the little skeleton!

His eyes suddenly grew resolute as he threw his previous plans away. Han Shuo stood where he was and didn't make any move, just waiting for the little skeleton and taking a gamble on his life.

The two blood water demons finally enveloped him and Han Shuo could no longer control his blood from splurging out of his orifices like tidewaters.

A deep wave of despair suddenly grew in Han Shuo's heart, but he didn't hate the little skeleton, but rather trusted the latter instead. He didn't have any regrets even if he truly died here.

Suddenly, Han Shuo's rapid loss of blood halted like someone had stepped on the brakes. The mysterious power controlling his blood suddenly vanished without a trace, and Han Shuo's magical yuan once again flowed smoothly throughout his body. All returned to normal as his blood settled down again.

The two blood water demons started thrashing violently in front of him. Han Shuo could read from their violent twists and struggles the expression they wanted to express – fear!

Han Shuo's body could move about freely now after his blood had returned to normal. He looked up and saw some bone spurs sticking into the two blood water demons. The little skeleton was looking at him with empty eye sockets as his body was slightly crouched, two leg bones stamped firmly on the blood water demons as all seven bone spurs were stuck firmly within them.

Streaks of bloody splendor flowed swiftly into the little skeleton's body through the seven bone spurs. The seven bone spurs, that had seemed to dull, flared with bewitching red light as the broken ribs in front of the little skeleton rearranged themselves with a speed that Han Shuo could see, also gleaming with a bloody light.

In contrast, the two blood water demons, that had been a vivid, blood red, suddenly dimmed as their color surged rapidly towards where the bone spurs were stuck in their bodies. The two blood water demons slowly turned ghastly white and Han Shuo could feel all the qi that they'd collected over who knew how long flow swiftly into the little skeleton's body, along with their life force and blood.

This situation wasn't maintained for long. When the blood water demons had thoroughly turned a ghastly white, their bodies transformed into two puddles of water with a splashing sound and fell to the ground.

The mist that had suffused the yard was swept away by the wind, and the waning moon shed a red light over the yard, giving it a few hints of a desolate beauty.

Clunk. The little skeleton fell down from midair because he'd lost his support after the two blood water demons disappeared.

Reaching out a hand to rub his head, the little skeleton's empty eye sockets met Han Shuo's. A surge of joy traveled into Han Shuo's heart from the little skeleton, and his originally vividly red body started changing once again. Each bone had had blood red splendor sparkling

over it, but it'd now turned back into its originally pure white color.

Since the little skeleton had been summoned and refined as a magical treasure, his skeleton had gone from inky black to blood red. Now, he'd changed back, but the stark white of the little skeleton's bones were obviously greatly different from that of a normal skeletal warrior.

His bones were translucent and as pure as beautiful jade. It even seemed to be sparkling with eye catching light, making various thoughts rise in Han Shuo's mind.

Han Shuo finally understood now why the little skeleton had stopped in front of the shop and hadn't moved. He must've been attracted by the blood water demon's energy!

Han Shuo recalled that last time, in Bob Ascher's slave trading house, the Calamity Church necromancer Clarendon had used fresh blood to summon the three eyed demon god. The blood had been absorbed by the little skeleton in the end. Perhaps it was because of this that, although the blood water demons could conceal the scent of blood from Han Shuo, they couldn't do the same to the little skeleton and this was why he'd stopped in front of the shop.

As Han Shuo thought silently, another wisp of consciousness came from the little skeleton once more. He was actually strongly requesting to return to the other dimension, and Han Shuo could clearly feel his ardent desire to exact revenge.

Having absorbed the strength of the two blood water demons, the little skeleton had undergone a significant transformation. Not only had his injuries from the previous battle been recovered, he seemed to have heightened his abilities as well. This was why he was so confident now.

The little skeleton's fighting spirit and requests were quite strong. Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, and felt that no particular problems would arise if he kept part of his mind on the situation. He then used the necromancy spell to once again send the little skeleton back to the mysterious plane.

# Chapter 195: Promotion to the Dark Moon division

Apart from the moonlight spilling into the yard and the two puddles of water around the well, there were no other traces of anything else within the vicinity.

Scattered footsteps suddenly sounded from outside. They rapidly approached as Phoebe and a band of ten others appeared in front of Han Shuo.

Worry filling her face, Phoebe's clear eyes landed on Han Shuo's body and visibly relaxed when she saw that he was unharmed. However, she didn't relax her grasp on her longsword as her pale neck swiveled, surveying the surroundings, seeming to want to detect if there was any danger hidden elsewhere.

There were a dozen armored Cairo mercenary band guards apart from Phoebe. It would seem that she had led them here. Their eyes were alert as they cautiously patrolled the surroundings.

"Are you alright?" Phoebe breathed out a sigh of relief when she took a look around and saw nothing out of the ordinary, nor any danger.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo cast a glance at Phoebe and smiled in comfort, "Don't worry, I'm fine."

"My apologies Mr. Harris, I think we must've seen an illusion just now. The danger I spoke of earlier doesn't seem to have appeared." Phoebe understood that Han Shuo must've taken care of matters and wore an embarrassed expression on her face, speaking to the stern, aloof guard captain.

This person was in the prime of his life. Swarthy, with a head full of short, brown hair that was messily askew, he carried a double headed battle-axe in his right hand and naturally emanated the violent aura of someone who'd weathered multiple battles. It was obvious that it had been formed through slaughter.

“This shop is a place that’s been cursed by a demon. All the owners who have taken charge of this shop have died of unnatural causes over the years. No matter who enters, whether man or beast, they will all die from this curse. There has never been any exceptions, so no matter how you entered, I recommend you leave immediately.” Harris’ eyes roved over Han Shuo and Phoebe’s bodies as he spoke coldly.

He waved his hand and didn’t wait for Han Shuo and Phoebe to say anything before he accompanied his band of a dozen soldiers out of the yard, seemingly unwilling to linger even another second in this area.

“Harris is a battle fiend who’s weathered hundreds of battles and the vice chief of the Cairo mercenary band. When I said there was danger here just now, he still paid a visit even though he was a bit unwilling. It looks like there is indeed something here that people are wary of. I didn’t have any strength to fight back earlier even with my level as a swordmaster!” Phoebe went over Harris’ identity in a perfunctory manner after he’d left. She then changed the subject and stared at Han Shuo, “What happened just now?”

Smiling dashing, Han Shuo reached out a hand to stroke the well and said happily, “The two blood water demons have been taken care of, so no more odd things will happen here in the future. In addition, I’m going to buy this shop no matter how much this place costs!”

Phoebe’s beautiful, clear eyes looked at Han Shuo with a look of surprise on her face as she said confidently, “You must have a great deal of assurance since you’re saying this. Don’t worry about the shop, I’ll take care of the negotiation with the Cairo mercenary band. I think such a cursed place won’t be worth much money.”

Nodding, Han Shuo walked over to Phoebe and wrapped his arm lightly around her, putting his mouth close to her ears and saying softly, “Thank you so much, Phoebe!”

Her face suddenly flushing red, Phoebe turned back and hugged Han Shuo fiercely, pursing her lips to lightly kiss Han Shuo’s. She then pulled back and stared deeply at Han Shuo, saying passionately, “I’m the one who

should be thanking you! You threw me out first when danger was in front of us!"

The danger with the blood water demon earlier had made Phoebe go through a life and death experience. Even Han Shuo's soul had been almost scattered to the four winds. Having survived these two disasters, the two felt a unique sense of the joy of life as they looked at each other now.

As the moon shone down on them, it added a few traces of beauty to Phoebe's stunning features. Her eyes shone with light and Han Shuo fell deep into them.

He tightened his grasp and held her tightly, feeling her shake slightly in his intimate grasp. A sense of happiness and contentment filled his heart.

Before he'd arrived in his world, Han Shuo had been just an ordinary person who had only dared to think evil thoughts. He didn't dare act upon them. His personality was one that was a bit timid. He'd lived twenty years and hadn't paid much attention to anything. He'd never had any women and had lived routinely through twenty years.

But thanks to Chu Cang Lan's maneuverings, he'd successfully arrived in this foreign world with the heritage of magical cultivation. He'd amassed great strength within a short amount of time, gotten quite a bit of riches, and won the hearts of two beauties.

The affairs of the world changed thus greatly and unexpectedly. What had been farfetched daydreams twenty some years ago had all become part of his grasp in such a short amount of time. An unbelievable feeling rose in Han Shuo's heart as he sometimes felt that all of this was still an unrealistic dream. However, his encounters with danger and pain again and again reminded him that this wasn't an illusion.

"Alright, I think Emily must be waiting for us. We should hurry up and make our way there!" Han Shuo looked at the fading light in the sky after a bout of reflection and spoke tenderly to Phoebe.

Seemingly enjoying this moment of peace and romance that belonged to the two of them, Phoebe assented softly and allowed Han Shuo to hold her

smooth, soft hand. The two of them walked side by side to the location Emily had previously mentioned.

Before long, the two of them had appeared in front of the shop. There were no longer any customers because night had fallen. A hale and hearty elderly man walked up merrily after Han Shuo had walked inside, “Are you Sir Bryan?”

“I’m not a sir, please just call me Bryan!” Han Shuo bowed humbly to the elderly man and took out his identity token, handing it over with both hands.

The elder took Han Shuo’s iron token and glanced at it, then returned it with a smile. He then said a bit apologetically to Phoebe, “My apologies Miss Phoebe, please wait here a moment. These are the Dark Mantle’s rules that no one may enter if they are not of the Dark Mantle.”

As the shadowy organization beneath the king’s hands, the Dark Mantle naturally had its rules that everyone must follow. The fact that Phoebe, an outsider, could’ve accompanied Han Shuo to this place was already an exception. She naturally couldn’t proceed further.

When faced with such a polite and benevolent old man, Phoebe didn’t maintain her usual aloofness and nodded with a smile, sitting down willingly.

“Let’s go, I’ll lead you inside!” The elderly man stooped slightly and led Han Shuo in. They walked through a hallway and stopped in front of the living room. The old man pointed inside, “Mistress Emily is inside!”

The old man returned along the original route when Han Shuo walked in, seemingly back to his post at the head of the shop.

“Is it Bryan?” Emily’s voice sounded from somewhere as soon as he set foot inside. A piece of the living room flooring then opened up into a hole, a mechanism similar to what Han Shuo and Emily had seen in Bob Ascher’s room last time.

Emily walked out in casual clothing from the hole. There was a fireplace in this living room and the temperature was quite comfortable. This was

why Emily hadn't continued to bundle herself up warmly.

"How are things? Was everything taken care of?" Han Shuo walked towards Emily with a smile when the hole closed up.

"No problems at all. My brother is taking over and our mission is done. We succeeded! Heh heh, do you want to know how much of this was thanks to you?" Emily's alluring cheeks held a trace of mischievousness as she looked at Han Shuo.

The mix of a youthful playfulness and an adult's maturity in Emily gave her an unusual allure at this moment. Han Shuo's heart lurched as his hands reached out and grabbed Emily while he sat down in a chair. His hands roved naughtily around her breasts as he chuckled, "Little hussy, I haven't even punished you for what you did in the tree hole earlier!"

"Humph!" Emily threw back her head and glared at Han Shuo, saying huffily, "How dare you mention that! You started doing that with Phoebe right in front of me, were you thinking of me at all? Don't think I couldn't see anything because it was dark. Humph, Phoebe was panting so loudly and the both of you were trying to put on a normal act!"

He suddenly lifted Emily's legs up and shifted her around so that she was kneeling on his thighs. Her well rounded butt was thrust high into the air and, much to her surprise, he started to spank them harshly. Emily began to beg for mercy amidst the pain.

"Alright alright! I won't say anything about what you do in the future, you big villain!" Emily played along and suddenly switched to a serious tack, "After this time's mission, you've advanced from a Third Dark Star to a First Dark Moon. You've skipped a few levels again."

Han Shuo started, stopping his motions and looking at Emily with confusion. "Sometimes completing several missions wouldn't be enough for one to advance one level. Why did I advance several after completing only one mission? You didn't do anything for me behind the scenes, did you?"

Rolling her eyes at Han Shuo, Emily didn't know whether to laugh or be angry. "Remember, you went up against Bob Ascher of the Gryphon



Legion. The difficulty of this mission, compared to the usual scouting for information or arresting some fugitive nobles, is completely different. According to your contributions this time, it wouldn't have been out of the ordinary to directly promote you to Second Dark Moon. However, you've only been in the Dark Mantle for half a year and promoting you to First Dark Moon was already astonishing enough. That's why we didn't go further."

Han Shuo understood after he thought briefly about Emily's words and then remembered Chester. "Oh right, Chester should still be in the Valen City Dark Mantle branch, what treatment is he receiving?"

"Thanks to you, he's already a Fourth Dark Star. This kid is smart enough to be able to be promoted to it just by delivering messages. I never ran into anything that easy when I was running missions!" Emily responded with a smile.

"Oh right, when will Elaine and Belinda arrive?" Han Shuo was happy for Chester when he heard of his circumstances and then thought of Elaine and Belinda again.

"I almost forgot! Belinda was an unexpected gain. If we deliver her to the headquarters and she undergoes interrogation at the hands of the experts there, we'll be sure to obtain a lot of information about the Calamity Church. We'll be rewarded according to the level of intelligence we gain from her!" Emily chuckled lightly and spoke happily.

"Oh right, what kind of different treatment can I enjoy after advancing to First Dark Moon?" Han Shuo thought for a bit and immediately asked. This was what he was most concerned about at this moment.

"First of all, you'll receive an increase in your monthly stipend from 70 gold coins to 150 gold coins. Of course, I think you don't care about this at all. Apart from that, you can use your current level to obtain all information that corresponds to your level from all Dark Mantle strongholds within the Empire. You can use the transportation matrixes in all the cities of the Lancelot empire, and don't need to pay any fees. You can command a troop of soldiers in any of the military organizations, not

to exceed 100 people. In addition...”

Han Shuo finally discovered that there was a significant increase in all areas of his benefits after advancing from Dark Star to Dark Moon. He was already enjoying so many privileges at the Dark Star division, then being part of the Dark Moon level or even one of the three heavyweights would surely come with much higher benefits.

No wonder so many people wanted power! It looked like it really was a nice thing!

# Chapter 196: Sharing one room

Phoebe obviously couldn't take up residence within the Dark Mantle, and now that her relationship with Han Shuo was out in the open, he naturally needed to stay with her.

Han Shuo finally left with Phoebe after dining with Emily and sweet talking her quite a bit, intent on finding a hotel for the two of them.

Hotels of various sizes could be found in great number in the Valley of Sunshine. Because there was a high number of traveling merchants and adventurers coming and going, the amount of entertainment facilities were no less than that in Drol.

Brightly colored, hazy lights shone out from each hotel onto the streets, alternating with ladies clothed in sexy or innocent attire, casting come-hither eyes at passersby on the streets, trying to lure customers in.

Han Shuo walked next to Phoebe and didn't look anywhere else. She was quite satisfied with that, but it was actually because Han Shuo had already vented his energy on Emily's voluptuous body earlier, so he didn't have any evil thoughts in his mind right now.

After a while, Phoebe stopped in front of a luxurious looking hotel. She tugged on Han Shuo with her little hand and walked inside with him. The small, skinny owner was already smiling fawningly at them in front of Phoebe before she'd even opened her mouth, saying ingratiatingly, "Noble Miss Phoebe, will it be the same room as last time?"

Nodding, Phoebe had an aloof expression on her face as she handed her crystal card over without saying a word.

Judging from the owner's expression, it was obvious that this wasn't Phoebe's first visit here. It looked like she'd traveled to many places in her travels to and fro for the Boozt Merchant Guild.

Retrieving her crystal card and key, Phoebe turned her head to smile at Han Shuo and tugged on his arm, leading him inside.

It was nicely warm inside the hotel and completely different from the

brutal cold outside. Bright lights hung in the hallways and shed ample light throughout the entire hotel.

The solid wood floors gleamed like a mirror, and shoes sounded out clearly when they tapped against the floor. The sounds were actually quite pleasing to the ear, so it was apparent that these floors weren't ordinary.

Han Shuo realized that Phoebe hadn't arranged another room for him, and some ambiguous motions grew in his heart as they continued walking down the hallway. Phoebe's not planning on sharing a bed with me, is she?!

Han Shuo couldn't help but cast a look full of passion at Phoebe as they walked.

Phoebe's long brown hair naturally fell down towards the floor like a waterfall, swaying around her translucent cheeks and long neck as she sashayed. Her brows were like the waxing moon and her skin gleamed richly with the splendor of the stars. Her lips were as red as cherries, making one want to give them a fierce bite.

"You big pervert, what are you looking at?" Phoebe suddenly stopped and glared at Han Shuo with slightly flushed cheeks.

Han Shuo's gaze had been fiery, with a strong sense of possessiveness within. Phoebe was stupid. She could naturally see all of it clearly and couldn't help but speak up as her heart beat in panic.

"No, nothing!" Han Shuo returned to himself and immediately concealed the lecherous look in his eyes. "Why aren't we walking anymore?"

"We're here, what nonsense are you thinking of? Don't you see that the door is right in front of you?" Phoebe's clear eyes were bashful as she glared at Han Shuo again, pointing at the door.

Indeed, Han Shuo noticed a tightly shut door when his gaze followed her jade arms. This was also the end of the hallway, and it seemed like it was the most quiet room in the hotel.

"Nothing much, just thinking of you!" Han Shuo chuckled evilly and looked straight at Phoebe.

“You bad jerk, you only know how to fob me off with sweet words!” Sweetness rose in Phoebe’s heart as she spoke softly.

“Nuh uh, I really was thinking of you just now!” Han Shuo said, aggrieved.

“Then you weren’t thinking nice thoughts. Judging from the way you were leering earlier, you must’ve been thinking something dirty!” Phoebe naturally wouldn’t believe anything at this point and snorted softly as she flicked a glance at Han Shuo.

He had indeed been thinking of nothing nice just now. Han Shuo could only chuckle dryly after Phoebe had hit the nail on the head and then hurried Phoebe, “Hurry and open the door. I’m really tired after such a long day, let’s go in and shower and sleep.”

Phoebe didn’t continue questioning as she took out the key to open the door. She moved aside to let Han Shuo in and then closed the door behind him.

A spacious living room greeted them with several fur couches placed on top of a soft carpet. Out of the four rooms, there were two bedrooms, one bathroom, and one storage room for clothes and random knickknacks.

“Do you think I didn’t know what you’re thinking of? Humph! There are two rooms here and each of us will have one. I will run through whoever barges into my room again!” Phoebe threw back her head and threatened Han Shuo as she lit the fireplace, making the internal temperature slowly rise.

“Heh heh, what if whoever barges in runs into a beauty having a wet dream and then throws herself into his arms!” Han Shuo chuckled evilly.

“You dratted, damned bastard! How dare you mention that!” Phoebe’s face turned bright red as she ran angrily up to Han Shuo and reached out her slender hands to give him a fierce pinch around the waist.

He first played along and cried out painfully, then yanked her arm around her back and kissed her unceremoniously. Han Shuo explored and ravaged her mouth like a dragon in the ocean as she grunted in protest.

Phoebe struggled symbolically for a bit before slowly weakening, and her hands, that'd formed fists that pounded Han Shuo's chest, suddenly twined towards his neck like snakes, her tongue entangling with Han Shuo's.

Han Shuo laid her down on the soft carpet and tasted her sweetness while rubbing his hand over her pert bottom.

When Han Shuo's hands finally started fondling her chest, Phoebe suddenly started struggling and pushed him away fiercely. She then glared at him with embarrassment as she said with great allure, "It looks like I need to be careful or you'll take advantage of me whenever I let my guard down. Ugh, after running for so long, my body stinks. I need to take a shower, you stay out here!"

Phoebe escaped to the bathroom after saying these words and shut the door with a great bang. The sounds of water flowing came from inside afterwards. It looked like she was indeed in a great hurry to wash away the dirt from her body.

Bam bam bam... bam bam bam...

Knocking sounds suddenly sounded at this moment. Han Shuo blinked and wondered if it was Emily looking for them. He walked over in confusion and opened the door. A bouquet of brilliant fresh flowers was shoved in his face. It looked like there were at least a hundred of them as they emanated a wonderful fragrance.

The bouquet was abruptly pulled back and a handsome face revealed itself in front of Han Shuo. His eyebrows were dashing and his eyes clear. A broad forehead, firm nose, and apart from somewhat skinny cheeks, this face could be labelled uncommonly handsome.

The charming face had been wearing a disarming smile when it suddenly drew together into a frown and the face became covered in clouds. He looked at Han Shuo in an unfriendly manner. "Who are you? Where's Phoebe?"

"She's showering. And who are you?" Han Shuo blanked and then reacted. This must be one of Phoebe's admirers. He too showed the fellow

a rather unfriendly face.

“Showering! Then what are you doing here?!” When he heard that Phoebe was showering inside and Han Shuo was inside the room, his expression grew even uglier.

“I’m Florida, chief of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. I’m Phoebe’s good friend! I naturally have something to discuss with her, so don’t block the way!” He stared at Han Shuo angrily and roared lowly, magical pulses emanating from his body.

When Han Shuo heard that he was Florida, chief of the Rainbow Sickle, Han Shuo was immediately startled and looked at this person with more than a hint of wariness.

The Rainbow Sickle mercenary band was just as famous as the Cairo mercenary band. However, the Rainbow Sickle was made up mostly of those from the Lancelot Empire. The Rainbow Sickle had been the strongest within the Valley of Sunshine a few years ago and had been in charge of order. However, the original chief unfortunately fell when defending the valley against robbers once. This was why their fortune had suddenly fallen.

It was rumored that this person was a light archmage and seemed to have something to do with the Church of Light. His strength was unfathomable, and although he was an upright person, he was decisive and vicious. He never had any mercy for his enemies and had a great reputation within the mercenary band.

Han Shuo hadn’t thought that such a person would be one of Phoebe’s admirers. Although Han Shuo felt a bit of a headache knowing the other’s identity, he wasn’t afraid. Han Shuo said coldly, “Sorry, I’m Phoebe’s boyfriend. She can’t see you at the moment, so you can come back next time!”

Han Shuo snorted coldly after speaking and slammed the door shut!

# Chapter 197: Making a decisive move

Florida was far more domineering than Han Shuo would've thought. He could feel a dangerous pulse of magic the instant he shut the door. Han Shuo immediately sprang backwards.

The door exploded with a tumultuous bang as the room wreathed itself in white light. Large pieces of wooden slats flew across the room as Florida's handsome face once again appeared in front of Han Shuo.

He still clutched the bouquet of fresh flowers tightly, with a strongly pulsating magic staff embedded with a red, blue, and yellow crystal in his right hand.

"I said, I want to see Phoebe. Didn't you hear me?!" Florida looked harshly at Han Shuo as he bit off his words.

At roughly 25 or 26, Florida's age was similar to the deceased Clark. The two of them had many similarities, both having the same high level of strength and charming exteriors.

However, although Clark was devious, he wouldn't flaunt it so boldly. He at least understood that his identity as a noble; conscious he had to conceal his emotions, he made his moves in the dark. On the other hand, Florida looked like a completely lawless person, with an even more brash style, seemingly having no reservations at all.

"And I said, don't disturb our rest!" Han Shuo snorted coldly and flashed to Florida's side like lightning. He raised a fist with magical yuan circulating within it and smashed it towards Florida's face.

Han Shuo's sudden move was outside of the other's expectations as panic suddenly appeared on his face. He threw out the bouquet in his hands and swiftly backpedaled.

Han Shuo's punch whistled through the air as it smashed the bouquet to pieces. Petals flew everywhere as a floral fragrance wafted through the air.

When this punch had obliterated the bouquet and seemed like it would land on Florida's face, a strong magic pulse suddenly burst from his body.



A rainbow colored, glass-like magic shield suddenly enveloped him like an enormous light bubble.

Bam. Han Shuo's fist connected with the shield. He felt like he was punching cotton candy as the shield distorted at the point of contact. The impression left by the fist deepened until Han Shuo's blow stopped right above Florida's well defined nose, unable to proceed any further.

Completely flustered, Florida was forced back a few steps, bringing the force field with him and widening the gap between him and Han Shuo. Disarrayed, he looked at Han Shuo with an even more unfriendly glint, as if Han Shuo had become his mortal enemy.

"You dared to attack first!" Florida's voice was as distorted as his expression as he roared furiously at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo shook his hand and retracted his fist, pointing at the shattered room door. He said coldly, "You trespassed the moment you broke through the door. I'm just defending myself!"

Nodding his head with a frosty smile, Florida cast a dark glance at Han Shuo. "Very good, you've got some guts. However, you won't get a chance to come near me again now that our distance has been increased. Let me see what you're made of now!"

Florida once again stepped back after he spoke and raised the staff in his right hand, planning on facing off with Han Shuo. In response to Florida's move, Han Shuo solemnly brought out the Demonslayer Edge from his space ring and prepared to take Florida's attack.

As a light archmage, his strength was certainly uncommon. Han Shuo had tested him just now and had noticed that his reaction was swift and movements agile. It was obvious that he'd weathered hundreds of battles. Han Shuo hadn't even been able to harm him just now with that punch, despite their proximity. Now that they were separated, Florida would be able to deploy his advantage as a mage and would be difficult to deal with.

Hasty footsteps sounded at this moment and seemed to approach the room. Just as Han Shuo and Florida were about to really get into it, vice chief Harris from the Cairo mercenary band suddenly appeared with a few

soldiers.

“Isn’t this chief Florida? What are you doing here, creating a mess in territory that’s under the Cairo mercenary band’s protection instead of staying in yours?” Harris’ voice was filled with obvious sarcasm as he maintained the same remote expression from earlier in the day.

The splashing sounds from the bathroom suddenly stopped. It seemed that after these disturbances, Phoebe had finally discovered something was happening outside after having her hearing affected by her shower.

The wildly posturing Florida looked back at Harris when he heard the latter’s voice. He put away the staff in his hand and said with an aloof expression, “I came to visit Miss Phoebe and hadn’t expected to be blocked by some blind kid.”

“If you’re here to be a guest, then I welcome you on behalf of the owner. However, I hope you don’t try to start a fight here, or else our Cairo mercenary band will definitely get involved. You surely know the rules after being in the Valley of Sunshine for so long!” Harris snorted coldly when he saw Florida retract the staff in his hands.

“Humph! Today was your lucky day!” Florida said coldly to Han Shuo and turned to leave. He halted when he passed by Harris, saying with his back turned to Han Shuo, “In the near future, I will definitely retake control of the valley. Then, I won’t be as polite to you as I am now!”

Florida laughed heartily after throwing down these words and walked out with large strides, not waiting for Phoebe to come out.

Harris had an ugly expression on his face and a vein began to throb on his forehead. He looked like he would go berserk at any time. In fact, Han Shuo knew that he was a berserker, It was said that a berserker’s strength was quite astonishing. They were able to use a mysterious method to provoke themselves into a mad state, increasing their strength exponentially and giving them incredible destructive power.

Han Shuo rather wished Harris would go berserk as he looked at the latter. If Harris couldn’t control the fury in his heart, he would immediately attack Florida until one of them died.

It was a pity that Harris quickly regained normalcy and Han Shuo's daydreams didn't play out. Harris cast a detached glance at Han Shuo and said, "You still need to pay for the door. Florida's group has great power in the Valley of Sunshine, so you need to be careful after offending him. You can come find us if there's anything you need from the Cairo mercenary band."

Although his expression was still aloof, Harris seemed to have undergone a change in attitude towards Han Shuo because of their newly acquired common enemy. There were even traces of concern in his words.

Han Shuo hadn't planned on paying for the door because it'd been Florida that had broken it, but his thoughts completely changed after seeing Harris' attitude shift. He did still have need of the Cairo mercenary band to obtain the shop with the place of extreme water, so he laughed decisively and said, "No problem!"

Nodding, Harris didn't say anything else and waved his hand, departing with his guards.

The room to the bathroom creaked open after Harris left and Phoebe came out wearing a bathrobe, like a flower emerging from the water. Her wet hair was plastered all over and a small expanse of reddened, fair skin was revealed at her chest. Her red lips were full and wet as she flicked her eyes towards the door. "They're all gone?"

"All gone. What's going on with that Florida?" Han Shuo looked at Phoebe and asked unhappily.

Chuckling lowly, Phoebe hiked up the bathrobe a bit and wrapped her legs tightly. She walked up to Han Shuo and batted her wet eyelashes, looking at him with interest. She teased, "What, are you jealous?"

"Yeah I'm jealous! That kid doesn't look too bad and came looking for you with a huge bouquet! He even told me, the boyfriend, to get out of the way. I'm very pissed off right now!" Han Shuo was quite direct as he looked irritably at Phoebe.

Her body softening, Phoebe sat on Han Shuo's legs and chuckled softly. "I used to come to the valley a lot and had business dealings with the

Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. But it's always been him pursuing me, I've never had anything to deal with him."

"Alright, alright, don't be mad. I'll explain things to him next time so that he doesn't bother me in the future. How's that?"

"No point in explanations, I don't think that brat is the kind to accept such things. I didn't like him from my first impression of him, but I think he thinks the same of me. I think our grudge has been well and truly formed!" Han Shuo shook his head.

"Then what do we do? The Rainbow Sickle mercenary band has great power in the valley and is second only to the Cairo mercenary band. It's said that they've been recruiting in recent times and have even hired a group of experts from the Church of Light. They seem to want to replace the Cairo mercenary band. It will be very troublesome to stay in the valley if we've offended them!" Phoebe was startled and spoke with some worry.

"We'll deal with matters as they arise. He's not the sole ruler of the valley, he won't be able to do anything to me!" Han Shuo snorted coldly and spoke without fear.

# Chapter 198: Conduct oneself well

Florida had broken the door with his appearance, and so, Han Shuo and Phoebe had no choice but to occupy another room. They paid twenty gold coins as compensation for the door, and Phoebe asked for two rooms so that Han Shuo would have no opportunity to get up to any shenanigans. He didn't remain idle when Phoebe returned to her room to rest.

He located the room's closet and set up the transportation matrix, then adjusted his mental strength to release a dark mist spell within the closet before stepping into the matrix.

The cemetery of death was as desolate as ever. Han Shuo immediately saw Gilbert's enormous true form as soon as he stepped out. He was fast asleep amidst piles of bones and hadn't noticed Han Shuo's arrival at all.

Gilbert had taken on a great responsibility in the past two days and was likely truly tired after being injured again. Han Shuo didn't disturb him and went to where the earth elite zombie and yin demons were being refined.

He first went to the yin demon cave to infuse it with more magical yuan. He noticed that there were only nine wraiths left in the cave now. After fighting every day and every night, the day at which he could collect the yin demons drew closer and closer.

The earth elite zombie exuded an immense presence of life. The earth qi that circulated around the entire cemetery of death was thinning out. Balls of grey qi spread out from the center of the place of extreme earth, and slowly coalesced into one place as if a large hand was tightening its grasp on them.

A marvelous connection emanated from the earth. Han Shuo started as an exuberant feeling flowed into his heart. He sensed carefully and discovered that this joy was coming from the earth elite zombie that was buried deep in the ground.

It looked like Han Shuo's arrival had caused the earth elite zombie below to become quite joyous. After the long duration of time in which it'd

absorbed earth qi and nourishment from the resources that Han Shuo had spent an enormous sum to acquire, the earth zombie was no longer just a simple zombie, but had simple, instinctual feelings.

Now that Han Shuo had located the places of extreme earth, wood, and water, he was also confident in gaining all the materials that he needed through Phoebe's merchant guild. He'd be able to refine the earth, wood, and water elite zombies. When these three elite zombies were formed, Han Shuo's personal strength would greatly increase as well.

As long as he could find places of extreme metal and fire as well, he'd be able to put a frightful formation with all five elemental zombies together. He would have even more of a right to speak in this world after that.

Han Shuo didn't wake Gilbert when he saw all was functioning normally here. He returned soundlessly to the hotel in the Valley of Sunshine and sat cross legged on the bed, meditating. He relaxed his entire body and slowly sank into meditation, not letting up on the slightest bit of time to increase his mental strength.

Phoebe came over early in the morning with her hair tied up. Her long blue skirt made her appear even more elegant and graceful.

She naturally tucked her hand into the crook of Han Shuo's arm as she walked over and tugged him outside, saying, "Come on, let's keep shopping in the valley today and collect all the materials you need!"

Han Shuo readily agreed. He'd planned on collecting materials only for the wood elite zombie before, but now that he'd discovered a place of extreme water, he needed to start collecting the materials required for refining the water elite zombie as well. As it bordered three countries, the Valley of Sunshine saw an endless parade of merchants through its borders and all sorts of strange materials could be obtained here. Han Shuo and Phoebe did indeed locate many of the needed items through some patient searching.

The noon sunlight filtered down from the sky into the Valley of Sunshine, basking the entire valley in its light. Its warmth was quite comfortable, and Phoebe's hand started rubbing her stomach after they

finished perusing the most recent shop. She turned to smile at Han Shuo, "I'm a bit hungry, let's go get some food."

"You're familiar with this place and know where all the good food is. Just lead me to it!" Han Shuo responded with a smile.

It was said that at certain levels of magical cultivation, cultivators could go without eating or drinking and just make use of the energy within their body to maintain their lives for a hundred years. They had no need for food to nourish their bodies. However, Han Shuo had yet to reach that stage and apart from nourishment, food was also an enjoyment to him.

Phoebe led the way in the front as the two walked into a small storefront. A few one meter tall dwarves walked out from within and enthusiastically led them to their table.

The shop wasn't too big and the decorations weren't that luxurious. There were only a few simple chairs, but it was incredibly crowded. Some merchants wearing rich furs, with diamond rings sparkling on their fingers, sprawled lazily over narrow chairs and tables, shoveling food into their mouths without a thought of their images.

The two sat down in a quiet corner near the window. Phoebe didn't ask Han Shuo for his opinion before she said to a dwarf waiting on the side, "The best food in the store!"

The dwarf smiled faintly and bowed urbanely, then quickly left to busy himself.

"Dwarves are quite an odd race. Some of them are adept at forging weapons, others crafting beer. There are those who like cooking as well. Whenever they fall in love with a craft, they always bring about some surprises in their work."

"The dwarves in this shop were from a remote mountain valley of the Kasi Empire. Their joy in life was to cook all sorts of delicious food. The dishes made by their hands are so tasty that it's hard to forget about them." Phoebe smiled faintly and explained to Han Shuo.

Having come from another world, Han Shuo had grown up with the

delicacies of Chinese cuisine. He'd tasted the food of that world and had always felt that there was a world of difference between the food here and the illustrious history of food culture in China.

To be honest, Han Shuo didn't truly believe that the food here would be that much more exquisite or tasty compared to what he'd had in hotels before, so he didn't hold too much hope and only went along with Phoebe's words with a smile.

Business here was good. One could see from the numbers of customers and their identities that these high class customers didn't disdain this place because of its scale. From the way some noblewomen were eating, Han Shuo could see that they were greatly enjoying the food on their plates.

As Han Shuo smiled and chatted with Phoebe, the little dwarf brought over two plates of odd looking food and placed it lightly in front of the two.

It looked like a strange sort of meat that had been cooked to a bright gleam. An interesting smell wafted into Han Shuo's mouth and nose and rather surprised Han Shuo.

Phoebe, in front of him, had already started digging in with a knife and fork in hand. It was apparent that she also greatly enjoyed the food. When Han Shuo cut into a piece of meat and placed it in his mouth. His brow suddenly uncreased as a delicious taste suffused his mouth. It was like a wondrous magic spell as the deliciousness of food continuously circulated in Han Shuo's mouth and nose.

His appetite completely expanded, Han Shuo immediately dug in with a vengeance after tasting that small bite. He devoured the food like tigers or wolves swallowing their prey. Han Shuo belched when his stomach bulged. He complimented, "This really is something alright. No wonder there's so many people trying to squeeze into this small restaurant."

"Friend, we meet again!" Florida walked in through the door at this time. He stood there in his white magic robes and looked coldly at Han Shuo.

Phoebe was in the midst of enjoying her food when she lifted her head to



look at Florida. She then hailed the dwarf and threw down a bag of gold coins on the table. She rose and said to Han Shuo, "Let's go!"

Han Shuo's expression was remote as he waved a hand, "I have nothing good to say to him. You can explain things to him directly. If he keeps bothering you, I'll be happy to have a go or two at him then."

Having exchanged a few blows with him yesterday, Han Shuo understood that Florida's strength was mysterious and unfathomable. However, Han Shuo had both magical cultivation and necromancy magic, as well as the mysterious little skeleton and the almost formed earth elite zombie and three yin demons. All of this combined made it so that he had no fear of Florida. As his magical cultivation improved each and every day, he had no need to lower his head in front of anyone.

Phoebe started when Han Shuo spoke thus and then flashed a smile, "I understand."

She moved and walked over to Florida, cold arrogance replacing her smile from a moment ago. When she reached the door, she pointed at Han Shuo and said to Florida, "He's my boyfriend, I think we have nothing to talk about. Business is business, but you have no right to interfere in my life. I hope you won't disturb me in the future!"

Although he was mentally prepared, Florida was still momentarily dazed when he heard these unkind words from Phoebe's mouth. The stiffness on his face faded away when he faced Phoebe, and he even spoke very gently. He stared tightly at Phoebe, "Where does this kid come from, what can he give you? Why choose him?!"

"Sorry, this has nothing to do with you. I hope you conduct yourself well!" Phoebe expression was remote and she also spoke frostily.

Nodding, Florida barked out a ghastly laugh. He looked at Phoebe and then at Han Shuo in the distance, saying, "Alright!" three times in a row. He then turned and left.

"Give me another plate!" Han Shuo snorted coldly and then turned to the dwarf by his side with a smile.

# Chapter 199: A marvelous sensation

After filling their stomachs and walking out of the shop, Phoebe and Han Shuo shopped for a bit longer amidst all the various stores in the Valley of Sunshine. Phoebe then went to find the proper members of the Cairo mercenary band to negotiate for the shop that contained the place of extreme water for Han Shuo.

Han Shuo walked alone towards the shop in which Emily was located in, planning on asking Emily to investigate Florida's background.

The same elderly man was still watching the door. This shop sold the armor in the style of Lancelot Empire knights, and because night had yet to fall, there were indeed a few wearing the armor of knights flipping through the wares located towards the front of the store.

The elderly man indicated to Han Shuo with a slight smile when he saw Han Shuo walk in. He pointed to the backyard. Han Shuo understood and made a show of picking up a set of clothing, walking over to the door that led to the backyard and walked through it.

"How did you run afoul of Florida?!" Emily was noticeably taken aback when Han Shuo started asking her about Florida with a ruthless expression on his face.

"Apart from the information everyone knows about him, do you have anything else? I know the Dark Mantle must have some other information on him!" Han Shuo glanced at Emily.

Emily's brow creased faintly as she looked at Han Shuo. "Just what is going on here?"

Han Shuo recounted what had happened last night, going over events simply. Emily then said angrily, "I've long since heard that Florida is arrogant and cocky. I hadn't thought that he would really be so domineering. The Valley of Sunshine isn't in the hands of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band anymore. How dare he act this way!"

When he saw Emily also grow angry with him, Han Shuo's originally

ticked off feelings were suddenly smoothed over. He then asked tenderly, "So what is this Florida's background?"

"The Dark Mantle stronghold located here, within the valley, is to collect local information. Florida is neither of the Lancelot Empire nor the Kasi Empire. He comes from a vassal state to the Lancelot Empire, and his grandfather is grand magus Ferguson of the Church of Light. He has a lofty status in the Church and it's said that he has an extremely high chance of advancing to magister."

"Florida grew up in the Church of Light and was personally taught by his grandfather. Apart from light major magics, he's also practiced many thunder magics. These are secrets that most don't know. Since his grandfather taught him personally and his potential is uncommon indeed, he became an archmage at a young age just three years ago. The Dark Mantle once kept an eye on him and felt that he would become one of the preeminent experts on the Continent."

"However, he didn't join the Church of Light and suddenly left a few years ago to come to the Valley of Sunshine, joining the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band shortly afterwards. Because he had such great power, he quickly won chief Jason's trust in an exceedingly short amount of time. Jason even entrusted his only daughter to him. However, old Jason fell in battle against robbers once, and his daughter also went missing as well."

"It's said that this had something to do with Florida."

"However, no one has solid evidence of this. Florida naturally took control of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band after Jason's death. There was a group that suspected Florida had something to do with this and left the band and the valley out of resentment and anger. This was how the Cairo mercenary band grew to strength."

"At the same time, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band has indeed developed well in Florida's hands these years, and it's gradually recovered all the strength that it'd previously lost. It's now become Cairo mercenary band's greatest opponent, and they really might regain control of the valley under Florida's hands!" Emily contemplated with a furrowed brow

for a bit and conveyed all she knew.

After Emily had finished sharing her knowledge, Han Shuo said lowly. “A strong enemy indeed. This person’s thoughts are vicious and devious to make a move even against his benefactor. These methods are completely against the mission of the Church of Light. It looks like I’ll need to be careful.”

“Bryan, the Valley of Sunshine is different from other places and is under the jurisdiction of no country. Whoever has the most strength here is king. I know your strength is certainly not inferior to Florida’s, but Florida has the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band in his hands and you will be hard pressed to fight against multiple enemies with your fists alone. I don’t think he’d make any moves in the valley thanks to the restraining pressure from the Cairo mercenary band, but you better not venture out easily so that you don’t give him any chances to make a move!” Emily was obviously very cautious of Florida as she spoke bracingly to Han Shuo.

“Don’t worry, I know!” Han Shuo’s expression was calm as he responded gravely. He paused and said to Emily, “Oh right, why hasn’t Elaine brought Belinda after such a long period of time. I left a drop of blood essence in Belinda, so she won’t be able to do anything at all. Has something happened along the way?”

Emily shook her head with a wry smile after Han Shuo’s words as she responded, “I was worrying as well. Elaine should’ve arrived in the valley by now. Has something really happened to her?”

“Forget it, I’ll take a trip and search the roads around the valley for a bit.” Han Shuo thought for a bit and answered.

“No, you offended Florida so you probably shouldn’t leave the valley for a while. He has great power in this area and if he knew that you left the valley, he would definitely try to make trouble for you.” A look of panic grew on Emily’s face as she tried to stop Han Shuo.

“It’s going to be fine. You know how perceptive I am. I’ll leave immediately if I discover any signs of danger. In addition, I placed a drop of blood essence on Belinda and only I can sense her within a certain

distance. I must take this trip in order to conclude this mission perfectly!” Han Shuo smiled dashing and paid no heed to the threat of Florida at all as he spoke quite at ease.

“Since you insist, then let me go with you!” Emily spoke resolutely to Han Shuo when she saw that she couldn’t sway him.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo rejected Emily’s suggestion and turned to step outside. He spoke with his back to Emily, “Emily, you should trust me and not try to take care of everything for me like I’m a child. That isn’t the kind of life I want. If Florida actually does act, then I’ll actually be quite excited.”

Emily had already started moving, but sighed when she heard Han Shuo’s words. “Alright, but you have to be careful. Elaine and Belinda’s well being is nothing compared to your own. You must remember to protect yourself first.”

“I will!” Han Shuo responded.

The sky was already darkening by the time he walked out of the store. The various shops on the streets were already closed at this time, and the bright, multi-colored lights of many places of entertainment replaced the setting sun.

Han Shuo ignored all the calls and pleas for attention from the thickly made up faces around him, striding towards the valley border. Some procedures were needed in order to enter the valley, but none were needed to leave. No one asked Han Shuo anything, but the two Cairo mercenary band knights look at him with some surprise, seemingly perplexed why the two beauties weren’t leaving with him.

Han Shuo’s sharp perceptions noticed that someone was surveilling him as soon as he had stepped out of the valley, but he paid them no heed. There was no need for further thought. It was either members of the Cairo or Rainbow Sickle mercenary band who were keeping an eye on him. It wasn’t difficult for Han Shuo to shake them, of that he was extremely confident about.

He’d been walking slowly since leaving the valley, but abruptly picked up

his speed. Han Shuo's body was like a shooting star as he streaked through the dusk sky. He'd covered several hundred meters in a few breaths and pulled ahead of those keeping an eye on him.

When that feeling of being watched disappeared, he suddenly took to the skies and flew close to the lush, silver trees, making for Valen City.

He sent out a mental command as the demon infant's mystical power mysteriously circulated. Waves of mystical power rippled out from the demon infant and covered the distance in front of him. There was a connection between the demon infant and the drop of blood essence. Han Shuo would immediately feel it if the drop of blood essence appeared.

As he concentrated his attention on the demon infant and cast his senses out in an attempt to search for the blood essence, a marvelous feeling suddenly grew in his heart. He could suddenly feel the presence of any small or large life forms. As Han Shuo inwardly started with shock, that sensation suddenly disappeared.

He once again concentrated his attention and bent his mind to finely sense the feeling that had surged into his heart just now. He discovered that he could feel the lifeforms of the various bugs and small mammals that were hibernating around him. Although this sensation faded in and out and was rather blurry, he was still quite shocked by this.

The demon infant suddenly shifted slightly at this point and the location of the blood essence was transmitted to Han Shuo in the next second. Overjoyed, he abruptly picked up his flight speed and sped to where that drop of blood essence was.

When he reached his destination however, he saw Elaine fallen on the ground beneath a large tree, her body covered in blood. Her neck was bent at an unnatural angle, as if she'd been forcefully choked to death by a strap. Her body seemed to have been hit by wind blade spells as multiple bone deep lacerations had sliced through her shirt. The blood was mixed into the accumulated snow and had melted into bloody water. It looked like she'd died not too long ago.

Suddenly, a strong sense of danger suddenly exploded in Han Shuo's

heart. He started and immediately tried to back up rapidly from Elaine's body.

# Chapter 200: Dog eat dog

An explosion rang out from Elaine's body as her profusely bleeding body suddenly exploded into bloody chunks as a momentous force vented in all four directions.

Two finger bones and three arrows of blood made directly for Han Shuo with ferocious and frightening power. In that critical moment, the quickly retreating Han Shuo immediately chanted out the spell for the bone shield and a pile of stark white bones immediately formed a white bone shield a meter wide and 1.5 meters tall that floated in the air in front of Han Shuo.

Cracking sounds rang out crisply as the white bone shield couldn't hold up beneath the tremendous impact it had just received. It exploded into numerous bone fragments that flew every which way, as splendid as fireworks.

If it'd been anyone else, they may not have sensed the danger lurking in Elaine's body and would've been caught unaware by this attack. They likely would've scrambled to face it. However, Han Shuo was perceptive and his thoughts moved quickly. A bolt of enlightenment had suddenly struck his heart and he'd felt the latent danger in Elaine's corpse just now. This was why he'd barely been able to react and retreat in time.

Being in the true demon realm, Han Shuo's brain had undergone a savage bout of training and the speed at which he could concentrate and release his mental strength at a speed far faster than ordinary mages. This was why he could chant out the white bone shield spell with such miraculous speed in such a crucial moment.

After retreating more than ten meters and the white bone shield now lying in broken fragments, Han Shuo had successfully evaded this obviously premeditated attack.

When he cast another glance at Elaine, there was nothing remaining apart from some fresh blood and chunks of flesh. A strong sense of bloodshed suddenly permeated through the air.

Han Shuo suddenly sensed a stifling feeling, and he immediately knew



that this was bad. He'd been catching his breath but started circulating the magical yuan in his limbs without another moment's thought.

The trickles of magical yuan made a circuit of his limbs as it wiped away the scent of blood that Han Shuo had just sniffed into his lungs. Han Shuo had been feeling a bit woozy and tired, but now felt strength surge back into his limbs.

A vicious plan, a devious enemy!

He went over what had just happened and was certain that the blood essence he'd placed in Belinda's neck had been tampered with and transferred into Elaine's body.

The enemy had then killed Elaine and used her body as bait, setting two traps to ensnare him. They'd first used a spell similar to corpse explosion. Elaine's body had been filled with chemicals so that the moment her body exploded, her fresh blood, that was laced with chemicals, would become a second round of attack.

Such cruel methods that made use of a corpse could only be the brainchild of those fervent cultists of the Calamity Church!

Belinda must have been saved by others, or she would've never awoken from the shackles of the blood essence through her power alone. Han Shuo immediately planned on leaving this place when his thoughts traveled here, but two sets of footsteps started drawing close to where he was. One of them was heavy and the other soft. Han Shuo could judge from their weights that the oncomers were a male and a female.

A thought struck him as his mind raced furiously. He was weighing up what was the most appropriate method and best timing to handle the two.

However, he needed an opportunity to create the best timing! Han Shuo looked around and noticed that there was no good terrain to take advantage of, nor was there any good timing present. He couldn't help but sigh in his heart!

Han Shuo's originally upright body then suddenly softened to the ground. When his eyelids covered the sharp look in his eyes, his heartbeat

and breathing became uncommonly calm. It was as if he were in a deep coma with no awareness whatsoever.

Two people gradually drew close. Belinda's face was covered by her black veil as usual. Her bright eyes stared tightly at Han Shuo without blinking.

The other person was rather elderly as the tips of his hair was a gray brown color. Fine lines wizened his face like moats as he wore a thick, gray cotton jacket. He held onto a knobbed cane in his left hand as his gray white eyes seemed without energy. He walked slowly over, keeping an eye on the surroundings as well and paying attention not only to just Han Shuo.

"Wait, Belinda!" Just as Belinda was about ten meters from Han Shuo, the old man immediately called out with a low, raspy voice.

Belinda had been staring intently at Han Shuo when she immediately stopped upon hearing this call. She turned in confusion and looked at the old man, "What is it Master Edwin?"

The man called Edwin was from the Calamity Church. His gray white eyes circled the surroundings again and again before finally settling on Han Shuo. He rasped out, "There's no blood on his body and there are no obvious signs of injury. He likely wasn't injured by that exploding corpse. Judging from the distance, he may have fainted from the chemicals, but we need to be more cautious."

"Then according to your opinion, what should we do?" Belinda not only stopped approaching Han Shuo after these words but actually started backing up until she was side by side with Edwin.

"Shoot an arrow into him. If he's truly in a coma, he won't have the slightest sensation of it!" Edwin responded.

Han Shuo cursed inwardly. This old fart was devious and vicious alright! He could come up with such a savage plan. This man gave Han Shuo a strong sense of danger, but from his body's condition, Han Shuo was well aware that this person wasn't a swordsman or a knight. He must be a marvelous mage despite his decrepit body, otherwise he wouldn't be afraid

to approach Han Shuo!

Belinda laughed softly and agreed when she heard Edwin's instructions. She took out a bow and arrow and shakily notched an arrow to the string.

Belinda was noticeably not a marksman. Her two arms were shaking as her notched arrow shook in Han Shuo's direction as well.

Because they were so close, Han Shuo could sense Belinda holding the bow and arrow even with his eyes closed. Her shaking hands made soft sounds when her arms brushed past her thick clothing. This made Han Shuo panic a bit as he weighed whether or not he should take the gamble.

If he suddenly exploded into action, he wasn't confident in his ability to kill both of them given their distance from him and the fact that they were both on guard. Han Shuo didn't know anything about what methods this Edwin possibly had either, so it was very unwise to take this risk in attacking.

Han Shuo hardened his heart in the moment that Belinda notched her arrow and decided to just take the hit no matter what. Han Shuo understood that they didn't seem to want to kill him from their conversation. This was what caused him to make up his mind.

"Do it!" Edwin's voice was low as he pressed Belinda.

"Alright!" Belinda agreed and released the arrow with a "whoosh".

The arrow landed in the snow by his left arm as Han Shuo lay there nervously. It hadn't touched him at all! It looked like Belinda's shooting skills were beyond crap, which cause her to miss even at such a close range. "No worries, we have plenty of time, you'll get the hang of it after shooting a few more arrows." No emotion could be heard in Edwin's voice as he spoke slowly.

His eyes lit up as he spoke and he focused on Han Shuo's body, wanting to glean some clues from it.

"Alright, I'll try a few more times!" Belinda responded and shot out another three arrows. All three of them missed yet again.

Belinda was obviously a bit irritated as she huffed out lightly and took out another arrow. She didn't aim at all this time and shot it directly towards Han Shuo.

However, the one arrow which she hadn't aimed at all actually turned out to be miraculously accurate. It flew straight towards Han Shuo's calf and sank in with a small pfft. Bright red blood oozed out slowly from his pant leg.

This kind of pain had long since become nothing to Han Shuo. His heart rate and breathing stayed the same as did the dull expression on his face, as if he'd truly sunk into the depths of a drugged coma.

"Things should be fine!" Edwin nodded and said lowly after observing for a while.

Belinda and Edwin then relaxed their guard against Han Shuo and approached his position. Han Shuo focused his concentration and prepared himself to kill at any second. He would make a move to immediately kill Edwin as soon as the old man approached. As frightening as Belinda was, she was only a threat in group fights thanks to the destructive powers of her golem. Han Shuo didn't fear her at all if they were to fight in a place like this.

Just as Han Shuo made his preparation, more sounds came from the distance. They quickly approached this area, surprising Han Shuo as he feigned death on the ground. He wondered who was arriving now.

"Chief, that person's here!" A loud yell suddenly sounded as a band of a dozen travelled swiftly through the frosty winter wind.

"To think he left the Valley of Sunshine of his own accord, he doesn't want to live anymore!" Florida's voice suddenly rang out in Han Shuo's ears, completely contrary to his expectations.

"Chief Florida of the Red Sickle mercenary band!" Belinda suddenly exclaimed in shock.

"No matter who you two are, give me that kid immediately!" Florida announced peremptorily as usual when he arrived.

Calm restored itself in the eyes of the man called Edwin. He flicked a glance at Florida and the others approaching, first cackling oddly and then rasping out in a voice full of hate. "So you're Florida, it looks like I was right to come to the Valley of Sunshine this time!"

As Edwin spoke, an immense pulse of magic suddenly emanated from his body. The presence of dark magic suddenly permeated the air towards Florida. Three enormous black hands materialized in the air, slamming down upon them with a ferocious force that could cleave the heavens and ground open.

All the trees and boulders exploded into dust within that area in the span of a second. Towering trees first creaked audibly and then fell beneath the onslaught of that force.

The enormous dark magic spell, "The Hand of Death", had been released, and three ten meter wide hands had appeared. As the terrifying force covered the ground, four of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries couldn't dodge in time and were pounded into bloody mincemeat.

"Did your grandfather Ferguson not teach you how to treat your elders?" Edwin's voice was suffused with a cruel smile as he spoke to Florida.

Edwin and Belinda were already by Han Shuo's side now, and if he wanted to, he could make a sudden move and harm Edwin. However, judging from these enormous disturbances, Han Shuo understood that Edwin seemed to hate Florida even more. He was trying to kill him after just meeting the man, and his strength was much stronger than Emily, who was also a user of dark magic.

On one side was a killer from the Calamity Church, on the other was enemies from the Rainbow Sickle. These two groups were both people that he would have to make moves against in the future, and it was all to Han Shuo's advantage that they had suddenly started fighting. As opposed to him making a move now, he might as well continue to play dead and have them dog eat dog.

"Just who are you?" Florida and the rest of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries had swiftly taken refuge on higher ground and was looking

back at Edwin in shock.

“Heh heh, you may not know me, but your grandfather has known me for many years. Perhaps you’ve heard of the name Edwin!” Edwin’s voice still sounded rather noncommittal.

“Grand magus Edwin of the Calamity Church, it’s you old monster!” Florida cried out with shock as he swept his gaze over Han Shuo’s body. He waved his hand, “Retreat!”

The Rainbow Sickle mercenary band members completely obeyed Florida’s orders and retreated swiftly, obviously greatly afraid of Edwin.

“Want to run? It won’t be that easy!” Edwin’s voice sounded again.

He quickly chanted a profound magical spell. Two enormous Grim Reaper blades materialized in his left and right hands. They were even larger than the previous hands of death. The sharp blades flew quickly through the air and cut through towering trees like they were slicing through tofu. They broke apart into various chunks of wood after the blade had passed through.

The presence of death emanated towards Florida and the others. Two brawny and tall senior swordsmen flanking Florida had no defense against this at all as they were carved into various pieces of meat by the blades and scattered down onto the ground in a bloody mess.

Such frightening effects made Florida and the others move even faster.

The appearance of such an unlucky omen had obviously disturbed Florida’s previously laid plans. Even Han Shuo was quite surprised as the ghastly wails continued to commentate a play by play of the casualties.

“Tie him up first, I’ll take care of these people!” Edwin turned to speak to Belinda when he saw Florida and the others fleeing towards the Valley of Sunshine for their lives. He took out a vial of powder and gave it to Belinda, “Smear this on his throat, he’ll answer all your questions as soon as he wakes up!”

“Don’t worry, I’ll make him pay!” Belinda responded resolutely.

Nodding, Edwin turned to leave and planned to pursue Florida and the others. Han Shuo suddenly made his move as the Demonslayer Edge howled through the air, shooting straight for Edwin's back.

Han Shuo had planned on staying quiet for a while longer, but now that he'd witnessed Edwin's strength and realized that he was departing his attack range, he didn't plan on observing any longer. Han Shuo decided to use this opportunity to take him out first.

Edwin was stronger than Han Shuo had assumed, as an instinctual response kicked in even when the Demonslayer Edge pierced towards him at such high speed in this short distance. A magic shield-like black metal flared up, protecting the area that the Demonslayer Edge was piercing towards.

Pfft. Blood sprayed everywhere.

The Demonslayer Edge sank a few inches in after piercing through the thick magic shield and was then halted by an enormous force, unable to move a single bit forward.

At the same time, Han Shuo leapt up like a panther from his original position on the ground, flying past Belinda to shoot towards Edwin with the speed of lightning, purple spellfire sparkling from his left hand as his hand formed a blade, drawing it across Edwin's neck mercilessly.

# Chapter 201: Hurry up old dog!

Grunting beneath his breath, the dark grand magus Edwin soared into the sky like the branch of a willow tree whipping into the air. As he did so, Han Shuo's sharp knife-like palm cut through the air.

Stuck in Edwin's heart, the Demonslayer Edge seemed to be under the draw of an immense force and forcefully flew out of his body, flying through the air.

Fresh blood dripping from his back, Edwin's expression was an ugly grimace as he chanted a magic spell. Another hand of death appeared in the air and started hurtling down upon Han Shuo like a mountain. An enormous aura covered Han Shuo's body, making it very difficult for him to breathe.

A thought grew in his mind as the Demonslayer Edge flew towards Han Shuo like a rainbow. He suddenly activated the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" and shot through the enormous aura surrounding him as the hand of death reached his head. He shot towards Florida's escaping group.

When the second blow missed, Edwin distanced himself from Han Shuo. The speed at which he flew towards the horizon was clearly much nimbler than Archmage Emily.

Perhaps Han Shuo would have been able to meet him head on if the opponent had been Florida. But Edwin was a dark grand magus. Such potential was most definitely sufficient to overwhelm Han Shuo. So once the situation turned ugly, he needed to withdraw immediately.

"Treacherous little brat. Your death is certain!" Edwin bellowed hoarsely from above. Unexpectedly, he ignored Belinda entirely as he shot straight towards Han Shuo.

Defeating him was out of the question, but as for escaping... The flexibility and speed of the "Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens" instantly displayed its power, gradually increasing the distance between Han Shuo and Edwin.



Suddenly, a group of ten or so people appeared before him. Florida hovered midair, his long hair billowing. Below him, a few elite members of the Rainbow Sickle Mercenary Band sprinted through the thick shrubbery at lightning speed.

This time, Rainbow Sickle's target had only been Han Shuo in their trip from the Valley of Sunshine. Therefore, they had only mobilized some experts. But who would have thought they would be so unlucky as to run into Edwin, someone with a grudge against Florida's grandfather, and fall into such a miserable state.

Even though they were escaping in the same direction, Han Shuo's speed had clearly surpassed Florida's group. The fact that he would be able to catch up to these people had also been part of Han Shuo's plans.

Laughing coldly, Han Shuo approached them from behind, using the flexibility granted by the Art to leisurely suspend himself on the bodies of Florida's group. With Han Shuo's chant, lance after lance of bone spears pierced towards Florida like arcs of electricity flashing in midair.

"Damn it!" Florida, in the midst of running for his life, suddenly heard the whistling sounds of bone spears breaking through the air. He turned his head back and discovered a sinisterly smiling Han Shuo looking down at him with a cold smile. In that moment, Florida couldn't help but swear.

A ball of eye blinding light shot out from Florida's staff. A "Radiant Slash" spell was flung out and pulverized the three bone spears. At the same time however, the difference between the levitation spell and Han Shuo's Art was made apparent. They had both chanted spells, but Han Shuo's speed hadn't been affected at all, whereas Florida's originally swiftly moving speed had decreased by a third.

A strange wind sound quickly approached from the distance and Han Shuo understood that Edwin was swiftly catching up. A mocking smile hanging from his lips, Han Shuo once again slowed down and clung to Florida's trail like a ghoul. He chanted the bone spear spell again as another three bone spears flew out.

Florida wasn't afraid of Han Shuo, but he was inordinately afraid of

Edwin. If it hadn't been for Edwin's pursuit, Florida would've absolutely stopped and brought his significant prowess to battle Han Shuo. However, he also obviously didn't want Edwin to catch up to him because of Han Shuo. Therefore, he could only continue his defense and reduce his speed again and again.

"Chief, we'll hold him off for you, you get out of here!" At this moment, some of the Rainbow Sickle experts out in front of Florida suddenly halted as one of them yelled loudly.

They'd all witnessed Edwin's strength just now. If they stayed, they might be able to hold back Han Shuo, but they'd never be able to defend against Edwin. Speaking these words at this moment meant that they'd already made their plans to die.

"Alright, I'll get revenge for you!" Florida was a ruthless person alright. Although he was a bit pained, he still decisively accepted their suggestion and glared ferociously at Han Shuo, then turning and dashing forward.

Two crossbows suddenly locked onto Han Shuo as two mercenaries' sharp eyes gave Han Shuo a prickling feeling of danger. Two sounds pierced through the air as two bolts brought a terrifying air current with them. They shot towards him with a speed and accuracy beyond Han Shuo's imagination.

The quickly advancing Han Shuo had to rapidly back up. He didn't dare rush another step forward. In this process, some of the archers notched their bows and took aim at Han Shuo. Their skill was in stark contrast to Belinda's methods just now. Since Han Shuo had already taken to the sky, he was hard pressed to evade the danger from below and had to back up once again.

Han Shuo hesitated and planned on immediately changing direction. At this moment, the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries beneath him suddenly started panicking. A milky white, resplendent severing aura suddenly shot out from their midst as Trunks appeared on the back of his manticore. He was waving his sword around with a cold expression and forced the mercenaries back so that they had no energy to spare for Han Shuo.

“Trunks!” Up in the air, Han Shuo was flabbergasted by the disturbance below and he couldn’t help but dive down to exclaim in joy.

“Fly through the air to keep harassing Florida. I’ll handle these traitors on the ground who should’ve died a thousand, ten thousand times! We’ll chat when we get back to the Valley of Sunshine!” Trunks threw back his head and flashed a brilliant smile. The charming, handsome Trunks was attacking the experts of Rainbow Sickle from the back of his manticore.

“Trunks, don’t you bully others to the extreme!” The expert who had spoken before suddenly glared ferociously at Trunks.

“Bully others to the extreme?! Haha! The old chief was so good to you and none of you guys said anything after that animal Florida took control. You just blindly followed behind him. How dare you say these words to me now!” Trunks laughed as if he’d heard something hilarious, but his smile was even colder than the frosty night wind and his tone spoke of a hatred etched bone deep.

Edwin’s figure was drawing closer, drawing a cold laugh from Trunks. Trunks lifted his head once again and urged Han Shuo on, “Bryan, hurry and go. Take advantage of this opportunity to kill Florida!”

“Alright, that old monster behind us is a tough bird. Run away immediately if he draws near and don’t meet him head on!” Although Han Shuo didn’t understand why Trunks hated Florida that much, he guessed it must have something to do with the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. The experts present here seemed to be acquainted with Trunks, and so this meant that there was some type of relationship between them.

Han Shuo realized that he wouldn’t be able to measure up to Trunks’ strong belief in him if he didn’t immediately give chase. He darted through the air like lightning and shot for Florida. Edwin arrived shortly after Han Shuo’s departure as well.

He cast a glance down and didn’t linger when he noticed that both Florida and Han Shuo were absent. He followed Han Shuo’s trail and seemed to be completely unconcerned with Trunks and those of the Red Sickle mercenary band below.

Han Shuo had already gotten a taste of Florida's abilities earlier, he definitely wouldn't be able to live in peace if the latter didn't die. The place of extreme water was located within the valley, so he needed to stay here for a while longer. If Florida didn't die, he'd have no end of trouble in the future. So even if Phoebe hated him for it, Han Shuo needed to kill him!

The flying art of a demonic cultivator enabled Han Shuo to slowly catch up to Florida when he circulated his magical yuan to the utmost, even after lingering halfway.

When the bone spears once again whistled through the air, Florida almost wanted to spit blood in his anger. He now knew that Han Shuo wanted to go down with him and have them both die to Edwin. In his irritation, he truly wanted to stop and fight Han Shuo to death.

"Just what do you want? When that old monster Edwin catches up to us, neither one of us will be able to escape!" Florida roared out furiously at Han Shuo, as the scene from earlier repeated again; Florida used the Radiant Slash to hack Han Shuo's bone spears into pieces.

"Heh heh, it strikes my fancy today that I'll die with you!" Han Shuo had an incredibly refreshing and relieving feeling after venting the dejected feeling he'd felt from being suppressed by Florida in the last two days.

Even with Edwin catching up to them, Han Shuo was confident that he could make use of his magic to get away. With Han Shuo's understanding of mages, he could also be certain that Florida wouldn't be able to maintain flight for too long, and thus this was why he'd done this.

"Crazy, a f\*cking madman!" Han Shuo's words finally caused Florida to start cussing.

Because Florida and Han Shuo's speed had decreased, Edwin's figure appeared from behind them at this moment and his odd cackling traveled to them first."

"Hurry up old dog! I'm waiting for you!" Han Shuo even had the time to laugh wildly and look back at Edwin, egging him on with his words.

"You better pray that I don't catch you, or I'll make you regret that

you've ever lived!" Edwin was absolutely incensed by the mention of "old dog". Even the injury on his back seemed to throb with more pain after hearing that.

Han Shuo had long since pulled out the arrow that Belinda had shot into his calf, and this was when his durable body showed off its capabilities. His blood had stopped flowing out of the wound, and apart from some minor pain, there was no impact to Han Shuo's movements.

When the three bone spears once again shot out, Florida had to reach out a hand and defend himself. Han Shuo made use of this time to release a dark mist spell. It was night to begin with, and there was no other light in the sky apart from a crescent moon. When the dark mist spell appeared again, it shrouded Han Shuo and Florida in a patch of darkness in which even one's own hand couldn't be seen.

"Damn it!" Florida emitted blinding light from his magic staff, but could only illuminate a small patch around him. He scrambled to defend himself against the bone spears and thereby decreased his flight speed even more.

"Kid, I'll take your life first to pay back some of your grandfather's debt to me!" Edwin had finally caught up to them, but Han Shuo slipped away like a bit of smoke and vanished in the direction of the Valley of Sunshine, leaving behind only Florida who'd been obstructed by the three bone spears.

Han Shuo wouldn't be so stupid as to conceal his traces in front of a dark grand magus. When the mental strength of a freak like this covered everything, even someone truly dead would be revealed to him. Therefore, Han Shuo could only use the advantage of his speed to leave this place of danger as soon as possible and leave Florida behind to bring up the rear.

As Han Shuo's figure slowly faded into the distance, the dark mist magic also started to dissipate. When Florida once again saw the clean moonlight reappear in the desolate night sky, he was also greeted with the sight of Edwin, enraged to the point where steam was spewing from his face.

"In the name of the God of Light, bind all darkness, Shackles of Light!"

Florida panicked when he saw Edwin and didn't think at all before he released the light magic spell, Shackles of Light.

Hula hoops of light sparkled with clean, pure light and rolled beneath the bright moonlight, surrounding Edwin. The bands of light were filled with the purest of light elements and had an enormous restraining power.

"This little fellow has such a high grasp of comprehension in light magic at such a young age. He will surely become a thorn in the side of our Calamity Church in the future. It looks like I can't allow you to leave alive today!" When faced with the shackles of light, the dark grand magus Edwin neither panicked nor grew frantic, and his angrily scowling face from earlier regained its peace.

He chanted out a dark magic spell and waved his staff at the approaching Shackles of Light. A boundless surge of energy seemed to want to rip into everything as it churned the two bands of light closest to him into pieces.

Suddenly, the remaining bands of light all formed into one string as lightning started sparking and crackling all over the bands of light. The Shackles of Light had originally only be able to restrain enemies, but it had suddenly turned into an enormously strong killing machine in the span of a second and tried to churn Edwin into pieces.

"Heh, you've got some skills alright to be able to combine thunder magic with the Shackles of Light." Edwin exclaimed softly as he was completely enveloped in the radiant flashes of lightning and bright light.

An inky black magic shield covered Edwin, and three Hands of Death appeared in the air, grabbing the Shackles of Light. They pulled apart the bands of light with brute force and the violently sparking lightning found it completely impossible to injure the Hands of Death.

"Pfft." Florida spat out a mouthful of fresh blood and then ran blindly away, seemingly unwilling to spend another moment there.

Melding together the light and thunder magic was obviously out of his control, and he'd been hit with the backlash of expending too much magic. That had resulted in immediate, significant injury. However, Edwin

had easily broken through such a strong blow, displaying that the differences in their strengths were indeed too hard to cross. Florida knew that he would be hard pressed to escape death if he stayed for another moment.

Although Edwin had broken through Florida's spell, it had taken him some time to do so. When Edwin then cleared away the remnants of the magic, he discovered that Florida had once again disappeared.

Florida was wavering through the sky in flight at this moment due to expending too much mental strength. However, the valley had finally appeared in front of him, and he'd be able to make it to safety before long.

No matter how much the Cairo and Rainbow Sickle mercenary bands were at odds with each other, the Cairo mercenary band still had to follow the rules of the valley. So once Florida entered the valley, whoever tried to kill him would face the attacks of all the assembled powers.

Add to that the fact that most of the Rainbow Sickle band was stationed within the valley, Edwin would be able to do nothing to Florida once he made it inside.

However, when he saw the border of the valley, Han Shuo's coldly smirking figure appeared at the same time and blocked the way that he needed to take, obviously not planning on letting him make it inside alive!

# Chapter 202: I'll remember you

If a person expressed the attitude of wanting to kill you at all costs, then the only way for you to live was to kill him before he killed you!

Han Shuo and Florida hadn't seen eye to eye from the very beginning, and the matter with Phoebe had magnified this enmity even more so. Not only had Florida expressed his desire to kill Han Shuo from the very beginning, he'd also taken actual action. Han Shuo would naturally not sit there and patiently await his death.

A day's worth of pursuit had now extended into the depths of the night. The bright moon hung high in the sky like a giant, a cold eye looking down on everything beneath it. Strong gusts of chilly wind shook the towering trees and blew away the thick snow cover on the ancient branches, the falling snow whispering in people's ears.

Han Shuo was standing in the air, carrying the Demonslayer Edge in his right hand with a cold expression on his face. His gaze stern and emotionless, he seemed to be a lofty mountain range obstructing Florida's path of hope.

Florida only had the chance to live if he made it past Han Shuo!

"If you step aside now, I promise to never go up against you in the future!" Caught in the throes of a magical backlash, Florida had greatly expended his energy in his desperate flight for life. His injuries were now severe and his strength far depleted. A tinge of resignation colored his words as he looked at Han Shuo.

A charming smile was plastered across his face, yet Han Shuo's laugh was as cold as an icy cavern. He looked meaningfully at Florida and shook his head, "I'm sorry, I think your corpse is much more reassuring than your promise!"

When he heard those words, Florida knew that there was no way out for him. His face darkened as he said, "My grandfather is the grand magus Ferguson of the Church of Light! There's nothing in it for you if you become enemies with me! Even if you can kill me today, my grandfather



will never let you off the hook!”

Even if Florida was injured, he still tried to create the illusion of strength with these words. But for Han Shuo, with his current strength, not only was he unafraid of Florida bringing out his grandfather to threaten him, he was now even more certain that Florida had nothing left in his tank. Otherwise, Florida wouldn't have wasted all this time talking to him.

“If I don't kill you today, I'll face danger from both you and your grandfather. But if you're dead, I only need to face your grandfather. Therefore, go die!” His words icy, Han Shuo readied himself to kill.

A pile of stark white bones appeared beneath the pristine moonlight as Han Shuo chanted. Gleaming coldly, the bones quickly assembled into a bone prison that was three meters wide and four meters tall, contracting rapidly around Florida.

Han Shuo suddenly shot towards Florida with a merciless expression when the bone prison had completely formed, moving through the night sky like lightning.

Even if his strength was greatly spent, Florida was still a light major archmage, particularly as he'd also dual majored in thunder magic. Han Shuo had seen everything quite clearly in the distance when Florida had faced off against Edwin, and knew that his strength was quite frightening.

Therefore, with Han Shuo's advantage in magical cultivation, the smartest thing for him to do was to close the distance between him and Florida. No matter how strong Florida was, Han Shuo was confident that he'd be able to kill him if he was within close combat range.

A light major spell suddenly exploded out with Florida as the epicenter. The eye piercingly strong light brought with it the pure, divine strength of light. The spell formed sharp ripples as it crashed onto the bone prison in front of him.

Light major had always been a natural counter to necromancy magic. When the pure and divine strength of light collided with the bone prison, the originally gleaming white bones seemed to undergo a hundred years of corrosion as they started to crumble. The strong defenses had become so

brittle that they wouldn't even be able to withstand the slightest blow, and so exploded into pieces when Florida struck fiercely with his magic staff.

Although he'd broken out of the cage, Florida's face was even more drained of blood than before. It was obvious that he'd expended too much mental strength and had taxed his body beyond its limits. At that moment, Han Shuo suddenly appeared next to him, the Demonslayer Edge sparkling with a murderous light. He slashed at Florida's neck, utterly determined to end his life with one deadly strike.

The magic staff in Florida's hand suddenly exploded with white light as an enormous power within suddenly erupted. Florida hurled his staff at the Demonslayer Edge.

A metallic clang rang out as the two connected, and the magical yuan infused Demonslayer Edge ripped a large hole through Florida's staff of unknown materials. However, the power within the staff obstructed Han Shuo for a slight moment, making him falter involuntarily in the air for a moment.

On the other side, frothy blood was now running down from Florida's mouth, trailing down his neck to dye his chest a vivid red. His handsome face was now as pale as paper and the blood by his mouth made him appear even more frightening. At this point, he wasn't so much flying to the Valley of Sunshine, but swaying his way to it instead.

High quality magic staffs could store a portion of the caster's magic within it and release it at critical moments. Florida's actions just now had obviously been that. The magical elements within the staff had acted as a catalyst to cause an explosion and make Han Shuo pause for a second.

By the valley's fence, the Cairo mercenary band's vice chief Harris seemed to have received some sort of message and was looking in that direction with some of his experts at his side. They had long since seen the battle going on outside, but was casting a dispassionate eye upon things and hadn't intervened.

Everyone in the valley knew of the enmity between the Cairo and Rainbow Sickle mercenary bands. The Cairo mercenaries had an

obligation to interfere as long as Florida set foot within the valley. However, Han Shuo and Florida's fight was taking place outside the valley at the moment. Additionally, with Harris' hatred of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, he likely was passionately wishing for Han Shuo to kill Florida.

Pausing for a moment, Han Shuo saw that Florida was about to enter the valley. Behind him, Edwin had once again reappeared as well. Han Shuo immediately circulated his magical yuan to its utmost and shot across the sky, leaving a smoke trail as he made for Florida.

Suddenly, a fire dragon rose into the air and shot out from the valley's fence, churning towards Han Shuo. Han Shuo had wanted to kill Florida, but was forced from his path in order to evade. He first used the dark mist spell to create cover and then summoned a zombie to substitute for himself in the face of the fire dragon's wrath.

Han Shuo looked down at the dark mist and noticed that a fire mage had appeared by the valley border. There was a rapidly approaching cavalry troop in the distance wearing the uniform of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries as well.

"Damn it, why are they here?" Harris growled in anger.

"Chief, chief, are you alright?!" The Rainbow Sickle mercenaries immediately surrounded Florida when they drew nearer and asked anxiously.

Florida was still suffering from immense shock and fright, and finally breathed a huge sigh of relief at the sight of his own people. He turned his head to point viciously at Han Shuo, "Kill him!"

Florida's body fell into a dead faint as soon as he'd finished speaking. It looked like the trials he'd suffered along the way had caused him great trauma.

The appearance of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries made Han Shuo understand that he no longer had any opportunities to kill Florida. However, since Florida had fainted, Han Shuo understood that even though he hadn't died, he was half dead anyways. It would take him a long

time to recover from this.

Han Shuo didn't wait for the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries to make their move, but shot into the valley from above and landed a few meters in front of Harris.

According to the valley's rules, even if one had the ability to fly, one couldn't enter the valley using flight.

However, Han Shuo's earlier fight with Florida had been completely witnessed by those in the Cairo mercenary band. The enemy of one's enemy was a friend, and so not only did Harris very magnanimously forgive Han Shuo's actions, but immediately gestured for his men to form a wall in front of Han Shuo.

"I'm sorry, now that he's entered the valley, fights cannot occur in the Valley of Sunshine, or our Cairo mercenary band would intervene!" Harris' expression was calm as he grasped his double headed battle-axe tightly, radiating a willingness to explode into battle at any moment.

Chief Florida's grave injuries were a large blow to the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries, not only in terms of strength, but also reputation. The eyes of the mercenaries all spat fire as they looked in Han Shuo's direction, but Harris had expressed his intention to abide by the rules, and so they were caught in a dilemma.

"Let's stabilize the chief's injuries first. They'll pay as soon as the chief is alright!" The fire mage who had attacked Han Shuo earlier cast a glance at Florida's face and suddenly opened his mouth to speak.

This person likely had a very high position within the mercenary band as no one else said anything after his suggestion. They all glared furiously at Han Shuo, leaving quickly with Florida in their care.

"Friend, you must be more careful. Florida will not let you off easily after he wakes up. Although our men patrol all over the Valley of Sunshine, we still can't fully prevent people from making some mischief. I think you know what I mean?" Harris' attitude was much warmer compared to the first time he'd seen Han Shuo. The cold lines of his face had softened as he spoke a word of warning to Han Shuo.

Florida's grave injuries greatly benefited the Cairo mercenary band, and as Florida's rival, Han Shuo was the Cairo mercenary band's friend. No wonder Harris' attitude was so friendly towards Han Shuo.

The Cairo mercenaries were on patrol all throughout the valley, but their energy was limited;. It was impossible for them to keep an eye out all the time. When the fuming Florida woke up, he would absolutely pursue revenge at all costs. Even if he was in the Valley of Sunshine, he would likely pick the perfect time to make his move, so Han SHuo wasn't truly safe within the valley as well.

Nodding, Han Shuo spoke with a slight smile, "Thank you, it's not that easy to kill me either!"

Edwin had also made it over at this time and landed on the ground near the border. His gaze fixed itself tightly on Han Shuo as he said, "I want to enter the valley, what procedures do I need to take care of?"

Han Shuo's head began to throb at these words. The arrival of such an old freak was an even greater threat to him than Florida. However, the Valley of Sunshine had its rules as well, and they wouldn't turn away such a god of wealth.

"Kid, you're called Bryan aren't you? There are fewer and fewer people who can inflict injuries on my body as the years go on. I'll remember you!" Edwin rubbed his aching back as he completed went through the appropriate procedures. He threw a ghastly smile at Han Shuo, the various crevices and moats on his face scrunching together to appear quite stern.

"You should forget me instead, I don't want to see you again!" Han Shuo smiled ruefully in response, walking into the valley nursing a headache and thinking of how to prepare appropriate measures.

Edwin came from the Calamity Church and had the strength of a dark grand magus. He was a significant force to be reckoned with across the entire Profound Continent. That such a character hadn't been immediately killed meant that he would have an almost unimaginable amount of trouble in the future. Han Shuo was now besieged with an enormous headache and wanted to leave the valley immediately.

Everything could wait until he returned to the cemetery of death through the transportation matrix.

The end of the night had arrived unknowingly and Emily was rather sleepy when Han Shuo returned to the Dark Mantle.

When she saw Han Shuo reappear in front of her, the slightly confused look in her eyes slowly cleared up. She said gleefully, "You're alright! Did you see Trunks?"

Nodding, Han Shuo said with surprise, "How did you know Trunks is here?"

"The Dark Mantle has a small intelligence network within the valley. Trunks entered the valley by himself shortly after you left. I know that the two of you are close, so I had a chat with him when he entered the valley. When he learned that Florida was making a move against you, he immediately left again and rushed in the direction of Valen City. I didn't go with him because I had to stay here and wait for news from my superiors." Emily explained.

"Elaine's dead. I fell victim to a trap and almost got killed!" Han Shuo sighed and sat down.

When she heard of Elaine's death, a sad expression appeared on Emily's beautiful face and she grew very quiet. After a while, she sighed heavily and softly said, "Although big sister Elaine didn't know how to fight, she was very capable. She'd operated her small hotel in Valen City for many years and supplied us with valuable advice many a time. She's helped us so much, but died because of us!"

If Han Shuo and Emily hadn't appeared, and if they hadn't given Belinda over to Elaine's care in their rush, Elaine wouldn't have died either. It was because Han Shuo didn't have a deep relationship with Elaine that he wasn't hit with any particularly tragic feelings. When he saw Emily's grief stricken expression, he patted her shoulder lightly and spoke a few words of comfort.

Emily's mood improved as Han Shuo comforted her in a low voice. It was then that she remembered the true task at hand, "Just what

happened?”

Han Shuo recounted the events in great detail, making Emily shudder in fright when she heard of the dangerous happenings on this trip. She cheered for Han Shuo’s escape and prayed for him during his dangerous encounters.

Emily was still caught up in the shock from what had happened after Han Shuo had finished, and lifted his pant leg to see the now clotted wound. “Don’t take such risks in the future, if Belinda’s arrow hadn’t landed here, then you would’ve been in a lot of danger.”

“Don’t worry, if the direction of her arrow was more dangerous, I naturally wouldn’t have sat there just to be hit by it. I would’ve immediately evaded and escaped as far as possible.” His actions had brought certain results in the end. Although Edwin’s back injury wasn’t as severe as Florida’s, it would be enough to cause him grief for some time.

“We’re in trouble now. Florida is already a tough person to shake off, and now we have Edwin to deal with as well. He has a high position in the Calamity Church and is quite vicious and brutal. You’ve even hurt him, I don’t know whether to be proud or worried for you!” Emily sighed with a look of worry on her face.

“Don’t worry, if it comes down to it, we can return to the cemetery of death. As long as we stay in a place where no one can find us, we’ll be able to defend ourselves or attack after we set up the transportation matrix!” Han Shuo held a rather optimistic view as he smiled to comfort Emily.

At this time, the old man looking after the Dark Mantle stronghold walked over and knocked on the door, “Mistress Emily, chief Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band requests that you and master Bryan pay a visit.”

“Understood, Grandpa Camby!” Emily responded lightly and looked at Han Shuo. “It looks like we may have allies!”

# Chapter 203: Forcing a fight

The sky had completely brightened and the air had grown cooler. The sun, the size of a disc, was slowly rising in the sky. A resplendent sunrise stood tall and upright over the inky blue clouds and sparkled with a soft red light, ripping apart the clouds that covered the heavens.

Small groups of people traveled on the morning streets in the Valley of Sunshine as they wandered out of the dens of temptation from the various alleys off the streets, yawning with sleepy expressions. It was apparent that they'd expended great effort on the bodies of women last night.

"There are truly so many disgusting fellows with no taste!" Emily wasn't in the best of moods as she flicked a cold glance at those walking out of the alleys with untidy clothing, a look of distaste on her face.

Han Shuo wasn't overly tired by the chase that had lasted all night. He looked around interestedly but didn't respond.

"Oh, right, Phoebe came to find you last night, I said you were out on business!" Emily drew her coat together tightly by the neck and turned her head to speak to Han Shuo.

"She didn't say anything?" Han Shuo started slightly and thought of what Phoebe had gone to do.

"No, she likely doesn't have anything to say to me!" Emily responded, paused, and suddenly drew close to Han Shuo in a gossipy fashion. She lowered her voice, "Did you do... that to her?"

Shaking his head, Han Shuo was all business as he said righteously. "How could I do that? We've only met for a few months. Am I someone in that much of a rush?"

"Pfft, you violated me the day you met me through raping me, you shameless villain!" Emily was quite disdainful of Han Shuo's response and snorted with contempt.

Han Shuo couldn't help but laugh at her words. He didn't feel awkward, but rather retorted, "Our circumstances were rather special. Besides, you



were so alluring, how could my hot bloodedness withstand your temptations?”

“Villain! All you know is how to talk nonsense!” Emily’s breath was caught in her anger, but she was rather satisfied by his answer and didn’t continue the conversation.

When he saw some happiness marking Emily’s brows, Han Shuo knew that she wasn’t actually angry. He suddenly thought of a problem and asked, “Oh right, how did the Cairo mercenary band know of that place? Do they know that Dark Mantle controls the shop?”

Contrary to Han Shuo’s expectations, Emily actually nodded. She explained when she saw his look of befuddlement. “The Valley of Sunshine is different from a town or city of the Empire. The Cairo mercenary band holds sway here. Since there’s limited land around here, they’ll thoroughly investigate any comings and goings. It’s a completely unrealistic thing to want to stay here and remain a secret.”

“However, although they know that we’re the Dark Mantle, they don’t interfere with our operations at all, because we target those with designs against the Lancelot Empire and won’t purposefully make trouble for them.”

“Bryan!” Han Shuo and Emily were walking towards the Cairo mercenary band when they heard Trunks’ voice.

Han Shuo turned his head to see the manticore riding Trunks appear from the direction of the entrance to the valley. There were some indistinct traces of blood on him and the manticore. Behind them, the Rainbow Sickle experts had on looks of anger. It seemed like they’d come off worse in a fight.

Han Shuo ran sharp eyes over Trunks’ body, but didn’t discover any traces of ripped clothing. It looked like the fresh blood on him and the manticore were from those of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band.

“Are you alright?” Han Shuo asked with a slight smile when Trunks had made it over on his manticore.

“Just a few cowardly traitors, how could they possibly harm me? Oh right, how did it go on your side? Did you kill that pathetic Florida?” Trunks responded confidently and looked closely at Han Shuo.

Spreading his hands out with a resigned expression on his face, Han Shuo sighed, “His men saved him at the entrance to the valley. However, I think he’ll have to spend at least a month or two to fully recover from his injuries!”

“Haha, that’s good enough. I came to the Valley of Sunshine for his life this time, and it looks like you’ve already done half the job for me, I thank you!” Trunks laughed heartily and then looked back at the Rainbow Sickle members behind him with an imposing expression. “Traitors, go back and tell Florida that I, Trunks, have returned again. I must take revenge for Annie this time, he’ll die by my hands!”

The Rainbow Sickle mercenaries all had looks of hatred and anger when they heard these words, but they seemed to know that Trunks wasn’t someone to be trifled with. They only snorted coldly a few times and circled past Han Shuo and the others, moving towards another direction.

“Trunks, why are you here, and what enmity do you have with Florida?” Han Shuo couldn’t help but ask at this point.

The merchants had already awakened on the streets of the valley and the streets had begun to bustle a bit. Trunks looked around with a slightly dismal expression, saying, “This isn’t a place to speak, let’s find a place where we can chat and I’ll tell you in greater detail!”

“Alright!” Han Shuo nodded.

“Wait, Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band has reached out to us. Why don’t you have a good chat after we return?” Emily couldn’t help but speak up in reminder when she saw that Han Shuo and Trunks seemed to want to immediately find a quiet place to chat.

Han Shuo only reacted after Emily had spoken and said to Trunks apologetically, “Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band sent people to find us early this morning, asking us to pay a visit. Why don’t we chat later?”

Nodding understandingly, Trunks walked side by side with Han Shuo and said dashing, "Let's go, I happen to know Laureton as well, let's go together."

"You know him?" Han Shuo started and asked Trunks with surprise.

"Of course, I spent some time in the valley back in the day and I know many people here!" Trunks responded matter-of-factly. Emily revealed a surprised expression and looking thoughtfully at Trunks.

There were no established streets of shops within the valley, just a few soaring cliff faces and some towering trees that blocked the sky. Trunks seemed very familiar with this area as he led Han Shuo and Emily inside.

"The terrain is quite precarious within the depths of the valley, but there's a vast plain after making it through a narrow tunnel in the cliffs. The strongest power within the valley has always lived there. It used to be the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band living there a few years ago, but if it wasn't for Florida's evil scheme in killing the old chief, the Cairo mercenary band wouldn't be forced to live elsewhere at this very moment!" Trunks started introducing the area around them as they walked.

There were members of the Cairo mercenary band standing guard at certain intervals along the path. However, the distance between the guards was large enough, and they weren't afraid of others hearing their words.

"Right, Trunks, just what kind of enmity is there between you and Florida?" Han Shuo couldn't help but ask when he saw that the surroundings were quiet enough.

"I was actually part of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band to begin with, and I was a senior swordsman then. The old chief had always taken care of me and the chief's daughter Annie treated me like a brother. I was very comfortable in those days, until Florida appeared. The young Florida brought with him a dazzling aura and enjoyed special treatment as soon as he joined. Not only did the old chief value him highly, but even Annie quite admired him. I myself had good relations with him as well."

"However, Florida's goal in coming to the Rainbow Sickle mercenary

band was to fully control it. Even though the old chief had already given Annie over to his care, he still felt that the old chief had too many days in front of him. He colluded with robbers and revealed our movements to them, causing great losses to the band. The old chief died when surrounded by the robbers, and Annie vanished as well. It's likely that she met with a bad fate as well."

"I was lucky enough to escape and personally witnessed the conversation between Florida and the head of the robbers. That was when I understood everything. From that moment forth, I swore to get rid of Florida one way or another. Sadly, when Florida took control of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries, he also invited a source of power from the Church of Light and consolidated his influence over the situation in an exceedingly short amount of time, thoroughly grasping the mercenary band."

"I was only a senior swordsman then and attempted to assassinate Florida with some injured mercenaries loyal to the old chief. We ended up getting thoroughly defeated and fleeing for our lives. Many of my closest friends died in that battle. I entered the Dark Forest to train myself, ever nursing the determination to take revenge. I waited for three years, and when I heard that the fight over the title of the strongest in the valley was about to take place, I knew that Florida wouldn't shy away. He would certainly contend with the Cairo mercenary band. I thought that I had a chance, and so I've come back!" Trunks unemotionally recited the tales of a time gone by as they walked.

His expression was indifferent from beginning to end, as if describing something that had nothing to do with him. However, as the audience, Han Shuo and Emily could discern from the events themselves the endless hate buried deep within Trunks' heart.

When Trunks had finished, Han Shuo looked deeply at Trunks and flashed a brilliant smile, "It looks like we can team up again. Without a doubt, Florida's going to die this time!"

"Of course! He's definitely going to die." Trunks said confidently, and then looked at Emily interestedly, switching his gaze to Han Shuo

afterwards. He asked a bit oddly, “And what’s the deal with the two of you? If I recall correctly, this lady was captured by you, but why are the two of you walking together now?”

Chuckling heartily, Han Shuo winked at Trunks and said, “Sometimes, it’s an easy thing for enemies to become friends, particularly between men and women!”

“I understand, haha!” Trunks burst out laughing and nodded in understanding.

“Two silly fellows!” Emily was a bit angered and embarrassed by their words. She rolled her eyes at them and huffed.

They’d passed through a narrow tunnel as they chatted, arriving at an open plain. Black boulders dotted the landscape in abundance, alongside tall buildings. These buildings were neither exquisite or beautiful, they just extremely practical. They seemed durable, sturdy, and would hold up well under an assault.

There was a large parade ground on the way to the buildings and several muscular mercenaries were practicing with various weapons. Some mages were releasing spells in a dense forest not too far away, and there were others meditating in the distance.

“This place is large enough and the buildings sturdy enough. Because there’s only one path leading here, it’s very safe, and has always been the valley’s last line of defense throughout the years.” Trunks kept explaining on the way over.

“Eh, Trunks, what are you doing back here?” Harris of the Cairo mercenary band was standing on the parade ground in great spirits, seemingly waiting for Han Shuo and the others. He was quite surprised to see Trunks and couldn’t help but call out.

“Harris, long time no see! You look even more fierce now! But Florida is still thriving throughout these years, it looks like you didn’t get your revenge!” Trunks spoke to Harris from afar with some mockery on his face.

“Humph, you also fled with severe injuries, what right do you have to talk about me?” Harris’ expression was stiff as he said irritably.

“Forget it, I have nothing to say to you. Let’s go, take me to Laureton!” Trunks frowned as he twitched his lips, urging Harris to lead the way. Harris led the three of them through the parade ground to a tall building. Rumbling crashes traveled from the inside of the building, and the three of them were greatly surprised by the scene in front of them when they walked in.

A bald, fierce man about two meters tall stood in front of them, wearing only a pair of shorts. The muscles of his naked upper body were raised upwards, each as tough as iron ore. The blood vessels over his body throbbed as they filled with frightening explosive power.

There was a black boulder the size of a small mountain on his back. It was three times the size of him as he shouldered the boulder. He leaped backwards, sending the boulder crashing against a stone pillar that was as thick as three people wrapping their arms around it.

Sweat flowed like rivulets down the lines of his muscles as his dark skin sparkled with healthy vigor. His gleaming head didn’t have a single strand of hair on it. His body trembled continuously amidst the thunderous collisions, and the entire building shook from the violent impacts, making one worry that it would collapse at any time.

After Han Shuo and the others arrived, he collided five more times before finally throwing away the boulder on his back away to the side. The ground trembled like an earthquake had struck it, and the thunderous roaring sounds permeated the entire building.

He raised his head and focused his eyes in their direction. A crushing force of presence slammed down on Han Shuo. Han Shuo’s heart couldn’t help but seize a bit, seeing how strong this person’s body was. He had used only external training methods to train his body to the point where it naturally produced such a thick, forceful presence. This alone fully explained the frightening aspects of this person.

“Trunks, what are you doing back here?” A strange light shone in the big

man's eyes as he looked askance at Trunks.

“Long time no see Laureton, it looks like your physical body has almost been trained to the pinnacle. You could become berserk twice over previously, and it looks like you've improved even more. I wonder if you can become berserk thrice over to reach the legendary third realm of the berserkers?” Trunks revealed an interested expression as he stared at Laureton.

Grinning oddly, Laureton didn't respond to Trunks' question and switched his attention to Han Shuo. “You're the fellow who almost killed Florida?”

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled faintly. “That's right, what might Chief Laureton be summoning me for?”

“I want to discuss a spot of business with you, but you need to eat one of my punches first. I need to see if I can measure your strength and see if you're worth me handing over that shop to you!” Laureton laughed loudly as a fist the size of a fan blasted towards Han Shuo with a fierce, dominating aura.

Han Shuo was slightly startled at the suddenness of his actions, but quickly realized that this punch embodied a berserk force as it drew closer. This greatly shocked him, and what was even more surprising, was that when this strength surged forward, it blocked off all his avenues of retreat, making it impossible to dodge.

Han Shuo was struck dumb with amazement as he immediately focused and deployed his magical cultivation to the maximum, planning on directly taking this punch.

# Chapter 204: My own power

An iron fist swung over with the momentum of wanting to cleave through mountains and split open rocks. The strong force rippled audibly through the air as an unbounded dominance spilled forth like the tides, making Han Shuo's hairs stand on end.

Han Shuo took a deep breath in and circulated his magical yuan to his right hand, deploying his magical cultivation to its extreme and turning his hand into the color of black jade. His very bones seemed to be made of black jade as his hand sparkled with a faint light. A cloud of purple magic circulated in the palm of his right hand, appearing as spellfire.

Trunks and Emily had been shocked by the sudden development and was about to intervene when they saw Han Shuo's right hand suddenly change. They all stood there, flabbergasted, and didn't say a word.

After his hand had changed, Han Shuo suddenly shot out from his defensive position at an unparalleled speed. He then pulled his right hand back and materialized a purple-black streak of lightning, smashing it into Laureton's oncoming punch.

A thunderous crash that was even louder than when Laureton had crashed into the pillar with the boulder sounded, the collision reverberating throughout the entire hall.

An overwhelming force traveled up Han Shuo's right hand into his body. The strength was beyond his imagining. If it wasn't for the perverse level of durability his body was at, his right hand would've absolutely shattered and exploded from this touch.

Even so, his body couldn't help but fly backwards and crash into a black boulder in front of the hall doors with an audible crack. His body sagged to the ground, as chief Laureton stood firmly rooted like a boulder. However, an icy cold presence spread from his fist throughout his body and froze the small trickles of sweat running down his body into gleaming, translucent pearls. White smoke rose from his body as the frosty air covered him.



“Are you alright?” Emily flashed over to Han Shuo in the blink of an eye, reaching to help him up.

His arm was numb from his fist up to his shoulder, and it was still trembling lightly even now. Han Shuo panted heavily as his heart filled with shock, full of astonishment at Laureton’s strength.

“Laureton, it looks like your strength has improved once again. Don’t think I can’t tell even though you’ve held back some of your strength. You may have already materialized the level of being berserk thrice over!” Light danced in Trunks’ eyes as he stared at Laureton’s body.

Han Shuo had been about to comfort Emily when he heard Trunks’ words. The shock in his heart grew even greater. From Trunks’ words, Han Shuo knew that perhaps that blow just now may have been fierce, but it still hadn’t been Laureton’s true strength. Based on the domineering strength from that blow, Han Shuo was certain that Laureton wasn’t any less inferior to earth rider Clark or swordmaster Phoebe.

This wasn’t even his true strength! If Laureton truly brought his full strength to bear, then it’d be even more astonishing. No wonder he was the chief of the Cairo mercenary band and controlled the order of the Valley of Sunshine. Ice had covered Laureton’s body when cracking sounds suddenly sounded over his body. The frozen beads of sweat scattered down from his body down to the floor like gleaming pearls, shattering into shards of ice when they came in contact with the stone ground.

Shivering involuntarily, Laureton sneezed and wrapped a fur cape around himself tightly, then looking at Han Shuo with surprise. “What kind of technique was that? I couldn’t sense any fighting aura or magic, but why did it have the power of the two combined?”

“I couldn’t feel any ripples of fighting aura or magic from you either, but your strength isn’t any less than a swordmaster and his fighting aura. This is nothing to be shocked about!” Han Shuo shrugged and responded with a smile.

“Us berserkers have a special way of training, and a very specialized

method at that. You're not a berserker, how can you do this? This is truly very strange!" Laureton looked askance and shook his head.

"Alright, I think this wasn't your point in inviting us here?" Han Shuo walked leisurely to the front and sat down on a stone seat not too far from Laureton, also calling out to Trunks and Emily as well.

After the blows they'd just exchanged, Han Shuo understood that Laureton was likely stronger than himself. The Cairo mercenary band's greatest enemy currently was the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries, so Laureton definitely hadn't invited them to come so he could act against them. Therefore, Han Shuo was quite at ease.

Emily and Trunks also walked over carelessly when they saw Han Shuo so relaxed, pulling over a stone stool each for a seat.

"Harris, what's Florida's condition now after returning to the Rainbow Sickles?" Laureton revealed an approving look at Han Shuo and the others' nonchalance and lifted his head to look at Harris.

"Florida suddenly fell into a coma at the door in front of the valley and was brought back to the Rainbow Sickles. According to our reports, he should still be comatose, so we don't know his condition right now either." Harris displayed an appropriate amount of respect in front of Laureton and responded quickly.

Nodding, Laureton rubbed his gleaming, bald head and seemed to contemplate something. He looked at Han Shuo after a while and said loudly, "Your strength isn't bad, I'd hoped that you would consider joining our Cairo mercenary band, but since you know Trunks, you likely won't be willing to."

"I know Florida's strength, and I tested you just now. I think it'd be impossible for you yourself to harm him to that degree, not to mention that he had some experts by his side. Can you tell me what happened?"

"An enemy helped me. Edwin, who entered the valley today, happened to be enemies with Florida's grandfather. Florida bumped into Edwin along the way and the two fought first, I just happened to take advantage of the situation." Han Shuo responded honestly since the truth was easy enough

to decipher, and there was nothing worth concealing about it.

“Edwin... Dark archmage Edwin of the Calamity Church—that old monster has entered the valley?” Laureton was startled and he turned his head to look at Harris.

“That would be him. Another masked woman entered the valley after a while and is staying with him for now.” Harris nodded and responded to Laureton.

“This person is very difficult to handle, he’s your enemy?” Laureton smoothed over his gleaming head again and appeared a bit troubled.

“Laureton, I haven’t heard that you were afraid of anyone all these years. Can it be that an old man is frightening you? It looks like the stronger you are, the more cowardly you’ve become!” Trunks seemed to know the meaning behind Laureton’s head rubbing and couldn’t help but mock him.

“I’m not afraid of him, I’m afraid of the Calamity Church behind him. This is the most evil cult in all of the Profound Continent, and they never adhere to any rules or logic. Their power is incredibly vast as well. They won’t rest if you provoke them, and all the kingdoms on the continent are quite scared of them, not just our Valley of Sunshine.” Laureton rubbed his head and spoke with some worry.

The Calamity Church was the disaster and nightmare of the entire continent. They nursed some unreasonable, fervent ideals and tried to use their power to destroy all those who didn’t agree with them. Even the Lancelot Empire would react as if facing an oncoming enemy when they heard of the Calamity Church, not to mention a mid sized mercenary band. From this point alone, it was apparent to see that the Church was very terrifying indeed.

“Edwin is my enemy and Florida’s as well. Now that he’s within the valley, I think he’ll be making a move!” Not much expression could be seen on Han Shuo’s face as he opened his mouth to speak dispassionately.

“I’ve heard that Miss Phoebe of the Boozt Merchant Guild is buying a shop for you. That shop is in a forbidden zone within the Valley of Sunshine. It’s rumored that it’s been cursed by an evil god. Any who’ve

bought that shop in recent years have all died from having their blood drained. Do you really plan on buying it?" Laureton didn't keep asking about Edwin as he raised the next topic of interest.

"Indeed, I've never believed in any curse from an evil god. I hope chief Laureton will sell that shop to me?" Han Shuo admitted and responded.

"Bryan, why do you want that shop? I've heard of that place as well. Many died there when the Rainbow Sickles were in charge. We even made an investigation once, but found nothing. That's an unlucky place, don't take that risk!" Trunks was quite startled when he heard this and immediately turned back to frown at Han Shuo.

Emily was also startled. She turned to fix her stare on Han Shuo. "No, don't take the risk! I've heard of that place too, there's an incredible curse there. You can't take that!"

This chapter has been stolen if it's not on volarenovels. Don't support theft.

"There are still some unclaimed shops within the valley. I just want to know, why that one?" Laureton obviously didn't care about Han Shuo's wellbeing. He only wanted to know Han Shuo's intentions, which was why he was questioning Han Shuo.

"I have no comment about this, but I hope you can give the shop to me. I'll pay you a reasonable price!" Han Shuo could understand from Laureton's words that Phoebe hadn't succeeded yesterday. Laureton looked all brawn and no brains, but Han Shuo knew that he certainly wasn't as simple as he appeared on the surface. If he was, he would've sold that cursed land to Phoebe a long time ago.

"Of course, I have no right to interfere in your personal matters, but I do have the rights over the shop in the valley. I have the authority not to sell it to you." Laureton put on a dashing air and laughed heartily.

Taking a deep breath in, Han Shuo said, "Alright, I won't push it if you don't want to sell it to me. If there's nothing else, I think we can leave. There certainly doesn't look like there's much left for us to do in the Valley of Sunshine!"

“Perhaps you do need to leave, but Trunks will likely stay. Heh heh, is that right, Trunks?” Laureton looked at Trunks with a look of confidence on his face.

Snorting coldly, Laureton had indeed touched up on a matter important to Trunks as the latter threw out a ferocious glare.

Han Shuo was absolutely confident in obtaining the place of extreme water. He’d pretended he was going to leave only because he wanted to haggle with Laureton. However, it’d seemed like Laureton had seemed to understand something and had seized on Trunks’ weak point.

Laureton had been observing Han Shuo and Trunks’ expression since they’d walked in and was certain that they had a deep friendship. When he’d tested Han Shuo, Laureton had mentioned the matter of the shop. Han Shuo had then taken out his full strength in response. This made Laureton understand that Han Shuo cared a great deal about this shop.

“I said in the very beginning that I wanted to talk about a spot of business with you. I tested your strength just now, you do indeed have the right to sit down and talk with me. Now with Florida in the mix, this matter will be a bit easier to handle. This is a win win situation, I wonder if you’re interested?” Laureton was completely unafraid that Han Shuo wouldn’t accept as he chuckled.

“Speak, what kind of business?” Han Shuo sat down lazily on the chair and flicked a glance at Laureton.

“Very simple. You continue about your business, which is to kill Florida. Our Cairo mercenary band will supply intelligence and can also guarantee that the Rainbow Sickles won’t send forth their troops against you. After the deed is done, you can get that shop for free and Trunks will have gotten his revenge. There will also be one less threat to us. Isn’t this great joy all around?” Laureton raised a very alluring proposal. It seemed like a win – win – win no matter how one looked at it, with no one being the worse off.

However, Han Shuo still didn’t immediately agree to it. Rather, he remained silent for a while and suddenly said, “You need to provide men

as well to help us handle Edwin. Otherwise, our safety isn't guaranteed with this person around."

"Friend, don't ask for too much. Actually, if we go find Edwin, we may have a better partnership effect with him." Laureton shook his head and declined with a darkened expression.

"Alright, then go cooperate with Edwin!" Han Shuo spread out his hands and couldn't seem to care less.

The Calamity Church wasn't made of kind people. Anyone who cooperated with them had to worry about going up in flames, particularly as Edwin was a dark archmage. If Laureton cooperated with him, it wasn't completely assured that Laureton could maintain control over the situation.

In addition, the Calamity Church had always been an organization on the continent that was hated by men and gods alike. If the Cairo mercenary band cooperated with Edwin, this would become a lethal blow to their reputation if this matter was leaked. All of the merchants within the valley would surely be incensed and the Cairo mercenary band's position within the valley would be subject to great challenge. Han Shuo had correctly deduced this point.

"We can't help you fight Edwin as it's not a wise move to offend them for Florida's matter, but we can use our advantage in the valley to supply you with intelligence of Edwin's movements. We'll tell you in advance no matter where he wishes to go. This way, your safety will increase as well. This is the best we can do, otherwise we really have no deal!" Laureton said slowly.

"Alright, then it's settled!" Han Shuo understood that this was the most that Laureton could do. The threat from the Calamity Church was so great that the Cairo mercenary band wasn't willing to make enemies of them.

"Very happy to be working with you. If you're willing, please stay for lunch first!" Laureton seemed to be in a great mood having settled the matter and made this suggestion with a hearty laugh.

"No thanks, we have other matters to discuss." Han Shuo demurred and

then walked out with Emily and Trunks.

“Bryan, are you familiar with Miss Phoebe of the Boozt Merchant Guild?” Trunks’ expression was a bit strange on the way back and he suddenly stopped in a quiet corner to ask Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “That’s right, our relationship is very good. She’s my girlfriend, what of it?”

Trunks’ handsome face revealed a strange light to it beneath the rays of the sun. He looked deeply at Han Shuo, “Bryan, look. The Valley of Sunshine is a marvelous place. You can start your own power if you have enough ability and if we develop using the Valley of Sunshine as our center of operations, we can have our own faction as well.”

“You have Miss Phoebe as your friend, and so you’ll definitely have enough gold. I have some seasoned mercenaries on my hand. We can absolutely use these resources to form our own mercenary band and form our own power. If we hold greater power in our hands, we’ll be able to obtain more and won’t have to be restrained by others anymore.’

“Honestly, with Lauren’s strength, he doesn’t need to fear that old monster Edwin. Add to that his Cairo mercenary band, it’s not difficult if he wants to kill Edwin. He fears the Calamity Church behind Edwin. He’s also on his guard against Florida not because of his own strength alone, but the Rainbow Sickles that follow him as well.”

“After all, one person’s strength is insufficient to contend with a faction’s. As long as we work hard, with the combination of our advantages and the peculiarities of the Valley of Sunshine, we can absolutely form an independent power. This way, no matter where we are in the future, others will definitely have to carefully weigh our words!”

This suggestion was filled with a fervor that filled Han Shuo’s mind like the finest cream. He suddenly understood something, as a heart that had never been willing to be ordinary suddenly started beating even more fiercely.

“You mean that the two of us should build a power that belongs to us alone?” Han Shuo’s voice sounded a bit emotional, at complete odds with

his usual indifference.

Nodding his head firmly, Trunks continued. “Indeed, some of the original Rainbow Sickle brothers are hidden in the mountain ranges around the valley after receiving my news. However, although their talents are extraordinary, life has been a bit difficult for them because they’ve lost the halo of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. However, their strength and quality are without a doubt the best.”

“I’ve been hunting all sorts of magical creature cores in the Dark Forest these years and have created a small stash of wealth with my greed. However, it’s still a bit difficult to satisfy the needs of the operations of a mercenary band. But you have a deep relationship with Miss Phoebe, and if we obtain the support of sufficient gold, we can absolutely form a mercenary band with my current network. When our operations are large enough and we have our own reputation, not only will we not need additional gold, but we’ll be able to amass our own wealth through various missions. We can also use those methods to slowly strengthen our power.”

“If our mercenary band can take control of the valley like the Cairo mercenary band to protect the profits of the merchants, we’ll have several hundred thousand gold coins in fees every year. With such a power in our hands, our identity will be different in front of any person or country!”

“Bryan, Trunks’ suggestion is sound. The organization won’t mind another identity. In fact, the stronger your other identity is, the more useful you are for the organization. The speed of your promotion will increase according to your organization’s size; it’s a good complement. If you reach a certain scale, then maybe the upper levels will send someone to help you so you have even more power!” Emily was also an ambitious woman and her voice had become charged with emotion the more the conversation progressed.

“Come, let’s go back and thoroughly discuss this!” Han Shuo’s decision had already been made. He spoke lowly with a strange smile on his face.



# Chapter 205: Then call it Soul Destroyer!

After a short conversation, Han Shuo understood that Trunks had already gathered several dozen original Rainbow Sickle mercenaries to take on Florida. These people hadn't entered the valley yet, but were staying in a mountain cave on the outskirts of the valley and waiting for Trunks' orders.

Trunks was part of the Rainbow Sickles before and had a treasure trove of experiences being a mercenary. He was well versed in the operations of a mercenary band, and only lacked the funds to register a mercenary band and to maintain its daily operations. Phoebe controlled the Boozt Merchant Guild, and there were many opportunities to earn money from the that guild alone. In addition, the Boozt Merchant Guild was quite well off and it could certainly temporarily fill in the gap of capital.

Emily had an enormous intelligence network within the Dark Mantle. With her position and role, she could absolutely supply much valuable information to Han Shuo and Trunks.

Not only was Emily quite excited about their conversation, but so was Phoebe highly interested as well. Han Shuo was well acquainted with Trunks' abilities and strength. Han Shuo knew that once the mercenary band was created and running, their business wouldn't be too poor.

"Trunks, give me an estimate of how much gold you're still short on?" Han Shuo looked at Trunks and asked.

Han Shuo and Phoebe had both expressed strong interest up to the point. As the owner of the Boozt Merchant Guild, it wasn't difficult for Phoebe to resolve the issues with lack of funding. Now that Trunks heard Han Shuo ask the critical question, he responded with some excitement, "Registration depends on the number of members, and each member's salary, equipment, weapons, and horses, as well as the band's facilities will need gold coins."

"Only fifty to sixty people have currently come forth to the Valley of Sunshine. They were all the key members of the Rainbow Sickles before.

Using them as a base to form a new mercenary band, we'll need to put forth only twenty thousand gold coins in the beginning. We may need to add to that in the future according to member strength and numbers, but once our mercenary band's reputation is set and we have stable partners we work with, not only will we not need to further invest in more gold, we'll be able to save money and slowly increase our strength!"

Han Shuo looked at Phoebe and then at Trunks, smiling faintly, "I had great gains during our last trip in the Dark Forest. I think I can set up the mercenary band with the wealth I amassed last time."

Han Shuo had obtained large amounts of gems and crystals from the dark elves and lizard men during his trip to the underground world. Not to mention his last haul of jewels from the Forest Trolls' sacred ground, which had been even greater than the last batch he'd handed over to Phoebe. When Han Shuo took out all the wealth he'd collected during this time, Phoebe, Emily, and Trunks were all stunned and flabbergasted!

The many splendid colors sparkled from the gems and beautiful jade beneath the light of the lamps. There was a small mountain's worth of wealth, and even wealthy folk such as Emily and Phoebe were momentarily stunned by the sight.

"Oh, my gosh, where did you get all this? Emily cried out in astonishment as shock was written all over her face.

"You already offered a pile of treasure last time, and this time's has been even greater. Exchanging this amount of treasure into gold coins would net you fifty thousand gold coins at a minimum, where did you get this from?" Phoebe was similarly surprised.

After being momentarily stunned, Trunks shook his head with a wry smile, "I spent three years in the Dark Forest and hunted hundreds of magical creatures, but only made less than ten thousand gold coins. You kid are certainly impressive!"

"Change all of this into gold coins for me, then take thirty thousand as the initial investment into Trunks' mercenary band. Keep the rest with you so that you can collect the items I need!" Han Shuo smiled faintly and

spoke to Phoebe.

Han Shuo had already quite trust Phoebe before they'd confirmed their relationship, and now that they'd had touched each other intimately, he naturally had even fewer reservations. Phoebe also felt that Han Shuo's trust was quite par for the course, and nodded in acceptance. She laughed softly, "Don't worry, I'll handle everything for you. The Valley of Sunshine is the best place to conduct transactions, I'll turn all these items into gold coins for you over the next two days!"

When Emily saw that Han Shuo had handed over such an enormous amount of wealth without reservation to Phoebe, she became noticeably jealous. But she knew that as the owner of the Boozt Merchant Guild, it was most reasonable for Phoebe to undertake this matter, so there was not much else she could do.

"Eh? Where did you get this bow?" Trunks suddenly walked over with an odd expression on his face as Phoebe was putting all the items away into her space ring. He picked up a bow with bizarre patterns and turned to ask Han Shuo.

Han Shuo suddenly remembered that this bow was from the dark elves when Trunks posed this question to him. The original holder had expended all his life force to shoot one arrow and cause great injury to Gilbert. After Han Shuo had obtained this bow, he didn't come to any conclusion after some research. Add tot that his lack of desire to expend his life force in shooting the bow, he'd thrown it into his space ring without further question.

"I got it from the hands of a dark elf family in the underground world. This bow is quite odd, it seems to be able to absorb one's life force to shoot a frightening arrow!" Han Shuo explained.

"Oh my gosh, legends speak of a bow cursed by Rose, that should be it! The legends say that the evil goddess Rose of the dark elves once cursed this bow so that it would absorb the life force of the wilder to shoot out an arrow of terrifying force. Usually, only perverse folks who wish to seek revenge at the cost of their own life would use it!" Emily exclaimed as

she'd heard of the legends of this bow.

“Indeed, this is the bow. However, I heard that this bow was a marvelous treasure that could increase thunder magic before it was cursed. If thunder mages held the bow, they could use it to shoot out astounding electricity with great power.” Trunks explained to Han Shuo as he held onto the bow.

“Keep it, maybe someone will be able to cleanse it of its curse in the future. If the curse is removed, then this bow will become a treasure that thunder mages fight over!” Emily thought for a moment and said to Han Shuo.

It wasn't likely that many would dare buy a bow that absorbs the wielder's life force anyways. As a magical cultivator, Han Shuo would be able to use his own magical yuan to create formations and forge magical weapons as his strength increased. Perhaps he'd be able to cleanse the curse on it in the future.

Therefore, Han Shuo nodded to Emily's words and put the bow away, “Alright, perhaps we can possibly use an altar in the future to communicate with the evil goddess so that she'll remove it. Let's try in the future!”

After obtaining Clarendon's memories, Han Shuo understood a bit about communicating with evil gods. The basic principle was that as long as you could supply something that the evil god wanted, you'd be able to receive a corresponding boon from the evil deity. This was actually just a sort of business transaction.

The sparkling and gleaming jewels had been stored into Phoebe's space ring in a short span of time. Han Shuo thought for a moment and took out another set of dwarf forged weapons, handing over a heavy battle axe to Trunks. Han Shuo smiled, “What do you think about this quality?”

Trunks' eyes had already started gleaming when Han Shuo had taken out the weapons. He picked up the battle axe without another word. As he waved it around once, a howling sound emitted from the battle axe's shining surface. There was a natural wave of cold killing intent emanating

from the battle axe as Trunks held it in his hands.

“This is great! Where did you get it?” Trunks was delighted as he looked at Han Shuo.

“The dwarves forged all of these weapons. Perhaps there will be something within this pile that’s suitable for our comrades!” Han SHuo smiled faintly.

“Haha, I think they’ll like it. Dwarf forged weapons are renowned in the lands. I knew these were no ordinary items when you took them out just now!” Trunks happily accepted these weapons and placed them into his space ring.

He was quiet for a bit and then looked seemingly carelessly at Han Shuo, smiling, “Chief, everything is ready now, and we just await a striking name from you!”

Han Shuo started after hearing these words, then smiled and waved his hands, “I just need to be vice chief, that’s enough for me. The real chief should be you, you decide the band’s name!”

Trunks had been wreathed in smiles just now when he suddenly grew serious and declined gravely, “You must be the chief of the mercenary band. This matter isn’t open for discussion. I’d rather decline your good intention if you refuse and nothing we’ve talked about before will count for anything.”

Emily and Phoebe had actually wanted to ask a long time ago who was the owner of the mercenary band. However, it wasn’t the thing to do to actually open one’s mouth and discuss this, so they’d kept things in and had planned on taking some time out to discuss with Han Shuo.

To the two girls, they would only help the mercenary band if the band was Han Shuo’s. They were unfamiliar with Trunks, and naturally didn’t have any relationship with him. Although Han Shuo and Trunks seemed close, they were naturally unwilling to put their lives on the line for Trunks.

The two girls paid a great deal of attention after Trunks brought up what

was troubling them. Their beautiful eyes looked between Han Shuo and Trunks continuously, anxiously waiting for their decision.

“Trunks, I know nothing about the formation and management of a mercenary band. It’s a bit inappropriate if I’m the chief!” Han Shuo truly didn’t know what a mercenary band needed.

“No worries, you just need to give general guidelines orders. I can take care of everything else for you as vice chief. Bryan, Miss Phoebe and Madame Emily will help me only if you’re the chief. I don’t have the charisma to obtain their support!” Trunks self deprecated and winked at Han Shuo.

“Eh, since this is the case, don’t continue to decline!” Emily wasn’t awkward at all, as if Trunks’ words had been quite ordinary.

Phoebe also nodded with a remote expression and turned to Han Shuo, “That’s right, I’ll only help this mercenary band unconditionally if you’re the chief.”

“Alright, men should be more decisive. Hurry and decide on the mercenary band’s name so I can go register it and officially give my brothers a new home!” Trunks looked at Han Shuo and urged him onwards.

Han Shuo was actually more aware than anyone of the circumstances at hand. When he saw that all that needed to be taken care of had been decided, he no longer hesitated and nodded his head in agreement.

“Alright, then call it the Soul Destroyer mercenary band!”

“You’re so fake! You even thought of the name already and said you didn’t want the position. You had to make a show of declining, so shameless!” Trunks couldn’t help but laugh and yell at Han Shuo when he heard Han Shuo immediately give out a name.

Emily and Phoebe both looked askance at Han Shuo. They too hadn’t expected that Han Shuo would think of a name so quickly. They then understood that Han Shuo had long since had intentions of taking control of the mercenary band, and he’d put on a show of declining just now.

“He’s always been this shameless!” Emily and Phoebe both deeply agreed with Trunks’ words and actually opened their mouths to say the same thing.

When they finished speaking, they discovered that they’d actually voiced the exact same words. This made them quite amused as they started giggling softly.

“Alright, let’s call it the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. I’m going to go about my business now, you guys can too!” Trunks said.

# Chapter 206: Transformation

Once things were settled, the hotly fired up young folk with money started to move very rapidly.

Florida's injuries were quite severe, and news from the Cairo mercenary band indicated that he was still in a coma. Edwin's every move and gesture was under close surveillance after entering the valley. He stayed within the hotel, seeming to want to take care of the wound in his back first.

Trunks left the Valley of Sunshine after he'd had settled matters with Han Shuo, saying that he wanted to discuss future plans and the good news of Florida's injuries with his brothers.

Phoebe moved about the Valley of Sunshine the next couple of days after receiving Han Shuo's enormous wealth. She called upon her connections to talk to several merchants and also helped Han Shuo collect materials to refine the wood and water elite zombies.

Emily stayed within Dark Mantle and seemed to be communicating with the executives. The senior levels of the Dark Mantle seemed to want a large operation this time to take down Bob Ascher.

As someone in the know, Trunks was the one busying about forming a mercenary band. There wasn't much for Han Shuo to do after the issue of funding had been taken care of. He used the two days of downtime to return to the cemetery of death.

Han Shuo wasn't actually too worried about Edwin's threats. After all, he had a dark dragon in the cemetery of death as backup. Through some communication, Han Shuo understood that if Gilbert wanted to recover quickly, he'd need to absorb some creature cores.

It was because he understood this, and that he did indeed need Gilbert's strength, that he'd brought Gilbert along with him over the past two days into the Dark Forest to hunt down some high level magical creatures.

The two killed seven wind blade wolves, four frost eagles, and one medusa in two short days. With Han Shuo's current strength and Gilbert's



help, the high level creature medusa was defeated after the two joined forces.

Gilbert mostly recovered from his injuries after absorbing these creature cores as well as the medusa's valuable blood, and his strength was no longer affected by his injuries.

Gilbert had absorbed all the cores but had left behind the teeth, skin, and flesh. Han Shuo took all those and threw them into one of the warehouses in the cemetery of death.

On the eve of the second night, Gilbert stayed within the cemetery of death to digest the cores. As for Han Shuo, he left to visit the broad and swift moving waterfall near the cemetery.

The waterfall dived down like the universe emptying itself, bringing with it a ferocious strength that swept away all obstacles in its path. It seemed to be falling directly from the heavens. Han Shuo sat down cross legged underneath the falls, positioning himself close to an enormous boulder near the center and enduring the crushing force of the waterfall.

The parts of his body exposed to the waterfall had all turned a bright red. Han Shuo had seemed to become part of the boulder as he sat there without moving an inch. He seemed to be a lifeless sculpture.

However, the magical yuan was circulating with the speed of ten thousand horses galloping ahead. All muscles, tendons, and bones in which the magical yuan circulated past were refined over and over again. The demon infant started bouncing slightly in his abdomen as a small figure exactly the same as Han Shuo emanated vigorous life force.

Han Shuo had continuously achieved new heights during this time. He'd finally completely absorbed all of Johnny's soul. Bits of information floated randomly through Han Shuo's mind. All sorts of disordered memories were in the mix as well, appearing as clouds of mist that no one could see clearly.

Han Shuo understood that these scattered bits of information were the memories that Chu Cang Lan had left in his mind. Han Shuo had been only able to obtain small parts of this information before reaching the true

demon realm and having his brain fully developed. The majority of the information had been locked in his mind.

Now that he had reached the true demon realm and his mind developed, Han Shuo had seen great increases in his memory, comprehension, and thinking abilities. Those previously hazy, indistinct, and scattered memories were swiftly casting off their veil and becoming clearer beneath Han Shuo's full examination.

All sorts of bizarre secret magical arts, parts of profound incantations, refinement methods to create magical treasure, demon generals, and formations were running through Han Shuo's mind at high speed. They were becoming part of Han Shuo's memories that would never be destroyed.

He suddenly awoke after who knew how long. There was hard to conceal excitement, pride, and confidence in that pair of eyes beneath the rush of the waterfall. It was as if he'd been reborn as he was filled with a heretofore unseen confidence.

The solid realm, open passages realm, molded spirit realm, true demon realm, bloodlust realm, separate demon realm, carnal realm, nine changes realm, and omen realm were the nine levels of cultivation that would enable a mortal to ascend to a level of existence that was as omnipresent as the gods. A frightening strength that could cleave open the heavens and earth, would grow to being able to move mountains and oceans, as well as grant the holder immortality in the end drew a magnificent and mysterious blueprint in front of Han Shuo.

The blueprint had been unfurled now and Han Shuo was the brush, able to trace his unbounded future according to his desires. This power that could reforge, fly through the heavens and earth, be indestructible, and surpass the wheel of rebirth truly did exist!

A thought struck him as all the pores of his body expelled goutts of dark grey, murky air out of his body. This murky air had been the dredges from Johnny's soul, and had remained in Han Shuo body after the demon infant had absorbed the strength from the former's soul.

Han Shuo's body wavered as he took off, shooting across the sky. He landed solidly atop an enormous tree, put on a warrior's dark green outfit and flew towards the cemetery of death.

"Eh? Master, you seem a bit different from normal!" Gilbert looked askance at Han Shuo as soon as the latter had returned to the cemetery of death and couldn't help but speak out.

"Oh? What's different about me?" Han Shuo looked at Gilbert and smiled faintly.

Shaking his head, Gilbert said, "I can't express it. Your eyes seem a bit more mysterious and your aura as well. Mm, you seem more confident, the confidence of having grasped the situation and being assured of victory!"

Han Shuo understood. After obtaining all of Chu Cang Lan's memories, he now knew many magical arts like the back of his hand. He'd be able to take on Edwin even without Gilbert's help now. But because he lacked sufficient strength, it'd be a bit troublesome for him to do so.

"Since your injuries have healed, leave with me!"

"Wonderful! Are you taking me to do some sneaky and underhanded things again this time?"

"Shut up, do what I tell you!"

"Master, I seemed to have seen that patch of dirt shift slightly after you left today!" Gilbert first pouted and then suddenly remembered something as he pointed at the area where the earth elite zombie was being refined.

Han Shuo started and turned back to look at the place of extreme earth. He suddenly discovered that the center had indeed sunk in. The earth qi that had been circulating the area had all vanished without a trace. Overjoyed, Han Shuo laughed heartily, "Very good, it looks like he's thoroughly absorbed all of the earth qi. He'll be able to emerge from the dirt after a few more days!"

"Humph, just a zombie, what's so good about it!" Gilbert flicked a dismissive glance over and grumbled.

Just as Gilbert finished speaking, the place he was standing on suddenly collapsed as an enormous crack appeared out of nowhere after a series of earth shattering rumbles. It caught Gilbert unawares and closed on him. The crack seemed to be alive as it kept closing, squeezing Gilbert's body and making him curse loudly.

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"Alright alright, let him go!" Han Shuo could feel the earth elite zombie's dissatisfaction from deep within the ground and knew that he must be behind all this.

The originally retracting crack suddenly sprang open like a spring. When the immobile Gilbert discovered that the earthquakes and shifting of the ground was due to the earth elite zombie below the ground, he couldn't help but wear an expression of extreme shock on his face. He hastily climbed out when the crack loosened.

"He was formed here and has been absorbing the earth qi here. This place is his territory. He's able deploy strength several times his own as long as he's here. He can move the earth and mountains, crack the ground, form the earth into a cage to trap you, or coalesce an earth dragon to attack you. This is all incredibly easy for him."

"Remember, don't fight him in his territory. He's basically invincible deep in the ground. He may not be able to manipulate everything according to his will when he leaves, but any bit of land here can be transformed into his weapon!" Han Shuo looked at the scrambling Gilbert with a supercilious smile as he explained faintly.

The elite zombies would be able to greatly increase their strength in the area that they were formed. Whoever irritated them in their own territory was committing a foolish action.

Gilbert had offended him with a word and the earth elite zombie had immediately struck back tit for tat, allowing Han Shuo to understand that the earth elite zombie wasn't a low level zombie that could only listen to his commands. It looked like it was the same as the little skeleton, having

gained his own sentience.

When he saw that Gilbert was behaving himself after clambering out of the crack, Han Shuo spoke in the earth elite zombie's general direction, "Refine the earth qi well and emerge sooner rather than later!"

A beam of thought was sent into Han Shuo's mind. The earth elite zombie had obviously heard his words and sent over "understood!".

"Come, let's leave!" Han Shuo walked towards the center of the cemetery of death as he looked at Gilbert. When he passed by the yin demon cave, he noticed that there were only five wraiths left. It seemed like the three yin demons would be formed soon as well.

"Just what's with that zombie, why is he so strong?" Gilbert couldn't hold back the questions in his heart when they'd left the earth elite zombie and arrived at the transportation matrix.

"You wouldn't understand even if I explained to you. He's just different from any other zombie warrior you know. His existence began to change the moment he started absorbing the earth qi. Remember, you should try to avoid provoking him in the cemetery of death. He's much stronger than you can imagine in here!" Han Shuo smiled faintly and instructed Gilbert.

Han Shuo pushed Gilbert into the middle of the transportation matrix as he spoke and then activated it, returning to the Dark Mantle's stronghold in the Valley of Sunshine.

Han Shuo put the six magical sticks away when he walked out of the secret room and lifted a piece of wooden floor above him. A hallway leading upstairs appeared and the two walked up.

"Bryan, you're back!" Emily suddenly called out when she saw them emerge.

"Hi, beautiful woman, we meet again!" Gilbert smiled at Emily in greeting when he walked up and was greeted with an enormous eyeroll from Emily.

"What's wrong?" After receiving all of Chu Yang Lan's memories, Han Shuo was now full of confidence about the future. He believed that if he

worked hard enough and advanced his magical cultivation, he'd be able to obtain strength that would make everyone respect him. It was because of this that he hadn't terribly minded some of the difficulties and setbacks that he was encountering and asked Emily rather carelessly.

"The Cairo mercenary band just sent word that Florida has awoken, and that he called for a meeting as soon as he woke up. He plans on moving against us with no thought of anything whatsoever, and wants us to be on our guard. In addition, Edwin and Belinda seems to have made a trip to the Cairo mercenary band these days. This is information we gained ourselves. No one from the Cairo mercenary band told us about this." Emily responded quickly.

Nodding his head in understanding, Han Shuo thought with a furrowed brow and then smiled slightly, "We'll deal with things as they come up. If Florida dare comes to his death, then I'll make sure he doesn't get off easily. Don't worry about Edwin for now. I think Laureton won't be so silly as to create trouble for us now. We're something he can leverage now. He'll wait until Florida is dead before creating trouble for us."

"In my estimations, Edwin went to meet with the Cairo mercenary band possibly to obtain some information about Florida, but Laureton may not have necessarily agreed to help him against us. He also won't choose to cooperate with Edwin against us. Don't be too bothered by it. What we need to do now is to defend our current stronghold."

Emily was stunned momentarily by Han Shuo's words, and then looked at him oddly. This was when she discovered that Han Shuo had worn a remote expression on his face all along, as if no danger would shake his confidence. His eyes were even more profound and mysterious, and his entire demeanor had changed. He was full of an unexplainable feeling, making Emily feel a bit surprised.

"What, why are you looking at me so oddly?" Han Shuo rubbed his nose and laughed when he saw Emily stare at him unblinkingly with her beautiful eyes.

"Bryan, has something happened to you these past two days? Why do I

feel like you're different from before?" Emily didn't conceal the thoughts on her mind and asked directly.

"Indeed, master is a bit different from usual. I've discovered it as well!" Gilbert also couldn't help but murmur loudly at this point. His eyes kept looking over Han Shuo, trying to figure out what was different about him from usual.

"Heh heh, nothing much, just that I've received a large amount of memories over these past couple of days. They've helped me understand a lot of things." Han Shuo wore a mysterious expression on his face as he explained to Emily.

Emily still felt Han Shuo was mysterious beyond belief, and that the things that happened to him were marvelous and illogical. He had a little skeleton that wasn't afraid of dark magic, could fly without making use of magic and fighting aura, and had an amazing weapon that moved according to his thoughts. These were all out of Emily's range of comprehension.

"Forget it, I wouldn't understand if you explained either. I just need to know that you're alright!" Emily shook her head and gave up further questioning. She suddenly remembered what Han SHuo had said last and asked, "Oh right, you said you wanted to defend our current location. How are you going to?"

Han Shuo paused silently with a bit with a mysterious expression, then voiced a word that Emily was completely unfamiliar with, "Formation!"

# Chapter 207: A hundred ghosts in a frenzied dance

The ability to set up a formation that could seize the wonders of the heaven and earth using the mystical rules of nature and a few special ingredients, was a secret skill that all magical cultivators could grasp.

Han Shuo was no longer content staying passive after digesting all of Chu Cang Lan's memories. Even if his current cultivation level wasn't up to par, he'd be able to take a more active role by using some magical formations.

Using a strategy of acting first and reporting later, Han Shuo took over the shop with the place of extreme water. He used Florida as an excuse to fob off Harris when he came by later.

The Cairo mercenary band was in charge of everything in the Valley of Sunshine, so they weren't afraid of Han Shuo getting up to any tricks. The shop would unconditionally be returned over to Han Shuo anyways, once Florida was dead. Han Shuo was just taking possession of his property earlier.

A storefront wasn't the same as other items, capable of being taken away and easily stored. If that had been the case, Harris probably wouldn't have been willing to hand over the store that early, since he would've been concerned that Han Shuo would've taken the items away. But since the store was immobile, this concern didn't exist for Harris. Not to mention, the deed was still in his hands. Thus, Harris didn't say anything after listening to Han Shuo's explanations, tacitly approving of what Han Shuo had done.

The storefront rumored to be cursed was larger than Han Shuo had imagined. It was roughly four hundred square meters and had an eighty square meters courtyard. There were many small and large rooms, including various tables, chairs, beds, lamps, and assorted furniture. It was because this was an ill omened place that all of the items inside had become unlucky after the owner had died. No one would take anything



from this store and potentially bring trouble down on their heads. Apart from lacking blankets and other daily necessities, as well as a thick layer of dust due to lack of occupants for a long time, there wasn't much that the storefront was missing.

Han Shuo had already explained the peculiarities of this storefront earlier when talking about forming the mercenary band. Although Emily and Phoebe didn't quite understand his explanation, they understood that Han Shuo had already cleaned out the unclean thing within this store. Out of their trust for Han Shuo, although the two girls were a bit uncomfortable with this place, they didn't protest and allowed Han Shuo to take up residence within.

Since he'd decided to set up a formation, he had to make the necessary preparations. Han Shuo made a list and put Emily and Phoebe in charge of collecting some necessary items of cold to form the foundational materials.

Due to consideration of their safety. Han Shuo had Gilbert follow behind them. With such a strong and extraordinary dark dragon following behind, and the two girls being an archmage and a swordmaster respectively, they likely wouldn't come off worse for the wear if they ran into Edwin.

Once everyone had been sent on their way, Han Shuo chanted a necromancy magic spell and summoned ten skeletal warriors. He gave an order, and they all picked up brooms and dustbins and started sweeping from room to room.

The "Shura Soul Formation" was a formation that trapped victims in a realm of illusions. This formation needed the death auras from a hundred ghosts to support it, as well as the bones from lands of cold to form six Shura pillars, and the blood of virgins as ink. Once magical glyphs were written onto the pillars, a piece of floating rock infused with five drops of blood essence from the caster would form the eye of the formation and complete it.

Once the formation was formed, any enemies who didn't understand formations would be attacked by the death auras of a hundred ghosts as

soon as they walked in. They would become disoriented and see illusions, discovering a spectral clone of themselves that wanted to kill them at all costs. Fear would cause him to sink into madness in an instant. Furthermore, no matter how strong their heart was, it was a very difficult thing to triumph over one's heart.

The well in the middle of the place of extreme water had been slightly modified by Han Shuo so that he could make full use of it. He was using the well as the eye of the formation and had added some of the materials he'd picked up these days to form a small scale "Kelpie Possession Formation". Each wraith had been planted with a jellyfish and had been transformed into a kelpie in the well through use of secret arts. Anyone who neared it would be possessed by the kelpies and dragged into the well.

After setting up the two formations, Han Shuo suddenly reflected that he'd been wise alright, to combine the use of Chu Cang Lan's magical cultivation and the necromancy magic of this world. It seemed that they did indeed give rise to unforeseen effects when combined.

The "Shura Soul Formation" ghosts could be replaced by wraiths, and the bones of cold could be replaced by ordinary skeletal warriors. The "Kelpie Possession Formation" also made use of wraiths. If Han Shuo hadn't known necromancy magic, he'd have to collect all the materials himself from cemeteries.

However, with the identity of a necromancer, he merely needed a few chants to collect all the materials. It'd saved him no end of effort.

After busying about for a day, Emily, Phoebe, and Gilbert were quite surprised by what they saw in front of them when they returned to the shop late at night.

Six stark white bone pillars were stuck in six different corners of the courtyard. Cold aura wafted from the center of the courtyard. There were clouds of foggy wraiths in the air, posturing and making faces as they danced through the air. A sinister feeling filled the surroundings.

Several white, foggy clouds were floating intangibly around the well in the center, forming leering and grimacing faces. A blood red stone was

placed within an indentation next to the well. Some of the wraiths floating through the air were circling around the stone, with their bodies dyed red as a result.

Han Shuo was sitting down cross legged in front of the stone, with beams of black splendor emitting from the palms of his hands. His hands had turned into an inky black as hazy light circulated around his body, making his entire being appear quite evil.

The doors to all the rooms around the courtyard had been opened, and all the dusty rooms had been thoroughly cleaned. The light within them was cozy and inviting, with none of the cold air in the courtyard drifting into the rooms. "Oh, my gosh, what did you do?!" Emily exclaimed in surprise as she turned on the spot. Curiosity filled her eyes and she reached out a hand to touch one of the Shura pillars.

"Don't move!" Han Shuo suddenly opened his eyes and called out softly to Emily.

Emily's jade hand had been about to touch the pillar when she hastily yanked it back, as if she'd been frightened. Phoebe and Gilbert were still a bit flabbergasted at the moment. They'd never have thought that this place would've been transformed so utterly within the span of a day.

A strange presence suffused the courtyard, making them instinctively uncomfortable. They'd never seen this setup of straight things, and had no idea what they were for. Their minds were full of questions at the moment.

Smiling faintly, Han Shuo stood up from his cross legged position and dripped a drop of bright red blood into the stone. The breezy courtyard whipped up even stronger winds as the wraiths danced and howled with the addition of the blood. Bouts of cold air of death made everyone feel incredibly frightened.

"Did you get everything I wanted you to purchase?" Han Shuo smiled faintly.

"Ask him, he was the one who collected the most important thing!" Phoebe pointed at Gilbert with a reddened face.

“Gracious master, why are you collecting the blood of virgins? You are too shameless and dirty!” Gilbert griped and looked at Han Shuo with a disdainful expression, yet he appeared quite excited.

“Oh shut up, did you get it?” Han Shuo glared angrily at Gilbert.

“Heh heh, I did I did. There’s nothing that can’t be settled without gold coins! I spent only fifty gold coins and took a spin around the small alleyways of the valley to get what you needed.” Gilbert took out a bottle the size of a palm as he spoke.

Emily and Phoebe both snorted coldly when he took out that bottle, splitting off into two directions and heading for the rooms.

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“Why are you two snorting at me? I wasn’t the one who wanted to do so, it was all master’s orders! Did you think I wanted to? All those stupid women inside looked at me like they were looking at a huge pervert! If I hadn’t taken out the gold coins, I probably would’ve drowned from them spitting at me!” Gilbert appeared quite aggrieved when he saw that both Emily and Phoebe were looking down on him, and couldn’t help but complain loudly.

There were some crudely wealthy customers within the red light district who liked to be waited upon by virgins. In order to lure these customers, those in charge would spend a great deal of money to purchase virgin slaves. Han Shuo had sent Gilbert there precisely because he knew this.

Although Han Shuo had a thick enough skin, he still couldn’t set aside his face enough to purchase these things. After all, if someone with no idea of what was going on saw his actions, they would think his actions were dirty enough indeed.

“Alright alright, go about your business, don’t bother me!” Han Shuo rather understood Gilbert’s complaints, but didn’t bother comforting him.

Han Shuo had used the Demonslayer Edge to carve various complicated drawings on the six Shura pillars. He now hauled a bucket of spirit water

from the place of extreme water and diluted the bottle of virgin blood within it.

He used a spoon made from the wood of a peach tree to stir it, then picked up the bucket and flew upwards, landing on top of the first Shura pillar, and poured the liquid on top of the pillar.

Emily and Phoebe exited their warm rooms when they saw Han Shuo start his work. Their clear eyes were full of curiosity about Han Shuo's actions.

The reddish liquid flowed down the pictures that Han Shuo had carved earlier. Amazingly, none of the liquid dripped to the ground. They filled the cracks within the pictures as if being tightly attracted by a surge of power.

Han Shuo threw the empty bucket away to the side after he poured the liquid over the six pillars. He then flew to the blood red stone next to the well and sent black sparkles soaring up from his palm, forming a magical formation and branding it into the center of the blood red stone. The six pillars suddenly glowed with a red light as the faces of all sorts of howling and wailing ghostly faces appeared in the pictures carved onto the Shura pillars. The hundred wraiths that had been flying around the courtyard sped towards these pictures as if sparrows returning to a nest.

The originally intangible wraiths melded with the twisting shapes of the ghosts as they sank into the Shura pillars. The ghosts seemed to come alive as they started thrashing and dancing on the Shura pillars, revealing fanged and bloodthirsty mouths. Successive bloodcurdling wails of desperation rang in the night sky, terrifying the nearby people.

This is bad! Han Shuo was greatly startled. He hadn't thought that such frightening screams like the cries of ghosts and howls of wolves would sound after the formation was complete. He immediately formed another spell and threw it into the floating rock that had absorbed five drops of his blood essence.

In that instant, all the wraiths were sucked into the Shura pillars, and the pillars that had hundreds of ghosts dancing madly over them became

lifeless, as the wraiths within seemed to be frozen in the drawings of the ghosts.

“Give me the rest of the materials. The formation should be completed first. Even if that old monster Edwin pays a visit, I’ll make sure he doesn’t get off easily!” Han Shuo laughed madly as he spoke to Emily and Phoebe.

Their two faces were full of shock at the moment. When they heard Han Shuo’s words, they handed over the items of cold that they’d purchased in a morass of confusion. When all the materials had been collected, Han Shuo started flying rapidly around the courtyard amidst the three people’s befuddled gazes. It was then that the three discovered that many large and small ditches that could perfectly hold all of the items in Han Shuo’s hands.

Han Shuo retreated from the courtyard when all was ready and summoned Gilbert to his side, where he was standing next to Phoebe and Emily.

He gave a mental order and a beam of red light soared to the sky from within the courtyard. Wind howled in the courtyard for a moment as an extreme feeling of cold from the hundred dancing ghosts on the pillars suffused the other three’s hearts.

The three understood that a simple courtyard had turned into a place of lethal danger after Han Shuo’s preparations!

“Everything will be flawlessly perfect as soon as we erect a soundproof forcefield around the area!” Han Shuo turned to look at Emily with a mysterious smile.

“Leave that to me!” Emily understood his meaning and released a dark magic. Magic ripples suddenly appeared over the courtyard, coming down like a formless dome.

“What happened, did the curse of the evil god flare up?” Harris’ call suddenly sounded from outside as hoofsteps echoed. Harris and others of the Cairo mercenary band appeared in front of the store on horseback, with Harris knocking on the door and calling out.

As the eye of the formation, the floating rock also had five drops of Han Shuo's blood essence on it. Therefore, Han Shuo could easily control the entire formation through the floating stone with a simple thought.

When he heard Harris' shout from the outside, Han Shuo slightly changed the formation and made it revert back to normal. There were no other changes apart from the six Shura pillars.

"Nothing much, has Mister Harris come by to tell us of some news?" Harris opened the door to let Harris in as he responded easily, beaming widely.

Harris looked around with his sharp eyes after entering, sweeping them through every corner of the shop. He asked Han Shuo with a bit of confusion, "Why have six strange pillars suddenly appeared?"

"Oh, we plan on making this a long term residence, and created this six pillars for support because there's no place to hang anything out to dry. What brings Mister Harris by?"

"A bloody light flared just now, and others in neighboring shops heard frightening wails come out from here. They said that they were terrified and wanted us to come over to look at the situation. I was also worried that something had happened to you, so I came by to take a look!"

Laughing easily, Han Shuo joked, "These people are quite cowardly. We were just practicing magic just now. We've several people here and wouldn't be afraid even if the curse kicked in. Don't worry!"

"Eh, the fellow collecting virgin blood is also your friend?" Harris nodded and was about to leave when he suddenly discovered Gilbert. He couldn't help but ask Han Shuo.

"Eh... you could say that!" Han Shuo felt a bit awkward as he turned back to glare at Gilbert. The latter was about ready to erupt in anger, when Han Shuo indicated for him to be quiet and then turned back to explain to Harris.

"Why do you have this kind of friend? He's so disgusting!" Harris looked at Gilbert with extreme disdain and seemed unwilling to stay longer as he

hastily took his men and left.

“The hell! It’s all master’s orders, what the hell does it have to do with me!?” Gilbert finally couldn’t keep it in after Harris left and roared, smoke coming out of his orifices.



# Chapter 208: The Purple Demon Eye

After Han Shuo's actions, the storefront had indeed turned into an incredibly dangerous place. Anyone who tried to enter without Han Shuo's guidance would be attacked by the formation. Those who lacked a sufficiently strong will would try to kill themselves as their minds grew confused.

After thoroughly remaking the store, Phoebe, Emily, and Gilbert all stayed there that night. Having seen the oddities of the yard, the three were on edge all night long, deathly afraid that something bad would happen to them as they slept.

Fortunately, all was fine that night and Trunks returned at noon the next day. He had learned from the Cairo mercenary band as soon as he set foot into the Valley of Sunshine that Han Shuo had actually moved into the cursed storefront.

When he swung by, he noticed the six starkly white pillars that had appeared in the courtyard. He was quite surprised, and had no idea what was going on.

"I heard Harris say that something out of the ordinary had happened here yesterday. Did you guys run into something?" Trunks asked after sitting down in the living room of the storefront.

Smiling faintly, Han Shuo explained, "We did run into a few things, but it was something I cooked up rather than the evil god's curse. There's no need to worry about anything. There's lots of rooms here, I left you one!"

"Forget it, I think I'll be safer elsewhere. When I was in the Valley of Sunshine a few years ago, I saw many owners of this store suddenly die spontaneously. Although you've already defused the danger, this place still makes me uneasy!" Trunks noticeably had some psychological trauma from this location and waved his hands with a wry smile.

"Who is this kid, how dare he not trust the master?!" Gilbert was already ticked off from being labeled a pervert. When he heard Trunks hem and haw and refuse to take up residence within, he couldn't help but speak up.

“And who are you?” Trunks started and suddenly looked at Gilbert.

Trunks had been acting a bit oddly since he'd come in on the back of his manticore. The manticore had been unafraid of anything beneath the heavens and on the earth, but was instinctively on his guard against Gilbert and tried to keep his distance from Gilbert.

The manticore was a sentient being and could naturally sense the enormous presence of the super rank dark dragon. Even though Gilbert was currently in human form, the manticore still didn't want to draw close to Gilbert. It was the fear brought about from the difference in levels.

As the owner of the manticore, Trunks had spent many years with the manticore and was well acquainted with its temper. When he saw the manticore's abnormal behavior, he started keeping an eye on Gilbert and couldn't help but question now.

“I am of the mighty dragon race, their future king, Gilbert!” Gilbert had an arrogant look on his face as he proudly proclaimed this with the tones of a ringing bell.

“Just like your manticore, he's my magical pet, a perverted little black dragon!” Han Shuo quelled Gilbert with a warning look and explained to Trunks.

Trunks was incredibly shocked when he heard that Gilbert was a dark dragon. He couldn't help but sigh, “You've got some skill alright. I'd thought taming a manticore was something to be proud of. To think you could tame a dark dragon! It looks like you're stronger than me!”

“It's nothing to do with me, I just so happened to get lucky. It's this dark dragon who shamelessly begged me!” Han Shuo shrugged and said humbly. He then paused and changed his tone, asking Trunks, “Right, you didn't run into any trouble on your trip out of the valley this time, did you? How did everything go?”

Trunks' expression also became serious when he saw that Han Shuo was chatting about serious matters. He responded lowly, “Don't worry, I'm more familiar with the terrain of the valley than even Laureton or Florida. It won't be easy for most people to hurt me within the valley. I met some

of my old friends and they were highly interested in forming a mercenary band. I've already sent someone to register the name of Soul Destroyer. We'll be able to have our own official name before long."

Nodding, Han Shuo said, "That's for the best. This will be our stronghold in the future. I'm sure that with Florida's ability, he'll be able find out where we are soon. We don't need to be a rush, we just need to wait for him to attack us!"

Since the formation had been set up, Han Shuo just wanted to test it out using Florida's men, and see if it was as magical as he saw in Chu Cang Lan's memories!

Surprisingly, whether it was Florida or Edwin's men, no one came to bother them over the next two days. Han Shuo and his crew stayed here both days and only shopped a bit on the busy streets during the day.

All the materials to refine the wood elite zombie had finally been collected. Phoebe used these couple of days to discuss some transactions with some of the merchants. She turned two thirds of the jewels and crystals that Han Shuo had given her into forty thousand gold coins. He very trustfully gave all forty thousand gold coins to Trunks and allowed him free rein over this sum to form the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

Han Shuo trained silently in his room. He hadn't left the store at all over the past two days. After a low incantation broke the silence, the bright sun was suddenly covered by black clouds, and the entire courtyard was plunged instantly into darkness.

The sinister black clouds completely blocked off the sun's rays, and a strong sense of death spread rapidly throughout the courtyard. The wraiths sealed within the pillars seemed to sense this marvelous presence and wanted to stir to action.

This particularly dark magic spell could cause the presence of death to permeate the surroundings. Dark creatures that were located within it would have their attacks greatly strengthened, and enemies caught in the range of the "Canopy of Necromancy" would be weakened thanks to the effects of this spell.

At this point, not only had Han Shuo fully grasped all the spells that an adept mage should know, he could also use them skillfully. If he returned to the Academy and made use of this strength, Han Shuo was confident that he could easily advance to adept mage.

When he thought of Fanny's promise with him and the right he'd have to go out with her once he advanced to adept mage, Han Shuo felt quite excited by the thought of a steamy night with Fanny. Although he already had Emily and Phoebe now, his feelings for Fanny were something that the two would be unable to replace.

Han Shuo had never become lax about his magical cultivation, but the stage that demon infant was at meant that it needed the strength from souls to become stronger. Hard training alone wouldn't be enough to obtain improvement within the short term. Therefore, Han Shuo had also been waiting for an opportunity to obtain some stronger souls to nourish his demon infant.

The sun was setting, and Han Shuo suddenly heard the little skeleton's call in the midst of his cultivation. An anxious, panicked feeling suddenly traveled from a plane far away as the little skeleton's urgent cry for help brought with it overtones of a hasty flight for life.

After last time's experience, Han Shuo immediately knew that the little skeleton must've met with some danger again. He didn't give it much thought as he immediately chanted the incantation, attempting to summon the little skeleton from the far away plane with the connection they shared.

When the incantation was complete, the air in front of him tore open as if a knife had sliced through it, and a little gleaming skeleton with seven flapping bone spurs shot out of the crack like lightning.

The figure of an enormous six meter tall knight, mounted on a flaming horse and wielding a two meter long broadsword, was suddenly illuminated in the crack behind the little skeleton. An enormous rotting air spread from the enormous figure, as an overwhelming presence of death suffused the area, making one's heart palpitate.

The dark creatures of the other dimension were bound by the laws of space. They could only display an enormous shadow. When the little skeleton was standing in front of Han Shuo, the crack in the air went back to normal and the enormous presence vanished without a trace.

The little skeleton had yet to recover as he clutched his bone dagger in his left hand and the eyepatch in his right. After losing the eyepatch, the purple demon eye from the statue of Datara sparkled with purple light as the little skeleton looked dumbly at Han Shuo.

An enormous strength suddenly exploded out of the little skeleton's purple demon eye. This power suddenly surged out with the purple demon eye as the center. It entered the little skeleton and Han Shuo's body, attempting to take over their bodies.

Just like in the forest troll's sacred place, the power from the purple demon eye was full of a violence that wanted to ravage everything. This power would always awaken after the eyepatch was removed, like Datara had truly left a bit of his consciousness behind in the eye.

"Put the eyepatch on, hurry!" Han Shuo roared out violently as his body trembled in the throes of pain as several sharp knives seemed to stab his brain.

The little skeleton was likewise rolling on the ground in pain. After receiving Han Shuo's order, his hand bone shook as he slowly lifted the eyepatch.

Miraculously, the enormous power that had invaded the two vanished without a trace when the eyepatch was placed back on.

However, just as Han Shuo was breathing a sigh of relief and was looking at the little skeleton, he saw purple light shoot out of the little skeleton's left eye as the eyepatch that had been covering it ignited, going up in flames!

# Chapter 209: The Purifying Strength of Soul

When the eyepatch that sealed the Purple Demon Eye had burnt to ashes, the eye embedded within the little skeleton's eye socket once again discharged an eye piercing purple light.

In that instant, that soul wrenching pain once again invaded Han Shuo and the little skeleton's body. The bone deep pain made both Han Shuo and the little skeleton tremble all over.

Han Shuo couldn't help but let a growl under his breath, and the little skeleton's stark white jaw bone also clattered together as the two were invaded by a mysterious power.

Suddenly, the demon infant residing in his abdomen surprisingly generated an enormous suction power. Han Shuo had the sudden impression that the demon infant had turned into a black hole in that instant. His entire body seemed to turn into a great spider web, with the demon infant at the center, and all his meridians had turned into the durable fibers of the spider web.

Thanks to the absorption force, the force that had invaded Han Shuo's body streamed towards the demon infant along the meridians of the spider web, like streams returning to the ocean.

The heart wrenching pain decreased by quite a bit when his body morphed into this state. The invading power in Han Shuo's body was sent to the demon infant. Just like how Johnny's soul had once been digested and absorbed, this power was being turned into nutrients to aid a crazy rate of development for the demon infant.

As the pain in his body slowly came under control, Han Shuo saw that the little skeleton was still rolling continuously on the ground. He struggled to make it to the little skeleton's side, and aimed the palm of his left hand at the skeleton's left eye socket, releasing the "Demonic Art of Assimilation".

Magical light suddenly sparkled from his left hand as beams of faint purple light flowed into his body through Han Shuo's arm. They were sent via the meridians to the demon infant, just like the surge of power in his body had been treated.

This was when Han Shuo was certain that the power from the Purple Demon Eye was one of the soul. Judging from the close relation between the forest trolls and their protector Datara, this might very well be the vestiges of soul power left by the demon Datara on this plane.

Compared to Johnny's soul, the soul from the Purple Demon Eye was even stronger. The violent, rampaging presence held within was met with no resistance from the demon infant. Instead, the demon infant circulated the power from that soul madly, slowly purifying it.

Looking in on the demon infant, Han Shuo could see that the demon infant now looked like a sun burning with black spellfire, sending out piercing magic light in all directions. At the moment, Han Shuo's body was also glowing with light, as beams of a violent, chaotic, and evil magical aura wreathed his body. From the distance, it looked like Han Shuo had suddenly gained countless black arms that were dancing wildly around him.

After who knew how long, Han Shuo suddenly relaxed as a crisp cracking sound rang out. Something seemed to have broken in the Purple Demon Eye as it suddenly lost its light. A cloud of purple smoke leaked out from the little skeleton's left eye as the demon infant kept furiously circulating the power from the soul. The power that he'd gained from the Purple Demon Eye was heads and shoulders above the amount that they'd obtained from Johnny a few days ago. When Han Shuo felt that all the power had been absorbed into the demon infant, he gave the little skeleton an order to protect him. After that, Han Shuo sat down crosslegged to enter a meditative state to digest everything.

The power within the Purple Demon Eye had been completely absorbed by the demon infant. The little skeleton sat dumbly on the floor for a while when he was released from his agony. After the mysterious power had vanished, the Purple Demon Eye embedded within the little skeleton's left

eye socket rolled around adroitly, giving the little skeleton a trace of life.

“What’s going on?” Emily and Gilbert detected that black magical aura had exploded out of Han Shuo’s room, and they couldn’t help but come forth to investigate.

The little skeleton had been sitting on the floor when he heard the knocks from outside. He straightened his calf bones and stood up, walking to open the door as his eye rolled a bit.

When Emily and Gilbert saw that a short, white skeleton had appeared in front of them when the door was open, and that there was a purple eyeball in his left eye socket whirring busily, both of them hastily took a few steps back in their fright.

Reaching out to point his left finger at Han Shuo, the little skeleton’s eye rolled in a circle as his hand reached for his mouth and made a shushing gesture. His meaning for Emily and Gilbert was that, “He needs quiet, don’t disturb him!”

Emily and Gilbert stared dumbly back at this little skeleton that was telling them to be quiet. They instinctively felt that the scene in front of them was too much of a challenge for their minds. A dark creature had made such a human gesture in front of them, and there was even an life-like eyeball rolling around in his left eye socket. All of this seemed unimaginably fantastic.

It was a good thing that it wasn’t Emily’s first day knowing Han Shuo. When she’d fought Han Shuo, she’d come up short against this little skeleton. Thus, when she looked carefully at the little skeleton and noticed the seven bone spurs on his back, she immediately understood that while the bone spurs color had changed, this little skeleton was still the same marvelous skeleton that’d been immune to most dark magic and had relentlessly chased her.

“I think your master must be having some sort of marvelous advancement this time again. We won’t disturb him then!” Taking a deep breath, Emily shook her head at Gilbert and indicated for him to leave with her.



After the earth elite zombie's sudden rage in the cemetery of death, Gilbert understood that his master's dark creatures were different than the ones that he knew. If there was a zombie could form a large crack in the ground to attack him just for one sentence, then it wasn't too difficult to understand a small skeleton that made such human gestures.

"I think it'll be very interesting to follow such a master!" Gilbert looked at the little skeleton curiously and waved his hand goodbye, turning to speak to Emily after closing the door.

"I think so too, but you must continuously improve yourself, or you might find one day that you can't even defeat one of your master's dark creatures!" Emily had learned from Han Shuo that the dark creatures he refined had the unlimited potential to evolve by themselves. She'd been a bit skeptical at first, but was a firm believer now that she'd seen the little skeleton's performance.

Han Shuo had been wholly unaware of Emily and Gilbert's visit. The enormous power from the purple eye was making him focus his concentration to the utmost, and he was impervious to all distractions from the outside world.

Some magical cultivators needed to find an exceedingly quiet area to meditate behind closed doors when training some sort of secret art or refining some treasure. They would also set up multiple layers of heavy defenses, in order to prevent disturbances. So much caution was taken because this was when a cultivator was most defenseless. Not a single bit of distraction could happen during this process, or one would run the risk of a cultivation deviation or waste of previous effort.

Two days and nights passed. Han Shuo stayed within his room during this time, and Phoebe, Emily, and Trunks all busied themselves with setting up the mercenary band, or continuing to talk business into selling more of Han Shuo's jewels.

On that night, the crew was staying within the store and discussing how best to use the gold as well as the most efficient way to handle the mercenary band's affairs when a member of the Cairo mercenary band

suddenly knocked to say that a group of people were on their way over.

The mercenary left immediately after delivering this message, saying that they needed to report this to the chief or vice chief of the Cairo mercenary band. He warned them to be careful, and informed them that their men would arrive in half an hour.

“It looks like the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries are on their way over. Bryan can’t be disturbed at the moment, and we don’t know when he’ll wake up either. We’re in a bit of trouble now!” Emily said with a small frown when the mercenary left.

“We’ll give whoever dares come a thorough beating if they dare trespass!” Gilbert was obviously not thinking much of this matter as he blustered offhandedly.

“They’re not that easy to take care of. Florida’s experts are as numerous as the clouds, and the Church of Light has sent some reinforcements as well. You may not be able to win even if you turn back into a dragon.” Trunks also said with a deep frown.

“Bryan can’t be disturbed right now. The dark creature is protecting him right now, so he probably can’t leave. We must protect him if he’s here. As long as we can stall things for a bit so that the Cairo mercenaries come, then all should be fine!” Phoebe thought silently for a bit and then responded.

Dull hoofbeats sounded in the quiet night air. One could judge from the sound that the hooves of these battlesteeds had been wrapped by cotton cloth or something soft.

“Be careful, let’s protect Bryan’s room first!” Emily called out softly and said to the others.

# Chapter 210: A whirling bone dagger

The enemies had come swifter than they'd thought. No sooner had hoofbeats sounded in the distance, did strange noises start coming from the roof.

"Go, leave the rooms, go to the courtyard!" Trunks maintained a calm expression as he hefted a longsword and walked towards the courtyard with the manticore.

There was a wide courtyard in the middle of the storefront, with various large and small rooms around its perimeter. If the enemy attacked and pierced through the walls, and then used fire magic to set the rooms on fire, it would force Trunks and the others to be on the defensive.

In addition, Han Shuo had once told them after he'd painstakingly made his preparations that enormous danger lurked within the six pillars. But if they stood in certain positions next to the pillars, they wouldn't be affected by the formation. The formation wasn't active now, but once the six pillars were violently attacked, the formation would have a natural reaction even without Han Shuo's orders.

"We're not familiar with the things inside the courtyard, so let's not make a thoughtless move unless we have to. If we really can't defend ourselves, we'll hit the pillars and then quickly hide into the six safe areas and gamble!" Emily said to the other three while she took out her staff and walked into the courtyard.

It'd been two days since Han Shuo had cast the "Canopy of Necromancy", so there wasn't much of an effect left from it now. The starry sparkles were like diamonds embedded in the night sky, and the light from the myriad actual stars in the sky added a few traces of scattered light in the night. The light was just enough for those in the courtyard to roughly make out their surroundings.

A sound suddenly howled through the air as a little bone dagger with a coldly flashing handle started traveling over the roof like a lost soul.

The howling from the little bone dagger ripped through the quiet of the

night sky. Its gleam was particularly eye catching as it brought a cold, harsh presence of death. It flew over the tops of the roofs in a marvelous trail with no discernible pattern to it.

Several soft sounds echoed from the dark corners that the little bone knife flew past. Suddenly, agonized screams rang out from those hard to view corners. Three dark shadows then fell off from the roof into the courtyard in an exceedingly bedraggled manner.

Trunks and the others immediately knew what had happened when they saw this. When they saw three people lying on the ground not far from them, bleeding profusely, they didn't even think before rushing up to finish them off.

The three on the ground had been struggling to their feet when they were laid back down in eternal slumber beneath Trunks and Phoebe's two flashing swords.

The group looked in surprise towards Han Shuo's room when the three were dead. They saw a corner lifted from the window blinds, and the whirling purple eye in the little skeleton's left socket, sparkling with a sinister purple light. There seemed to be a purple ball of ghostly flame dancing around behind the window.

His sparkling clean hand bone waved continuously. The weaving bone dagger seemed to be manipulated by his hands as it danced around with no pattern whatsoever.

"Frightening little skeleton!" Trunks looked and couldn't help but shake his head.

"Look over there!" Gilbert suddenly shouted out. The other three looked over accordingly and saw that three clouds of gray mist were floating out of the three would-be ambushers' heads. The gray clouds seemed to be attracted by some sort of power as soon as they left their bodies and were soon absorbed by the two closest pillars.

"If I saw correctly, those three grey clouds were the souls of the three who'd just died. Ordinarily speaking, people's souls return to the earth after they've died, and most people won't be able to see them without the

effects of magic!” As a dark archmage, Emily’s knowledge in this area was a bit more broad than others, and she explained to the rest with a furrowed brow.

“Then why can we see it, and why did the three pillars absorb the grey clouds?” Phoebe asked in bafflement.

Shaking her head with a wry smile, Emily turned to look at Han Shuo’s room. “How would I know the reason behind all this? If you want to understand everything, wait for him to wake up first. This courtyard is full of oddities, and it’s all his doing!”

“I don’t think I’d understand if he explained it either!” Phoebe was just as hard pressed to understand Han Shuo’s mysteriousness as Emily was. She shook her head ruefully after Emily’s words.

The little bone dagger was still twirling without rest as the four were chatting. The three who’d wanted to ambush them hadn’t even clearly taken in their surroundings before they were counter-ambushed, and died ignobly. This had been so unjust!

However, those three were just a scouting party. Although they had died, it didn’t affect the enemies in the rear.

When the dull hoofbeats suddenly quieted, Trunks and the others knew that the true battle was about to begin.

The little bone dagger’s howl suddenly grew more fierce. When the four looked over, the little bone dagger had already left the vicinity of the roof and was flying towards the sky in the distance. Two faint figures slowly became clear in the direction that the bone dagger was flying in. They seemed to be two masses of floating clouds in the starry night sky, being sent on their way by the wind.

“It’s two archmages, we need to be careful!” Emily started and issued a grave reminder.

A fiercely burning flame suddenly sprang up in front of the little bone dagger as soon as Emily had spoken. The dagger shone with even more of a cold light beneath the light of the fire, and it sent an eye piercing ray in

all directions.

Several crossbow bolts suddenly came shooting from the front. Five had been shot out, but only one accurately connected with the little bone dagger. The whirling dagger was knocked off its path and dropped down, landing with a clank on the streets not too far away.

At that moment, the sound of the doors being broken down echoed as a fast patter of footsteps quickly approached. Roughly a dozen armored people immediately filled the courtyard, wielding all sorts of swords, spears, axes, and bows.

Two archmages floated down to the roofs. Now that the dagger was no longer a threat, they cast a cold eye down on the proceedings.

“Trunks, you’re here alright!” The cold voice of the fire archmage who’d saved Florida at the gates to the Valley of Sunshine last time sounded, one of the two standing on one of the rooftops.

“Andy you traitor, how dare you come see me. The old chief treated you well, and that staff in your hands was something that the old chief spent a great deal of money to get someone to refine for you. To think that you’d still be with that swine Florida after the old chief died!” Trunks pointed the longsword in his hand at Andy and hectored coldly.

“The old chief’s death was an accident. He died at the hands of robbers in the surrounding mountain ranges, and had nothing to do with Florida. You envied Florida sitting in the seat of the chief of the Rainbow Sickles, that’s why you’re framing him.” Andy looked disdainfully at Trunks and mocked him.

“I think that with your intelligence, you’ll be able to see what’s really going on here. I’ve come back this time to make sure all you traitors pay the price!”

Andy first laughed jeeringly and then looked at Trunks with a gaze full of pity. “Today is when you’ll die, you won’t have the chance to in the future!”

“Stop wasting time with him, Laureton’s men may show up at any time.

We need to kill them immediately!” The other archmage who’d come with him said expressionlessly.

There was the emblem of lightning on this person’s magic robes. It looked like he was a thunder archmage. He seemed about 30 years old and had grey-brown locks. He was as thin as a bamboo pole as he paced back and forth on the roof.

“I know!” Andy said impatiently. He didn’t seem to have cordial relations with this thunder mage. He then cast a slightly odd look downwards and said with an equally odd tone, “Do it?!”

The enemies in the courtyard were comprised of swordsmen, knights, and archers. The weakest amongst them were sergeant knights or journeymen swordsmen. There was also one completely covered in a green robe, wearing a pointy hat. His features couldn’t be made out in the darkness, but there was an enormous presence from him.

Andy had been looking and not really looking at this person when he spoke earlier. His tone didn’t sound like he was giving an order, but more like he was asking his elder’s opinion.

When Andy’s question concluded, this person suddenly moved as an enormous, harsh silver sword aura suddenly emanated from his body.

As he moved and the harsh sword aura cut through the air, the pointy hat on his head flew backwards, revealing a face that Emily and Phoebe were very familiar with.

“Gabriel, it’s you!” Emily couldn’t help but cry out in surprise.

Gabriel was Clark’s master and possessed the extraordinary strength of a great swordmaster. He was Bob Ascher’s right hand man, but had popped up here instead!

# Chapter 211: The formation activates

Gabriel flicked the longsword in his hand and sent silver fighting aura splitting through the air, accompanied by a vicious, icy killing intent that pierced one down to the bones.

As Emily gasped in shock, Trunks and Gilbert had already charged to intercept Gabriel. Trunks had an inscrutable expression as he brandished his sword on the back of his manticore, forming a round, milky white fighting aura circle in front of him.

Gilbert held a dark long spear in his hand. He had no martial arts foundation, and so flung his spear forward with the inborn strength of a dark dragon tribe descendent.

There was a string of metallic clangs and explosions. Trunks grunted and evaded swiftly with the manticore. Gilbert's spear was broken into two as his chest was marked by the fighting aura, revealing a large patch of dark skin.

Great swordmaster Gabriel refocused his attention, his impassive face like it was carved out of stone. He was in no hurry to attack, but turned his gaze to where Han Shuo and the little skeleton were.

The howl of the bone dagger suddenly grew in intensity, and a gleaming bone dagger shot out from the direction Gabriel was looking in. The little skeleton behind the curtain had focused his purple eye on Gabriel and was waving the five finger bones of his left hand.

Trunks was heavily panting, and Gilbert had been shocked into a cold sweat as they both reacted to Gabriel's strength. A simple swing had forced Trunks to dodge and evade like he'd faced an avalanche of attacks. The immensely strong Gilbert had simply thrown out a spear because he hadn't understood any martial techniques, only to have it hacked into two by the silver aura. If he hadn't shifted in time, his chest would've been cut open by the fighting aura as well.

Just as the two were fretting over how to handle Gabriel, support from the little skeleton arrived. Gabriel couldn't help but treat this gleaming



dagger carefully.

The ability to deploy a magical treasure was an incantation unique to magical cultivators. Gabriel had obviously been shocked by this incredible attack, which was why he'd given up the chance to further beat down on Trunks and Gilbert and had turned his attention to fully sensing how the little skeleton was manipulating the bone dagger.

The silver fighting aura was radiant and stunning, and it seemed like glorious clusters of fireworks beneath the starry sky, erecting an impregnable defense around Gabriel. The little bone dagger circled around him, emitting ear piercing howls as it tried to give Gabriel a lethal blow.

Small collision sounds continued to sound around Gabriel along with sparks, and the little bone dagger's path became more and more unpredictable.

"What are you standing you there? Attack!" Andy suddenly roared from above.

The mercenaries had been staring, flabbergasted, at the little bone danger's unbelievable attacks. They were finally awakened to their senses by this yell and either raised their bows to find their targets, or wield their swords, circling past Gabriel to charge at Trunks and the others.

Andy and the other thunder mage on top of the roof also got to work when they saw the swordsmen and knights start charging below. They too used magic to attack Emily and the others.

In the span of a moment, three fiercely burning fireballs as big as records started descending down to where Emily and the others were, rolling violently with the heat of their flames. Several bolts of lightning also ripped through the sky and crashed down, sparks flying everywhere.

"Oh dear!" Emily exclaimed and released a dark magic spell she'd prepared in advance.

An enormous, oily green net appeared over people's heads as she chanted. When the net formed, it delayed the three enormous fireballs, but the thunder attack went through the holes in the net and still came

crashing down.

Emily and the others kept continuously ducking and weaving, evading the lightning strikes. The ground within the courtyard kept crackling and popping as two of the Shura pillars were also hit by lightning, piercing the darkness with light.

A clang sounded from Gabriel's direction. He'd gotten a grasp on the bone dagger's pattern of attack and used his sword to connect solidly with the bone dagger, sending it clattering to the ground.

"The friend within the house, your marvelous techniques are quite amazing, but your preferred style of hiding yourself and ambushing others is a bit shameful! Since you have such a marvelous technique, you should walk out forthrightly from the house and meet with me in battle!"

Great swordmaster Gabriel naturally thought it was the reclusive Han Shuo manipulating the bone dagger. Although he too had seen the little skeleton and his somewhat bizarre hand motions, he wasn't willing to believe that such a wondrous method of attack originated from a lowly dark creature.

However, the little skeleton's next moves completely wrecked his understanding of the world!

The little skeleton's purple eye flared with light as he jumped out of the window with a twist of his body, landing to face Gabriel's provocation.

He curled the five fingers of his right hand and the bone dagger lying on the ground suddenly flew upwards, landing in his hand like lightning.

Gabriel couldn't react for a moment as he stared incredulously at the little skeleton, his mind short circuiting for a bit. An even more stunning thing happened at this moment as the little skeleton bent over slightly, making the seven bone spurs on his back suddenly fly out and shoot towards Gabriel like seven bolts of lightning.

"Oh my gosh!" A cry of astonishment that only Gabriel could hear flew out of his mouth.

He was once again forced to become passive, defending himself by

concentrating his silver fighting aura onto his longsword and expending all his focus on parrying the seven bone spurs' aerial attacks.

The little skeleton raised the bone dagger and crashed into the attacking mercenaries in a mass of flailing limbs. He revealed his cruel side as he bent and flexed his leg bones, landing into the group of mercenaries like a flash of lightning.

He shot out his empty left hand and connected with a soft splurting sound, ripping out five bloody gorges in the chest of a journeyman swordsman and creating a bloody fountain.

His right hand brandished the bone dagger and flourished it wildly, sending a nearby mercenary's head flying off his neck at high velocity. Bloody sprayed everywhere from the severed neck, dyeing the little skeleton's clean skeleton in an eerie red.

Two crossbow bolts whistled and dinged into the little skeleton's back and chest with metallic sounds. The two bolts clattered to the ground as two white traces appeared on his bones.

The two bolts hadn't harmed the little skeleton, but he had indeed been affected as his originally swiftly moving body couldn't help but waver a bit from the crossbow bolt attacks.

Some of the mercenaries nearby took advantage of this opportunity to send their spears and swords at the little skeleton. Multiple dings rang out from his skeleton as these strings of attacks seemed to daze the little skeleton, and his control over the seven bone spurs also suddenly ceased.

The bone spurs had been flying around Gabriel and attacking him whirled uncontrollably and crashed into a nearby Shura pillar.

It was as if a powerful inhibition had been triggered. Winds gusted through the courtyard and a thick sense of death suddenly spread to all four corners. The night sky was covered by this deathly aura, and not even the slightest hint of starlight made it through this shroud. Only a beam of evil red light rose to the sky from the center.

The stark white pillars had been deathly quiet until now, when

horrifying wails and screams suddenly rang out. The cries of ghosts and howls of wolves drilled into one's brain, making the scalps tingle with numbness. It was like a vicious ghost was crouched next to one's ear, sticking a tongue out of its blood red maw to lick at one's earlobe.

The ghostly drawings on the pillars abruptly came back to life as they all capered and caterwailed. The pillars seemed to turn into demons with hundreds, no, thousands tentacles that continuously waved around, attacking all life around them.

"Hurry and take cover!" Emily shouted when she saw that the formation had been triggered.

The others had actually already started moving before Emily's shout. They hastened to stand in the safe spots that Han Shuo had told them about before.

Footsteps once again sounded outside, as the couple dozen Cairo mercenaries, originally surrounding the shop on the outskirts, couldn't help but charge into the courtyard when they saw that Han Shuo's group hadn't taken care of the attackers after so long.

On a large tree three shops away, the dark grand magus Edwin and female alchemist Belinda of the Church of Calamity stood atop a large tree. They looked at the blood red light in the distance, and the center of the location where a hundred ghosts were wailing and screaming while strange winds were blowing.

"Can it be that the legendary evil god's curse has truly taken effect?" Belinda's eyes were filled with shock as she spoke to Edwin.

"I don't know, the presence within is quite odd, even I don't know what's going on. Let's not draw near for now and see what's going on first!" Edwin shook his head with some confusion.

# Chapter 212: Slaughter

“What’s going on, what’s going on here? I can’t see anything!”

“Someone’s attacking me, what’s going on in this courtyard?!”

“Everyone be careful, this is the most sinister place in the Valley of Sunshine. It must be the evil god’s curse taking place!”

“Retreat, everyone leave the courtyard! No one can leave this place alive when the evil god’s curse takes effect!”

Panicked screams rang out from the mouths of the Rainbow Sick mercenaries who’d entered the yard. These people had all heard of the legend of the store, and when they saw abnormalities happen, they all tried to immediately leave in great haste.

However, when the formation had been activated, the first formation of illusions had already taken effect. Apart from Emily and the others standing in safe zones, all the other mercenaries who’d brashly intruded could see nothing of their surroundings as the thick sense of death permeated the air.

Several foggy shadows suddenly shot out of the well in the center of the courtyard. When the kelpies sensed the presence of living humans nearby, they began to attack the mercenaries without hesitation.

In an instant, the mercenaries suddenly felt their bodies grow cold, and it seemed like something liquid had entered their bodies. Their minds were hazy and befuddled as a voice seemed to take control of them, forcing them to wander involuntarily to the well and jump in.

Three splashes echoed, as the mercenaries plummeted into the well amidst disorientation. The ice cold well water immediately restored their mind’s clarity, but their efforts to crawl out of the well at any cost were stymied. Their bodies were no longer under their control as they began to sink slowly into the depths.

Three despairing screams suddenly rang out from the well. As their voices filled with terror and despair, the scalps of all the other

mercenaries in the courtyard grew ever more numb!

It was then that they finally realized there were many unknown dangers in this courtyard. This flash of enlightenment caused them give up any further thoughts of aggression, as they frantically tried to navigate the courtyard according to their memories, attempting to leave this evil and dangerous place with the fastest speed possible.

However, the modestly sized courtyard seemed to stretch on for an eternity in every direction. They retreated according to their memories, and their speed should've taken them out of this area a long time ago, but they never seemed to be able to find its end, and cries of agony rang out in succession next to their ears.

The illusion suddenly changed as another them suddenly appeared in front of them. These apparitions were wielding sharp weapons and leering at them, attacking the real one mercilessly. The fear brought about from this phenomenon destroyed their willpower in an instant, thoroughly defusing their fighting spirit.

Screams of fear and helpless sobbing echoed as all the mercenaries sank into a state of frenzied violence, randomly flailing their weapons about. Even the most stout hearted mercenary found it hard to accept a double attacking them ruthlessly, and they were all equally scared, lashing out at everything and anything.

And like this, all the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries who had entered the courtyard went insane in a matter of moments. They fought against each other enthusiastically as cries of mental breakdowns, anguish, pain, and the clang of weapons rang out from all corners of the courtyard.

Emily and the others in the safe zones had their lines of vision affected by where they were, so they couldn't see what was going on in the courtyard. However, the various sounds and shouts from those trapped within allowed them to understand that the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries were caught in a situation that they would find hard to forget for the rest of their lives.

Whenever a wail cut off suddenly, it meant that another life had been

lost. They would then see another wisp of grey sucked into the Shura pillars next to them. As each soul vanished, the souls inhabiting the Shura pillars would provide more evil power to the pillars, making the wind howl even more fiercely within the courtyard and spreading the presence of death even more quickly.

Andy and the thunder mage could do nothing but watch the changes in the courtyard. The thick presence of death obscured the sky, and apart from a blood red beam rising into the sky from the center, there was nothing else that entered their eyes.

Like Emily and the others, the cries of helplessness and despair rang continuously in their ears. Contrary to the feelings of Emily and the others, Andy and the other mage felt their scalp grow numb as their hearts palpitated in fright. They didn't dare randomly cast fire and thunder spells because they couldn't see the situation clearly. They could only stand anxiously on top of the roof and scratch their heads, attempting to find a more appropriate way to help.

Although everyone's vision had been affected, the little skeleton was standing in the center of the courtyard, with his purple eye sparkling fiercely like an elegant gentleman. He walked leisurely, as if taking a stroll through the ballroom and walked with light steps with the bone dagger in his hand. He ambled at ease through the courtyard of madness, walking at the side of the mercenaries randomly waving their blades.

He made a grasping motion with his left hand bones and created bloody gauges in the mercenaries or just directly twisted their necks. The bone dagger sparkled with cold light as it drew beautiful arcs, cutting off agonized wails and reaping yet another life.

When the attacking mercenaries had all fallen one by one, the great swordmaster Gabriel had become the little skeleton's final target. Gabriel was much more difficult to handle than he'd imagined. Silver fighting aura filled the area around him as his brows jumped up and down on his face. It was obvious that he too was feeling the effects of the formation, but he was in no hurry to attack his surroundings and had focused on defending his area instead.

It was because of these conservative actions that only the weakest attacks had drawn near him. Those mercenaries that were closest to him were all blocked by the fighting aura, but these mercenaries were all busy killing each other or had been easily slaughtered by the little skeleton. Apart from the enormous drain of his fighting aura, Gabriel hadn't suffered at all from the formation.

The little skeleton drew near to Gabriel and wanted to keep using the same easy method to reap his life, but it wasn't that easy. Since Gabriel was holding onto the mindset of being willing to forgo achievements as long as he could protect himself adequately, he'd used his silver fighting aura to form curtains around him, thoroughly defending himself.

The little skeleton couldn't penetrate the great swordmaster's method either when he arrived. The little skeleton rubbed his head in frustration as he stood by Gabriel's side, his purple eye rolling around busily as he tried to figure out the best way to handle the situation.

"Who dares ignore the presence of the Cairo mercenary band and attempts to commit murder in the Valley of Sunshine!" Laureton's explosive roar crashed in from the distance like a great wave from the sea. Heavy hoofbeats sounded from afar with his shout.

"This is bad, that Laurmonster is coming. We need to retreat!" The thunder mage on the rooftop suddenly said lowly.

"But, Gabriel is still down there!" Andy also had a panicked look on his face as he looked anxiously downwards.

"No time for all of that. If we don't leave now, we won't be able to when Laurmonster makes his way here. But if you want to die that badly, I won't make you leave either!" The thunder mage said coldly, without a glance at Andy. He used a levitation spell to lift himself up and flew off into the distance.

Andy looked blank for a bit and finally shook his head with resignation. He stomped his foot and also used a levitation spell to float upwards, vanishing into the night behind the thunder mage.

When Andy and the thunder mage had left, Edwin and Belinda also left



their post from a great tree not too far away and followed them soundlessly.

At this moment, the six Shura pillars quickly sucked in the presence of death and ill winds within the courtyard. In a couple of moments, starlight once again shone down onto the courtyard. As the formation's effects withdrew, it left behind only a ground littered with bodies and Gabriel, still waving his sword around.

"Kill him!" Gilbert yelled and grabbed a battle axe from the body nearby, charging towards Gabriel.

Phoebe and Trunks also knew that this opportunity was uncommon as they too brandished their weapons, charging towards Gabriel with the fastest speed possible. They combined their efforts with the little skeleton to issue a strong attack towards Gabriel.

Gabriel reacted very swiftly as soon as the formation's effects wore off. He took a quick look around and understood that his operations this time had failed completely. He moved without hesitation and leapt for the rooftop.

Gilbert and the other's attacks arrived at this time, only to be met with a rock from the roof as Gabriel's longsword flicked with a silver flash of fighting aura, batting it into the path of the attacks coming at him from behind.

An explosion sounded as the flying battle axe was halted by the large rock. The bone dagger howled as it broke apart the rock, directly threatening Gabriel. Gabriel swept his longsword in an arc and finally sent the little bone dagger flying to the side.

However, Trunks and Phoebe's fighting auras also arrived in front of Gabriel at this time. A ghastly scream spilled from his lips as his swiftly flying body suddenly paused, with a criss crossing pattern of blades appearing on his back. It was obvious that he'd suffered great injury. As he fled in a panic, he spat out great mouthfuls of fresh blood.

Emily used the levitation spell to fly upwards and was about to chant a dark magic to give him the final blow when a fierce arrow flew out of

nowhere like cold lightning. It brought with its speed a frosty chill, something that she felt before it even drew near her.

Emily choked off her incantation halfway through and suddenly dropped out of the sky. However, that cold arrow still doggedly clung to her path and shot towards her neck like a lethal flash of lightning, embodied with a fearful chill and ruthlessness.

There wasn't even enough time to chant a spell at this moment. Gilbert and the others were all within the courtyard and had just sent forth an enormously vicious blow. Whether in terms of personal speed or fighting aura, there was nothing that anyone could do for Emily at this time.

The person who had sent out this arrow had an exquisite grasp of timing, understanding the right moment to strike. They'd melded ice magic into this arrow, and the swiftness and cruelty of this shot was one that greatly frightened onlookers.

Despair filling her face, Emily's hopes vanished at this moment. There was only one thought in her mind. ...was she going to die like this?

However, nothing is ever absolute in life! In that moment of certain death, a red light ripped through the dark sky and appeared next to Emily, crashing into that lethal arrow with irrefutable accuracy.

The missile broke apart on contact, and the frosty air scattered as it was unable to concentrate into one place.

Emily had snatched her life back from the jaws of death, and the glee of living after a disaster filled her heart. When she focused her eyes to the front again, she saw the Demonslayer Edge flying in front of her!

In that moment, an indescribable feeling of bliss filled her heart like an enormous wave. In that instant, the love that she had for Han Shuo was as deep as the boundless ocean.

"You won't be that lucky next time!" A clear shout traveled from exceedingly far away. A thin figure danced on top of some rooftops like a swan elegantly dancing on a lake.

Trunks and the others were enraged as they all leapt up to land on the

roofs, planning on taking down this extremely dangerous female archer.

“Don’t chase her!” Han Shuo’s low shout traveled from within the house at this time.

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The room door was open as a sinister looking Han Shuo stepped out. Blood red light emanated from his body as a thick killing aura condensed around him. His eyes were blood red, and his expression sinister and filled with the utmost cruelty. It was as if he was a demon from hell, having endured millennia to break through his shackles and arrive in the world of humans!

Emily and the others were absolutely shocked by Han Shuo’s current appearance and aura. They subconsciously halted their footsteps and looked at the somewhat unfamiliar Han Shuo.

The current Han Shuo’s presence and expression were all much too malevolent. He was simply too different from usual!

# Chapter 213: A bloodthirsty urge

Han Shuo took a deep breath in and slowly repressed his aroused desire for blood. A slowly stirring urge to engage in slaughter was slowly calmed after a few deep breaths.

Under the gaze of Trunks and the others, Han Shuo's original distant and bloodthirsty appearance started to slowly revert to normal after he took in a few deep breaths. The blood red light and that cruel aura all slowly disappeared until he returned to the form they were familiar with.

"What happened to you?" Emily finally breathed a sigh of relief when she saw Han Shuo return to normal. Her beautiful eyes looked anxiously at Han Shuo.

"My techniques were elevated to a new stage just now, and this new stage is incredibly difficult to control. I'm not that familiar with this new stage yet and lost my composure!" Han Shuo revealed a faint smile when his mindset returned to normal and explained to the others.

"I was so frightened. Your expression and aura earlier were really evil and scary. Even I felt terrified!" Trunks looked deeply at Han Shuo. His heart was pounding even now.

Of those present, only the little skeleton wasn't reacting out of the ordinary. He started capering happily when he saw Han Shuo appear, and pointed at the corpses on the ground every now and then, seeming to be relaying his battle score to Han Shuo.

Chuckling lightly in gratification, Han Shuo could feel the little skeleton's desire to show off, excitedly awaiting for Han Shuo's compliments.

"Hey you brat, c'mere. Well done!" Beckoning his hand, Han Shuo stroked the little skeleton's gleaming skull when the latter walked over docilely with his bone dagger. The little skeleton's purple eye rolled around as his jaw bone clattered together, appearing quite at ease.

"Honored master, you're truly prejudiced. You've never treated me this

kindly!” Gilbert complained when he saw Han Shuo drown the little skeleton with love.

The little skeleton had been by Han Shuo’s side when the latter was still an errand slave. He’d started off throwing trash away for Han Shuo, and took care of a lot of random, irritating matters. When the little skeleton had grown stronger, it had protected Han Shuo a few times. This were deeds which Gilbert couldn’t measure up to.

Flicking a glance at Gilbert, Han Shuo was about to say something when he suddenly frowned and turned his eyes to the entrance.

Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band walked in through the doorway like a metal tower. Harris and a group of experts followed close behind him. Laureton’s body was built very robustly, and he was likely even a bit heavier than a battlesteed. His footsteps echoed dully on the ground as he walked.

“What’s going on, where are the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries?” A voice that rang like a bell sounded from Laureton’s mouth.

Pointing at the corpses littered over the ground, Han Shuo smiled faintly, “Aren’t these them?”

Laureton’s brow drew together as he looked at the ground, listing out names as though he were counting up his family’s treasures. “Angero, Tulije, Jelina...” Shock blossomed on his face as he spoke. When he finally lifted his head to look at Han Shuo, shock was all that was left on his face. “You guys killed all of them?”

“Possibly. Or maybe it was the curse of the evil god that helped us!” Han Shuo smiled mysteriously and shrugged his shoulders as he answered carelessly.

“These people are indeed of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, and some of them are their core members. To think you’ve managed to killed so many of them, this is a big help to us!” Harris was hard pressed to conceal his joy after he walked in, and his voice seemed more emotional than usual.

“What’s going on here?” Laureton was thoroughly confused by Han Shuo’s response and could not help but ask.”

“Laureton, you came too late! You only arrived after the fighting had finished. Looks like the efficiency of the Cairo mercenary band isn’t as good as we thought!” Trunks flicked a glance at Han Shuo and spoke before the latter could speak.

“Trunks, you also know that there are many areas in the valley that need to be protected. Our mercenary band can’t possibly station that many of our men here.” Laureton said and then snorted coldly with an irritated expression. “To ignore our existence like this, Florida has become way too cocky! The ones who launched a sneak attack on you didn’t even conceal their features. This is an obvious dismissal of us!”

“Chief Laureton, I hope you guys can be more timely next time. The matters here have already ended and there’s probably nothing here that’s worthy of your attention left.” Han Shuo said and then suddenly remembered something. “Amongst those who attacked us this time was a great swordmaster called Gabriel. This person works for Bob Ascher, chief of the Gryphon Legion in nearby Valley City. I don’t know if the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band is in leagues with Bob Ascher. I hope you’ll keep an eye out for this!”

“Great swordmaster Gabriel!” Laureton exclaimed in shock as he obviously didn’t know of this matter. His expression grew grave.

Nodding, Han Shuo said, “That’s right. This person is the master of Bob Ascher’s eldest son, Clark and has always been by Bob Ascher’s side. I hadn’t thought that he’d leave Ascher’s side this time and be with the Rainbow Sickles.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll investigate things thoroughly. Alright, we’ll be leaving now, if there’s nothing else.” Laureton seemed to be contemplating something with a darkened face as he spoke rather anxiously.

“Wait, I’ve been away from the valley for too long and don’t know enough about Florida’s strength. You should give us detailed information about all the experts of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries and their

strength. A thunder mage appeared today, as well as a female archer with amazing shooting skills. One of our companions was almost injured this time. We need detailed information on the Rainbow Sickles!" Trunks hurriedly said when he saw Laureton about to leave.

"Female archer!" Laureton cried out once again and said gravely, "That would be the female elf Maxine. She's a sharpshooter versed in the water, thunder, and wind magics. She can combine all three magics into her shooting and send out incredibly frightening shots."

"This woman is very difficult to deal with, it's said that she's the fiancée that Florida's grandfather located for him. She's very mysterious, and doesn't seem to have good relations with Florida. She's rarely in the valley these days, but will always help whenever the Rainbow Sickles meet with danger. It looks like she's come back!"

"Who was the thunder archmage?" It was Emily's turn to ask this time.

"His name is Asa. He only joined half a year ago and I'm not too sure of his background. Vicious and cruel, he gets along well with Florida. He's taken care of most of the band's underhanded dealings this past year, and is deeply trusted by Florida!" Laureton was quite familiar with the experts of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and began to explain in great detail without hesitation when Trunks and Emily asked him.

"Apart from these two, have any other experts joined the Rainbow Sickles these past few years?" Trunks continued to ask.

Laureton's brow creased as he thought silently for a moment, then turned his head to look at Harris. "Give him a copy of our intelligence."

Harris started and then nodded, taking out a scroll from his space ring and handing it over to Trunks. "The information regarding the Rainbow Sickles in here is likely going to be more detailed than what Miss Emily has."

It looked like Harris and the others already knew of Emily's identity. They were the ones who held true power within the valley, and the identities of those they watched over would naturally not escape their eyes.

Trunks nodded after scanning this scroll, then smiled at Laureton. “Very detailed. We’ll take care of Florida for you before the struggle for power begins!”

“If this is the case, I will thank you all greatly. Not only will this shop be unconditionally yours, Miss Phoebe’s guild shall be exempt from all taxes in the valley in the future.” Laureton laughed heartily and strode outside with great steps.

Harris, who followed closely behind Laureton looked at Trunks and reminded, “The terrain of the Rainbow Sickle quarters is drawn behind the scroll. There are detailed descriptions of their open and hidden outposts. Destroy this scroll after reading it, don’t let it fall into the hands of others and give rise to unnecessary trouble!”

Trunks nodded understandingly and laughed coldly, “Don’t worry, I know what to do!”

Harris and Trunks were old acquaintances and naturally knew that Trunks and Florida had a death feud. Harris left with the parting words, “Good luck!”

When Laureton and the others had left, Han Shuo said lowly, “Laureton is trying to take advantage of us! But we want to find our footing in the valley as well, so we won’t move according to his plans! The Cairo mercenary band and Rainbow Sickles aren’t the only powers within the valley. There are some others that aren’t weak either, and I’m sure they would love to replace the Cairo mercenary band and hold power in their hands as well!”

Trunks blinked and asked Han Shuo, “What would you like to do?”

Chuckling sinisterly, Han Shuo looked at the sky and murmured to himself, “The winds are strong and the night dark today. The Valley of Sunshine has been chaotic for a while now. Let’s make use of this opportunity to make things even more messy!”



# Chapter 214: The four great powers

Apart from the strongest Cairo mercenary band in the Valley of Sunshine, there were two other slightly weaker factions of the House of Menlo and the Katar orc tribe.

The House of Menlo had originally been a minor noble family in a small kingdom. They had their own private army and had attempted a coup, but had failed when their plans were revealed.

They'd fought with the royal army of the small kingdom and fled, discarding their armor along the way. They'd finally arrived in the Valley of Sunshine with vastly decreased strength.

They only possessed three hundred soldiers then, but the House of Menlo had made off with quite a sum of riches from the small kingdom during the chaos of civil war. They used this fortune when they arrived in the valley to attract a thousand experts of various professions, and their strength was now second only to the Rainbow Sickles.

The House of Menlo was now the richest power within the valley, and the head of the house Sawyer Menlo always dreamed about becoming the most powerful within the valley, recruiting more soldiers and going back to their home, obtaining the authority over that kingdom.

The Katar orc tribe was a small tribe that had originally lived in frosty desolation. They'd overcome countless hardships to immigrate to the Valley of Sunshine and take up residence within one of its mountain ranges. There were only five, six hundred orcs within this tribe, but all of them were highly capable warriors that were tough to take on.

The orcs of the Katar tribe mainly functioned to protect the merchants and put their earnings towards taking care of their family and elderly.

This faction wasn't weak, but the chief of the tribe was also constantly thinking about controlling the valley in order to gain more benefits and gold.

The Cairo mercenary band, the Rainbow sickle mercenary bound, the

House of Menlo, and the Katar orc tribe were the four strongest forces in the Valley of Sunshine at the moment.

This information wasn't hard to obtain. Han Shuo had just arrived in the valley not too long ago before learning all of this from Emily. Everyone was aware that the four powers had uneasy relations, and that each of them wanted to take over the Valley of Sunshine to leverage its resources and quickly increase their own strength.

The Cairo mercenary band had only had a thousand people to begin with. After they'd taken control of the Valley of Sunshine, their numbers had doubled in just a few years. This was all because they'd obtained enormous amounts of gold after controlling the Valley of Sunshine and attracted even more numbers of experts to join.

To the Cairo mercenary band, it was a wonderful trade if they could immensely decrease the Rainbow Sickles without harming their own strength. A mere storefront compared to the entire valley, it was a worthwhile trade no matter how one looked at it.

It was because Han Shuo understood the situation within the valley that he was full of ambition and began to think for himself, trying to plot a profitable path for the mercenary band he'd just formed.

"Trunks, take your old comrades and go for a walk around the House of Menlo tonight. Conceal your faces and cause some trouble. Kill some people and set some fires!" Han Shuo looked at Trunks and smiled slightly.

"You mean, make the House of Menlo think that another faction did it?" Trunks' expression changed as he asked.

"They won't suspect us anyways when they're attacked, because we don't have the strength and have no reason to be enemies with them. They'll suspect the other three factions in the end." Han Shuo explained.

Trunks nodded and a sinister smile appeared on his face. "I think I can do this well. I was used to the covert and open struggles between the factions when I was still in the Rainbow Sickles!"

“Then good, be careful and don’t expose yourselves. Cause as much destruction as you can!”

Trunks made use of the night and said nothing else, leaving hurriedly. It looked like he was planning on making some moves tonight.

After Trunks had left, Han Shuo said darkly to Emily and the two others. “Since the Rainbow Sickles have already made a move against else, we can’t take that long down, can we? Come, let’s go take a walk ourselves and see if we can kill some people at the Rainbow Sickles!”

Han Shuo’s group now enjoyed exceedingly good relations with the Cairo mercenary band. It was very convenient for them to enter and leave the valley. However, they didn’t exit from the main entrance this time, but made use of Gilbert’s flight ability to fly out of a quiet corner in the valley.

There were rules in the valley as well. Under ordinary conditions, even archmages who could fly couldn’t levitate themselves in and out of the valley. If they were discovered by the Cairo mercenary band, they would be immediately detained for questioning.

The moonlight shimmered like water as it cascaded down over the white ground. The accumulated snow had yet to melt, and the snow covered mountains and towering trees were inordinately beautiful beneath the rays of the moon.

The Rainbow Sickles were located within a small mountain valley to the north of the Valley of Sunshine. When Han Shuo’s group arrived, they could see row of low houses made of red tiles when they peered into the mountain valley. There was a sizable hot spring cluster within the valley, and hot mist was arising from the waters, shrouding the mountain valley in white mist.

There were many fresh flowers and grass planted around the hot springs, and because of the heat from the springs, the flowers and grass in the surroundings weren’t afraid of the bite of winter. Many vibrant flowers were blooming all over the area.

Stout looking mercenaries were stationed at outposts all over the mountain valley. They were looking around alertly, always on their guard

against the intrusion of enemies.

Han Shuo had Gilbert stop on a cliff over the valley and looked downwards. Han Shuo smiled coldly, "Someone else may be making a move before us this time!"

Phoebe and Emily revealed confused expressions after his words. They looked in bafflement at Han Shuo, with Phoebe asking, "What makes you say that?"

"When we were at the storefront earlier, dark grand magus Edwin and the female alchemist Belinda of the Calamity Church were observing not too far in the distance. I sensed their position before I stopped, and the two of them followed after Andy when he left."

"Edwin and Belinda were the first to break off from the pursuit, and then it was Gabriel and the female archer Maxine who left. Edwin and Belinda should in the mountain valley below now. If they're here to kill Florida, that will be a huge help for us!" Han Shuo said slowly as he looked down into the mountain valley below.

"Then what should we do?" Starting at some unknown time, Emily had already grown accustomed to Han Shuo deciding everything when he was present.

Lifting his head to look at the sky, Han Shuo said, "Only half of this long night has passed. We still have plenty of time, let's wait for a while!"

Time passed quickly as roughly half an hour later, violent magic pulses suddenly emanated from one of the most magnificent red tile buildings. A metal golem in the shape of the three eyed demon god abruptly appeared out of thin air beneath the cool moonlight.

The golem began body slamming the magnificent building as soon as it appeared. Its thick metal tail swept across the scene and sent red tiles flying everywhere, shaking all the buildings as well.

At the same time, strong magic pulses accompanied the rumbling sounds of the earth shaking and mountains moving. Three hands of death appeared out of thin air and floated into the magnificent building through

the windows, destroying its insides with abandon.

“Edwin and the others have made their move, we can’t sit idly by!” Han Shuo chuckled coldly as the air of bloodlust gathered around him again. The evil and ruthless expression from earlier once again floated onto his cheeks.

“What should we do, honored master?” Gilbert was once again excited as he rumbled in his deep dragon voice.

“Bear them on your back and fly over the mountain valley. Destroy all the buildings in this valley to the best of your abilities, and spray out poisonous flame. If you run into any attacks that may injure you, fly away immediately and don’t wait for me. No one will be able to stop me if I want to leave!” Han Shuo laughed loudly with a grimace and a coldly stern expression. He rushed down like a diving hawk, a blood red light emerging from his body as his eyes were turned a deep blood red.

“Will he be alright?” Phoebe had already discovered Han Shuo’s peculiarities before he’d flown down, and couldn’t help but voice her concerns to Emily.

“Do as he says!” Emily responded and kicked Gilbert in the sides. “Dark dragon, move out!”

A thin figure followed behind Han Shuo in this moment, floating downwards through the air.

The little skeleton capered wildly as he flew like a kite with a broken string. When he reached halfway, the seven bone spurs on his back shook consecutively and his body regained balanced. He followed closely behind Han Shuo with a strange trail and dived down towards the mountain valley.

# Chapter 215: A frenzied slaughter

Cultivators easily became violent and angry in the bloodlust realm. One could only comprehend the wonders of this realm in the midst of bloodthirsty battle, and only through such slaughter could a cultivator understand himself better. Continued slaughter was the fastest shortcut to breaking through this realm.

However, it was exceedingly easy for one to veer into a cultivation deviation during the slaughter. It was incredibly hard for a cultivator to regain their reason once they accidentally lost it, and they would become a crazed monster that only knew how to wreak mass slaughter. Therefore, this realm was quite difficult to exercise self control in. Slaughter was the fastest way to ascend from it, but it was also a one way path.

As Han Shuo flew down from the cliff, his hatred towards Florida was infinitely magnified, including his anger towards the female archer Maxine who'd almost caused a fatal blow to Emily. His originally calm heart began to pound at a much faster rate than usual, and the magical yuan filled the demon infant with a thriving life force.

When the demon infant had absorbed the pure power of the soul held within the purple demon eye, it'd help Han Shuo break through his stalemate in the true demon realm. When he'd reached the bloodlust realm, although he would occasionally have the thought of rampaging around killing everything in sight, his strength had indeed taken leaps and bounds forward.

An inky black shadow landed from the sky amidst large rumbling noises. An thick sense of killing intent arose, one that couldn't be ignored by anyone. When the panicking Rainbow sickle mercenaries, in the throes of gathering their men and horses to respond to Edwin and Belinda's threat, discovered the abnormalities in the sky, they sent arrows, spears, and javelins howling with lightning into the sky.

However, none of the dozen or so attacks could approach the dark shadow. The descending figure swiftly recited a necromancy magic

incantation, and a black light flashed through the skies. A troop of gargoyles appeared out of nowhere. They were wielding bone spears and lined up in a neat formation in front of the dark shadow, blocking all the arrows, spears, and javelins.

Suddenly, an enormous black canopy expanded quickly from the dark figure. It covered the bright moonlight and enclosed a third of the valley in the canopy.

A thick presence of death abruptly spread out. All those who moved around in its vicinity felt that their body was moving around much more stiffly than normal. The dark shadow landed in the valley beneath the cover of the canopy and dark creatures started popping into existence shortly thereafter.

The moonlight was blocked by the black clouds, making one unable to tell time and not knowing how much time there was until daybreak.

The Canopy of Necromancy was a spell that had been lost long ago, and it adversely affected the battle strength of all enemies caught within it. All dark creatures would be strengthened in the range of this canopy, and their strength and speed would be increased after absorbing the thick presence of death around them.

This was an evil magic that wore away at the opponent's strength and increased the strength of one's own dark creatures. It'd been forgotten by humans on the continent since the cemetery of death had vanished.

When Han Shuo's magic materialized, the dark creatures all began excitedly attacking their surroundings. Not only did the Rainbow Sickles feel the limberness of their bodies affected, their eyes also felt abnormally dry and their vision was likewise affected.

"Belinda, apart from Clarendon, has another necromancer come by this time?" Edwin had been releasing dark magic when he saw the moonlight become obscured by the black clouds. He asked a gleeful question to Belinda, who happened to be manipulating her golems off on the side, when he saw the dark creatures enthusiastically attack the mercenaries.

Shaking her head, Belinda's expression was perplexed as she responded,

“Clarendon’s already been killed. There should be no other necromancers other than him!”

Edwin started when he heard those words and smiled faintly, “Then perhaps our superiors sent more people over. Even I have never seen such mysterious necromancy magic. I don’t think that there’s any other necromancers apart from our Calamity Church who would grasp such magic!”

“Of course, only our Calamity Church would have such mysterious magic. He must be one of our.” Belinda had full faith in Edwin’s words. It would seem that they had an unswervable confidence in the strength of the Calamity Church.

“I’m Edwin, which friend has come by?” When Edwin saw that the dark creatures were helping them after Han Shuo had appeared, he couldn’t help but call out in a friendly manner when he saw the dark creatures head off some of the mercenaries.

His enormous amount of mental strength had been mostly depleted after releasing the canopy of necromancy and summoning fifty to sixty dark creatures of different levels. When the dark creatures began to attack with wild abandon under the cover of the canopy, Han Shuo became a cruel shadow locked in the depths of bloodlust and began to vent his violence every which way.

A craving for fresh blood cascaded down like the endless river waters, pushing Han Shuo into a boundless frontier of slaughter. Wherever the dark shadow passed, the mercenaries with insufficient strength were all hacked to pieces by the sharp Demonslayer Edge, and fresh blood splurged everywhere.

His eyes dyed blood red, Han Shuo’s hard to control desire to kill everything led him to kill all those in his path. He was as if a machine reaping lives, and all the mercenaries in his vicinity kept being subjected to frightful attacks.

His body halted slightly after hearing Edwin’s words, but he ignored them. When he looked around again, he discovered that apart from the



little skeleton hot on his heels, there was no one else there.

Now in the bloodlust realm, the durability of Han Shuo's body had reached its peak. He could instinctively sense the danger around him as he fought, and could even clearly perceive the fear and trembling of those far away. Whenever he killed someone, the fear of his victim upon imminent death and his resentment after death would form a cloud of air hard to be seen by the human eye, to be absorbed by the aura of killing intent around Han Shuo.

As more and more mercenaries were slaughtered, the killing aura around Han Shuo became more and more thick. A strong scent of blood even began to emanate from his pores. Han Shuo's body and magical yuan kept being continuously refined in this process, and he could feel his strength increasing bit by bit in this process.

In contrast, Han Shuo's mind became more and more torpid the more his body and magical yuan improved. When the fear and resentment cause from killing others was attracted to his vicinity, this enormous amount of information seemed to affect Han Shuo's mind, making the blood vessels on his brain pulse and giving him the feeling that he was entering a cultivation deviation.

He realized that this was bad and scanned Chu Cang Lan's memories, immediately realizing that in the bloodlust realm, once the brain had this kind of torpid sign and wanted to kill and destroy everyone and everything in sight, this was a sign of one about to enter a cultivation deviation.

His tried and tested willpower proved to be useful now. Han Shuo recalled the Demonslayer Edge back into his storage ring and attempted to calm his rampaging heart whilst he still had some semblance of reason left. He ignored the chaos around him and sat down crosslegged.

The little skeleton had been at Han Shuo's side and helping him reap lives when he suddenly saw his master sit down. His purple eye flashed as the little skeleton waved a hand at some of the dark creatures nearby.

The purple eye flashed on and off with an evil, purple light like a broken light bulb. There seemed to be a mysterious power compelling the dark

creatures. Several zombies and hate warriors walked over fearfully as the little skeleton beckoned to them, giving the little skeleton the respect that subordinates would give to their superiors.

When they faced Han Shuo, they could only move stiffly according to instinct, due to being summoned by a spell. But when Han Shuo had sat down cross legged and was summoned by the little skeleton, they displayed fear and respect when they carefully surrounded Han Shuo. They seemed deeply afraid that the little skeleton would be unsatisfied and become angry at them. They behaved like the most humble servants and slaves.

This kind of performance seemed to indicate that they'd long since known the little skeleton, or heard of the little skeleton's dominance and wondrous achievements. Otherwise, in the vast and boundless other dimension, how would an ordinary skeletal warrior incite so much fear and respect from them?

Perhaps, in the other dimension, the little skeleton with the seven bone spurs, wielding a bone dagger and boasting of a purple eye, had already grown into his own and become a famous and illustrious character!

# Chapter 216: Shock

A third of the mountain valley had been enclosed by the canopy of necromancy. Black clouds obstructed all light, and a thick sense of death floated everywhere, making the mercenaries within feel extremely uncomfortable.

In the center of the canopy of necromancy, having undergone a slaughter, Han Shuo was finding his desires hard to control. The aura of killing intent around him created a scene in which his mind was starting to run out of control. Thankfully, his long honed willpower hauled back on the reins at the most critical moment, forcefully halting his further descent into madness.

He sat down cross legged and ignored the chaos around him. Han Shuo calmed himself and concentrated, slowly placating his deep desires. Three zombie warriors, two hate warriors, and seven to eight skeletal warriors stood around him. The little skeleton wielded a bone dagger as his purple eye sparkled. He was as if a general leading thousands. He stood with a puffed up chest plate and looked towards the front, silently protecting Han Shuo.

The most magnificent building in the valley finally collapsed with a roar beneath Edwin and Belinda's concerted efforts. The earthshaking explosion shook the entire mountain valley. All of a sudden, whether it was mercenaries living further away in the valley, those meditating or practicing, or yet others sparring with each other, all members of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band realized that their old nest was under attack and surged towards the valley.

In a place exceedingly far away, a knight wearing gleaming silver armor charged over on the back of a warhorse clad with silver armor whilst wielding a three meter long javelin.

A thin, black figure moved adroitly amongst the branches of trees with thick accumulation of snow, swiftly making up for her tardiness in arriving. A loose, black dress and several colorful ribbons concealed her

face as she moved. Only two long, tipped ears indicated her identity as an elf.

Andy and the thunder mage made use of the moonlight to fly through the air from another direction. They too were rushing over to render aid, panic and shock written all over their faces.

“Who dares come wreak havoc in the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band!” A furious roar shook the earth from the knight clad in silver armor. Even though his head was covered by a silver helmet, this roar still echoed throughout the entire valley.

“The Knights of Light are here! It looks like we should retreat!” Belinda cast a look into the distance and turned to speak to Edwin.

Edwin nodded and suddenly pointed at the horizon in shock, “Eh? Who’s that?”

Belinda followed the direction of Edwin’s finger and looked at the sky. Although there was the cover from the canopy of necromancy, gouts of flame still enable the two to identify an enormous black figure through the light of the flames.

“It’s that person’s magical pet, a young dark dragon. To think that they followed us here as well!” Belinda seemed to remember her earlier embarrassment and responded with a heavy tone.

“Heh heh, then that’s perfect ,we don’t need to be in a hurry to leave!” If it wasn’t for Gilbert and the others, then all of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries’ attacks would’ve been targeted at Edwin and Belinda. Now that Gilbert and the others were here to divert attention away from them, they naturally wouldn’t have to bear the brunt of the pressure.

Gilbert made use of his fast flight speed over the valley to haul Emily and Phoebe around, spewing out red hot flames at the buildings below and drowning them in a sea of fire.

Gilbert would send a stream of green poison down to wherever a concentrated group of people were. The mercenaries all screamed in agony and dodged away to all sides. If any were splashed with even a hint

of the green poison, they would lose their lives in the span of a moment.

“Lowly lives, you shouldn’t have angered us. This is the punishment that I, dark dragon Gilbert, am visiting on you for your lowly actions!” Gilbert’s resonant voice sounded out as he passed over the mountain valley. He was dancing in his excitement and proud of the destruction that he had wrought.

“Oh noble God of Light, hear my calls. Disperse all darkness—Radiant Glory!” A wizened voice suddenly rang out in the chaotic mountain valley. All sorts of cries, shouts, and collision sounds were unable to bury this chant.

An exceedingly strong beam of light ripped through the sky, and the pure, divine elements of light suffused the valley. The black clouds formed by the canopy of necromancy was diffused in an instant and vanished without a trace.

The resplendent and stunning light scattered down over the valley, intermixing with the soft light from the stars. When the divine power of light shone down, the presence of death was swiftly banished and all the mercenaries in the valley were no longer affected by the darkness.

Apart from the little skeleton being unafraid of the light, all the dark creatures that Han Shuo had summoned began to rot in an exceedingly short amount of time. They displayed expressions of great pain and hurriedly began to find cover.

The dark creatures that had been protecting Han Shuo under the little skeleton’s orders were also all in great pain, but they seemed to fear the little skeleton greatly. Although their bodies were fast decomposing, they didn’t leave. They all looked pleadingly at the little skeleton, waiting for the little skeleton’s forgiveness.

The little skeleton finally waved his hand, allowing the dark creatures to disperse. They all hid beneath roofs or found a random hole in the ground to burrow into, attempting to evade the rays from the Radiant Glory.

The injured mercenaries saw their wounds miraculously come under control beneath the radiant beams of light. They all recovered some of

their energy like they'd been quickly healed.

When the element of light filled the valley, it immediately turned the situation around. Shortly thereafter, an old man wearing the accoutrements of a priest of the Church of Light with greying hair but in good spirits, started patrolling the valley with a benevolent gaze in his eyes.

"He's here alright. When Florida was injured so heavily, I thought he might go back. Let's go, Florida must've been transferred elsewhere. Otherwise, the building that he lives in wouldn't have had only that little bit of defense!" Edwin looked viciously at the light archmage Ferguson as he stood in the shadows of a house and spoke lowly to Belinda.

"Yes, we'll find it hard to leave soon if we linger any longer!" Belinda understood just how strong Ferguson was. She didn't hesitate. The golem had already transformed back into a beam of white light as soon as she'd finished speaking, disappearing into her scroll.

On the other side, the bellowing Gilbert fled swiftly into the skies without another sound when he saw that this old man had used a single light magic to change the situation as soon as he'd appeared.

Ferguson frowned as he saw Gilbert about to leave and chained a basic Radiant slash spell. The light element surrounding the mountain valley suddenly coalesced into three swords of light, swiftly shooting towards Gilbert.

Gilbert turned his head back and spewed out a gout of flame, hauling two of the swords. Emily hastily released a hand of death and blocked the other sword of light. It was only after that that the dragon and two girls finally made it out of the mountain valley.

After Ferguson had release the Radiant Slash, a strong pulse of light magic formed, resulting in ripples of magic spreading out from the epicenter. The ripples screeched through the air as cracks grew swiftly in the ground. A building roughly fifty square meters was in the path of these ripples. It was instantly crushed to rubble and stone shards flew through the sky.

“Edwin old friend, I could feel that hateful presence from you from a far distance away! Come on out!” Ferguson called out in the direction of his attack after releasing the light magic.

It looked like Gilbert wasn't Ferguson primary target. Otherwise, he wouldn't have left so easily. As someone on his level and an opponent he was quite familiar with, Edwin was Ferguson's true target.

“Heh heh, it's so good to see you. However, this place isn't suitable for me. Good bye!” Edwin's sinister laugh traveled from the pile of rubble as a dark figure slowly faded after these words were delivered, disappearing from the wreck.

“I'll find you!” Ferguson's face was calm. He didn't look happy or sad, and there were no ripples of anger in his voice either.

“There's another one down there, and he actually looks unafraid of death!” Thunder mage Asa looked askance below and called out with surprise.

There was a figure shimmering with a blood red light in the center of the ruined mountain valley. He sat there like a boulder, as unmoving as a mountain, ignoring all that was going on around him. A figure that was slightly shorter, wielding a bone dagger with seven bone spurs on his back and a purple left eye stood by his side, unswerving in his loyalty and looking like he was protecting the other.

“It's him, the person ho almost killed Florida at the border of the valley!” The fire mage Andy immediately cried out after flicking a glance down.

Everyone was shocked after these words! They all looked at Han Shuo, perplexed, not understanding why he hadn't left at this time.

Could it be that he wanted to use his own power alone to fight against the entire Rainbow Sickles mercenary band? Didn't he know that there was a light grand magus in the mercenary band?

“Surround him, I want him alive!” A trace of anger finally colored Ferguson's voice. It was unknown whether or not he was angry that Han Shuo had injured Florida, or that Han Shuo was ignoring all of them.

“Understood!” The Knights of Light immediately surged forward from all directions after hearing Ferguson’s order, surrounding Han Shuo with three layers.

Up in the sky, archangels Andy and Asa as well as grand magus Ferguson and sharpshooter Maxine also surrounded Han Shuo as well. By this point, it was likely that only a magister or a divine knight or swordmaster would be able to leave at will.

Han Shuo was obviously not at that level of existence!

As everyone focused on Han Shuo, a stunning light suddenly lit up light archmage Ferguson’s eyes. His calm face was suddenly filled with a bizarre expression. His brows were knit together, the furrows in his forehead twitching as his mouth opened and closed. Incredible shock filled his expression, as well as a few traces of worry and fear.

“Grandpa Ferguson, what’s wrong?” Maxine looked at Ferguson with an odd expression not too far away.

Maxine’s features were comprised of an exquisite, flawless face like she was a perfect work of art. She had all the advantages that a beauty of the elves should possess. A long and limber body, an ethereal bearing, gleaming green tresses that were like a waterfall, and a heart stopping face. All of this had come together in a marvelous combination to form an elfin beauty that would cause cities to go to war for her.

On a cliff on the other side of the valley, where Han Shuo and Gilbert had stood, Edwin and Belinda were now standing side by side.

The expression on Edwin’s face was incredibly similar to Ferguson and the others below. A stern light flowed out from his eyes, focusing on the little skeleton wielding his bone dagger. His expression encompassed a few gleeful traces of obtaining a heavenly treasure amidst unparalleled shock, and his lips trembled uncontrollably.

“Master Edwin, what’s wrong?” Belinda looked oddly at Edwin, asking the exact same question as Maxine.

“That little skeleton isn’t afraid of the Radiant Glory!” Ferguson and



Edwin said at almost the same time with exceedingly different emotions.

“I don’t know how that person has done it, but he must die now. He can’t live for another second!” In all these years, it was the first time that Ferguson had made up his mind to kill someone. An unquestionable resolution filled these words.

On the other side, Edwin took a deep breath in and said gleefully, “He must stay alive no matter what! In the last thousand, hundred years, light magic has always been the bane of dark magic. If the dark creatures no longer need to fear the rays of light magic, then the Calamity Church will completely change the situation and the Church of Light will no longer be able to halt our footsteps forward!”

Belinda immediately woke to her senses after hearing these words as her eyes were also filled with shock and delight. She then looked at Edwin, “What should we do?”

“We need to save him no matter what. He absolutely can’t die!” Edwin said firmly. He’d never wanted to protect someone as bad as he did now!

# Chapter 217: A bloody explosion

“Knights of Light, kill them immediately! This person and dark creature cannot be permitted to stay in this world!” Ferguson’s expression was grim as he called out lowly.

The group of knights who’d just surrounded Han Shuo and were about to take him alive were rather surprised by this sudden change of heart. However, they only paused for a second, still intending on executing Ferguson’s orders.

Up on the cliff, Edwin didn’t waste time hesitating, and shot down towards Han Shuo with Belinda. He planned on saving Han Shuo, whatever the cost, and get to the bottom of why that dark creature was unafraid of light magic.

At the same time, Han Shuo suddenly opened his eyes and swept a cold glance around his surroundings, revealing a bizarre smile.

He chanted out a simple necromancy magic, and the little skeleton who’d stayed by his side all this time, vanished without a trace as a beam of black light broke through the skies.

“Farewell, everyone!” Han Shuo smiled after the little skeleton had disappeared.

The blood red light that had been circling around Han Shuo suddenly shot to the heavens after his words, and an enormous explosion rang out.

Increasingly loud explosions, with Han Shuo’s location as the epicenter, began to shake the ground and skies. The entire valley trembled, and the knights closest to the center were blasted to shreds, blood and flesh flying out like shrapnel.

Edwin and Belinda had been descending rapidly when they saw the sudden explosion from below, accompanied by the ear numbing explosions. Waves of evil, blood red light blasted towards their location in the sky, shocking the two of them.

Edwin slammed on the brakes, skidding as he used the levitation spell to

grab Belinda. They floundered around in the sky in order to evade the light, and then cast urgent looks to the enormous change down below. Stunned stupefaction filled their face as they looked down incredulously.

When the dust had settled, an enormous hole six meters deep and ten meters wide had appeared where Han Shuo had been sitting down cross legged. A thick sense of blood slowly floated out, along with dark red clouds of air. The only things left were a pockmarked surface and the mangled bodies of some knights by the hole.

Han Shuo had vanished without a trace, and no matter how grimly those remaining searched, they couldn't discover a single trace of him.

Taking a deep breath in, Ferguson restrained his anger and said, "Stop searching. Although I don't know how he did it, that person's left already!"

"Then what should we do now?" Thunder mage Asa asked respectfully when facing Ferguson.

"I need to know everything about this person as soon as possible. As detailed as possible!" A trace of rare anxiety colored Ferguson's tone as he looked back at Asa.

"Understood! We'll do this immediately! Asa responded.

Female archer Maxine roughly understood why Ferguson had lost his composure thus at this time. That someone who could turn the situation around like this had appeared on the Continent meant that this might bring nightmarish effects to the Church of Light.

Therefore, as an important person in the Church of Light, Ferguson would be sure to use all resources available to kill this possibility before it even formed.

"Nice going kid, he's got some moves alright to be able to escape so miraculously!" It was a good thing that Edwin had stopped his descent. Otherwise, he might've been embroiled within it as well. He was delighted to see Han Shuo's miraculous escape and couldn't help but compliment him.

"Master Edwin, this person is enemies with our Calamity Church.

Clarendon died at his hands, and he even killed Johnny!” Belinda couldn’t help but speak up when she saw Edwin’s attitude undergo a 180 degree change.

“What do these grudges matter as long as he’s willing to work with us! All humans have weaknesses, and we can give him whatever he needs. Not to mention that Ferguson’s discovered his peculiarities today, the Church of Light will try to kill him at all costs. Ferguson himself will be helping us in making this person work with us!” Edwin laughed heartily and took Belinda higher up in the skies, slowly leaving the mountain.

There was a lake with a thick layer of ice roughly ten li away from the Rainbow Sickle mountain valley. On this frosty winter day, the lake had been frozen into ice cubes, and the smooth mirror surface glistened beneath the moonlight.

However, a bolt of red light streaked through the sky and descended from the heavens like a falling star crashing down to the earth, slamming violently onto the sturdy ice.

The lake exploded outwards as a huge crater appeared on the mirror smooth lake surface. The waters of the lake began to spurt through the cracks of the ice as the ice began to crumble under the impact.

A slender figure shot out of the crater in the next breath. Han Shuo was sopping wet as he landed on a piece of ice that hadn’t cracked. He immediately sat down and began to adjust his breathing.

Han Shuo opened his eyes after roughly fifteen minutes and huffed out lightly. Dark red, muddy air floated out of his pores like string, and vanished with the gusts of the chilly winter wind.

Han Shuo stood up from his cross-legged position and changed into a dry shirt. He once again took to the air and gathered his bearings, before flying swiftly towards the Valley of Sunshine.

After fully grasping all of Chu Yang Lan’s memories and having reached the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo could now deftly utilize some secret arts.

The “Blood Explosion Shield” was an art that helped one escape. It was

usually triggered with blood essence to form a series of explosions, enabling the cultivator to move their body and escape the place of danger in the ensuing sound and chaos.

However, most cultivators wouldn't use this method that would consume a lot of blood essence if they didn't have to. That was because once this was cast, the cultivator would exhaust a great deal of energy due to consuming blood essence and would find themselves in a disadvantageous situation.

However, this hadn't been the case with his casting this time. Having reached the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo's body had naturally produced a violent killing aura after engaging in the massacre in the mountain valley. The aura had naturally attracted the fear and resentment from the mercenaries he'd killed and concentrated it in his body.

The stronger this power became, the harder it became to control. This impending lack of control was what had caused Han Shuo to immediately prioritize his mind's recovery, even in the middle of the battlefield. After suddenly awaking in the middle of recovery, he'd immediately understood that he was surrounded by a group of experts.

At the moment, the violent aura around him was still disorderly and hard to control. He suddenly recalled the "Blood Explosion Shield" in this moment of danger and a thought struck him. He turned this aura into energy and used the energy he'd absorbed as a foundation to cast this art.

In this way, not only had he created a commotion that had shaken the heavens and earth, brutally killing some knights who hadn't had time to react, Han Shuo had also left unhurriedly from the encirclement of the various knights. At the same time, he'd been able to release a power out of his control, and he hadn't harmed himself at all.

When he had again returned to the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo felt that his body had once again been miraculously tempered in the slaughter of the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries. Perhaps it was because he'd cast the "Blood Explosion Shield" and consumed the random, disorderly power, but there was a tiny bit of pure power left at the very end that had

miraculously been absorbed by the magical yuan.

“It looks like adventuring is needed in order to pick up the pace of improvement!” Han Shuo couldn’t help but murmur to himself when he felt the changes in his body thanks to the fight against the knights earlier.

The metallic sound of battle caused Han Shuo to pay close attention to his surroundings. Coming to a halt in midair, he began to carefully investigate the situation around him.

Having fully developed his brain due to magical cultivation, Han Shuo was quite familiar with the layout of the nearby terrain as he’d committed the entire map to memory. When he listened carefully, he quickly realized where the sounds were coming from, and where he currently was as well.

The clashes were coming from the House of Menlo. This matter might even have something to do with Trunks and the others.

“I should go take a look at the strength of my unknown troops.” Han Shuo murmured to himself and changed his flight path, making for the House of Menlo’s territory.

# Chapter 218: A cry from the heart

The House of Menlo was located within a small mountain in the Valley of Sunshine. The center of the mountain had been hollowed out into caves, all interconnected to form a matrix of astonishing defense.

Han Shuo came in from the air and stood on a towering tree tens of meters tall, looking towards the source of the noises.

He saw the caves where the House of Menlo stored their weapons on fire, with thick smoke rising into the air. Tongues of flame flicked out from some of the entrances. It looked like everything was on fire.

These caves each had many stone chambers hewn into them. Each was a room, with all the necessities of life inside. Many of them were even more luxurious than some of the shops within the Valley of Sunshine, so it was very normal for the whole thing to go up in flames once a fire dragon spell was lobbed inside.

A group of masked people were moving swiftly around the entrance to the small mountain. There were some fire mages amongst them who occasionally chanted fire spells, sending gouts of flame towards the mountain entrance.

Their movements were swift and highly coordinated. The fire mages would release fire, the wind mages call up winds to push the fire along, and several archers would force those of the House of Menlo who dared poke their heads out back inside again.

Nevertheless, the small mountain was actually quite large after it had been hollowed out. With so many caves and stone chambers, this band of marauders could only target a section of the mountain. Once Menlo reinforcements arrived, they would immediately split up and conceal their movements, hiding into the surrounding shrubbery for cover. They were obviously very familiar with the surrounding terrain and well versed in these guerrilla tactics. They would quickly retreat whenever someone discovered them and then circle around, coming in from another side to continue wreaking havoc.

Under normal circumstances, this group of people would've been dead without a doubt if they hadn't retreated after the first wave of attacks.

However, the House of Menlo was completely preoccupied at the moment. This group of troublemakers wasn't the main target. Their main focus was on a group of heavily equipped robbers around 500 strong. The robbers' motives were unknown, but they were besieging the mountain and attacking anyone who walked out of it. These two sides were locked in heated battle.

Han Shuo stood in the distance and looked out for a bit, doubled over in laughter as he saw Trunks' men taking advantage of the chaos and adding further confusion. He hadn't thought Trunks would be talented in this regard. The House of Menlo mission this time had only been to make this power suspect the other factions. Han Shuo was a bit surprised at how things had developed.

Even more cavalry with gleaming armor, wielding sharp weapons, came galloping from a path in the distance. Their adornments clearly identified them as those of the House of Menlo. There were roughly six hundred of them, each with an uncommon air to them. They were likely the elites of this house.

The direction that this group was charging in happened to be where Trunks and the others were. Yet to detect the danger they were about to encounter, they were currently planning on causing another round of mischief. Han Shuo finally couldn't sit still any longer and flew to where they were.

The sky was already lightening, and the stars had hidden behind the depths of the night at some point. It seemed like daybreak would come soon. Just as Trunks was about to start on his final round of mischief, a black shadow landed with a "whoosh" in front of him.

He started badly, but breathed a sigh of relief when he discovered that it was Han Shuo. "What are you doing here?"

"I happened to be passing by and saw that the elites of Menlo are about to return. They're going to pass through here. Let's hurry and leave?" Han



Shuo smiled slightly and explained the situation to Trunks without further ado.

When he heard that the elites of Menlo were returning, Trunks shouted lowly and gestured at the mercenaries off in the distance.

These fellows were covered from head to toe and immediately understood Trunks' hand gesture. They didn't gather together to leave en masse, but actually spread out even further and made use of the terrain to conceal themselves, slowly vanishing without a trace.

"Let's go!" Trunks didn't remain idle as he turned his head to smile at Han Shuo, darting into the thick undergrowth.

Snow lay heavily on the branches of the towering trees, blocking the sky's light. The densely packed branches made it hard to trave, but Trunks wasn't the least bit bothered. He took Han Shuo down several twisted paths, emerging far away from the House of Menlo's mountain roughly half an hour later on the path to the Valley of Sunshine.

"Those were all old Rainbow Sickle mercenaries. Everything within the valley was under our control when the old chief was still here, and we're so familiar with the terrain that we can navigate it with our eyes closed, so don't worry about their safety." Trunks said to Han Shuo when they'd left the mountain.

Han Shuo had observed the group's operations when he was on high ground earlier. They showed a high degree of collaboration and were all quite strong. Most of them were journeyman swordsmen or sergeant knights, with a few adept mages and swordsmen mixed in. There were many of them with uncommon bow and arrow skills. It looked like things were as Trunks had said, they were the old mercenaries of the Rainbow Sickle band.

With such a group of people and Trunks' plans, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band would have an easy path forward in the future.

"Right, what happened with you, why did robbers come knocking on the doors of the House of Menlo?" Han Shuo couldn't help but ask.

Trunks couldn't hold his laughter in when he heard this question. "We happened to see this band of robbers on our way to the House of Menlo. They were about to rob a caravan. We pointed out the proper path after fighting with them, and they attacked the House of Menlo with our guidance."

"When they finally disturbed those guys inside, the robbers started fighting them. We took advantage of the chaos to create more havoc everywhere else. We'd thought that the robbers would be immediately defeated and had made plans to retreat early, but who would've thought that the elites of the House of Menlo were deployed elsewhere on some unknown business?"

"When the robbers saw that the elites weren't surging out to attack them, they grew more bold and continued to attack. We stuck around a bit longer, and you saw the rest!"

"So that was the case. Are there many groups of robbers like those in the mountain ranges around the valley?" Han Shuo nodded and asked with a faint smile.

"Of course. Since the valley sits where three nations' borders meet,, many merchants seek to do business in the Valley of Sunshine. Therefore, there are many bands of robbers in the vicinity as well. Two of them even number in the thousands, and they're made of wanted fugitives from the three nations."

"The leaders of the two bands of robbers are a man and a woman. The man is called Gustav, nicknamed the Butcher, an infamous criminal in the Kasi Empire. He kills without blinking and is exceedingly brutal. If a merchant caravan runs into his crew, then they're truly unlucky. If his mood is fair, all the goods and beauties will be taken away, but if his mood is ill, no one is left alive."

"Florida cooperated with Gustav that year to scheme against our old chief, killing him and causing my little sister Annie to disappear. I'm going to kill him sooner or later!"

"There's another woman called Janet. Eh, she's basically inherited her

father's business. Her father was a robber, her grandfather was a robber, and her great grandfather was also a robber. They're a notable family of robbers in these mountain ranges. She's been raised as a robber as soon as she was born, and although she's not a kind sort, she still has certain principles. As long as the merchants who run afoul of her don't resist, they're usually able to retain their lives!"

"Apart from these two, there are about a dozen small to mid-sized robber groups in the mountains. Their scales of operation are smaller and they're not as famous as these two." Trunks explained.

Han Shuo listened for a bit and then asked further about the strength of the robbers before nodding, "It looks like the robbers and mercenaries in the Valley of Sunshine mutually depend on each other. Whether it's the robbers or the mercenaries, both of these are vital for the ecosystem of the valley!"

"What do you mean?" Trunks asked.

"Merchants won't need protection if there are no robbers. Therefore, the mercenaries won't be able to make any money. Without mercenaries, the merchants wouldn't dare come here, and thus the robbers won't have anything to take. Therefore, it's completely logical that both mercenaries and robbers can be found within the valley."

"With the strength of the four factions in the Valley of Sunshine, they should have the ability to destroy the robbers. However, perhaps it's because they understand this that they haven't done so and have allowed the robbers to exist." Han Shuo smiled and explained.

Trunks chuckled after his words, "That's right, the old chief understood this back in the day, to think you'd understand that so quickly as well!"

Nodding, Han Shuo looked at the sky, "Let's go, it's late. We should hurry back to the valley, I want to take a look at some things as well."

Ever since the Rainbow Sickles had left, Han Shuo had felt a voice calling him from afar. He'd thought that it was the little skeleton running into trouble again at first, but after some careful probing, realized that this wasn't the case.

When he focused his attention, Han Shuo discovered that the voice was coming from the Dark Forest. They weren't too far away from the Dark Forest, and the cemetery of death was within it as well.

When he realized that this call was coming from the Dark Forest, Han Shuo immediately understood that the earth elite zombie had successfully broken out of the earth. However, it was confined by the boundary of the cemetery of death and couldn't exit find Han Shuo. It could only passively send out this message to its master.

# Chapter 219: Don't worry, I'll take care of him!

Han Shuo and Trunks returned to the Valley of Sunshine.

Gilbert, Emily and Phoebe had already returned to the store that contained the place of extreme water. They were currently anxiously waiting for Han Shuo, afraid that some mishap may have befallen him.

"Are you alright? I didn't think that old guy, Ferguson, would also be part of the Rainbow Sickles mercenary band. Luckily, his main target wasn't us or we might not have returned so easily with Gilbert," Emily exclaimed upon seeing Han Shuo's safe return, a trace of fear lingering in her heart.

"Mm, contrary to what you think, Ferguson minded the events of tonight very much. There is no way the Rainbow Sickles mercenary band will quietly endure the losses they suffered tonight. We must be more careful!" Han Shuo understood that the Rainbow Sickles mercenary band were not weak; the reason the chaos in the valley had happened then was because none of their high-level experts had been present. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for them to stir up such a massive disturbance.

"What happened afterwards?" Phoebe and the two others had left early so they were unaware of what had transpired later. She couldn't help but inquire after seeing Han Shuo come back safe and sound.

"Nothing of significance. After you left, I also escaped under the cover of the chaos," Han Shuo replied.

Continuous pleas tugged at Han Shuo's mind and heart, emanating from the distant Dark Forest. Since there was nothing else to address, Han Shuo could no longer resist his curiosity so he said shortly, "There shouldn't be any problems during daytime. Everyone has worked hard throughout the night. While the skies haven't completely brightened, take a short break!"

The moment these words left his mouth, Han Shuo hastily returned to his room. He recited a spell and the small skeleton that had been faithfully guarding him appeared before him, bone dagger in hand.

Han Shuo gave a command and brought out the magic sticks that led towards the cemetery of death. He set up the formation and hastily set a foot inside, activating the formation with his mental strength.

A brilliant flash of white light blinded him as the scenery around him shifted radically in the blink of an eye. Han Shuo stepped out into the hall of the cemetery of death, his eyes greeted by mounds of dirt protruding from the ground. Under the murky darkness of the sky, the dense earth element kept congregating in this bastion of extreme earth.

Like the tumultuous ocean currents, the ground trembled softly as though it were made of waves. One by one, the mounds of dirt bulged and dissipated as the firm dirt turned as soft as sand. There was a deep hole in the center as the dirt seethed, as though an enormous mudfish was twisting and tossing.

The cemetery of death was protected by a special boundary. Without the Eye of Darkness that Han Shuo grasped in his hand, there was no way for any person to enter or exit this place. The moment the earth elite zombie was born, it followed its instincts to search for Han Shuo.

As it turned out, Han Shuo's current location, the Valley of Sunshine, was not too far from the Dark Forest. Hence, the moment the earth elite zombie sensed Han Shuo's presence, it immediately strove to get closer, but was unfortunately blocked by the barrier. Irritated at not being able to leave, the zombie had been churning the ground as though it wanted to use its special abilities to exit the cemetery through the ground.

However, it was obvious that the cemetery of death was indeed a marvelous place with wondrous powers. Despite being a favored son of the earth and having the ability to travel through the earth as it desired, the earth elite zombie could not overcome the restriction. This sufficiently proved that the status of the cemetery of death as a sacred ground for necromancers was definitely not a name given in vain.

"Come out!" Han Shuo immediately called out after he stepped into the cemetery.

Immediately after he spoke, a slightly yellow shadow abruptly emerged

from the ground in the center and stood stiffly at attention in front of Han Shuo.

It was still an ordinary zombie warrior, but its appearance had undergone quite a change after being refined by the secret arts of demonic cultivation. The original dark green of its face had faded to a yellow pallor, and its entire body was covered by armor slicked with yellow oil. A faint light flickered its way through it, and a thick sense of earth spirit emanated from the armor.

The yellowish armor had slowly formed after the earth elite zombie had absorbed the earth qi of the land and mixed the qi with several uncommon materials that Han Shuo had provided. The earth elite zombie had refined the mixture along with his body, and so the armor covered all of its skin. The durability of the body was vastly greater than before, and he could use the earth qi to form all sorts of attacks. He could also fly through the earth to conceal his movements or suddenly attack enemies.

The earth elite zombie stood at 180cm with an ordinary, unremarkable face. Its face was split into a wide open grin at this time, revealing an odd smile that was a bit simple. It was looking delightedly at Han Shuo. Like the little skeleton, although the earth elite zombie had a soul, it wasn't able to directly communicate with Han Shuo. He could only make use of the mysterious connection between the two to communicate. The earth elite zombie grinned widely at Han Shuo and waved his enormous hands around, calming the furrows in the earth and restoring calm to the area.

"Alright, I know your abilities, stop showing off!" It was like a mischievous kid, eager to show off its abilities. Han Shuo understood that the earth elite zombie had just formed and that its intelligence was quite low. He'd need to keep infusing it with knowledge so that it would understand more.

The earth elite zombie moved its lips after Han Shuo had spoken and jumped into the center of his hiding place with a flip of his body. The ground shook slightly as the earth elite zombie reappeared, clutching three vaguely shifting shadows.

“Oh, the three yin demons have formed as well!” Han Shuo was surprised and immediately activated the magical yuan in his delight. He sent a beam of black light towards the vague shadows and shouted, “Yin demons, take your places according to my order!”

When the black light hit the three indistinct shadows, strands of black aura appeared around them, making their forms clearer and more distinct.

They had long tails, sharp fangs, and was as large as vicious, wild monkeys. All three had two sharp horns and a pair of bat-like meaty wings. Their faces had evil, deep green eyes that sparkled with a frightening ruthless light. This was the true form of the yin demons.

When their forms grew clear, they flew out from the earth elite zombie's hands and through the air like lightning. Their forms shimmered between tangible and ghostly, changing their shapes at will in the air and emitting soul wrenching howls as they moved.

The three yin demons circled around Han Shuo once and entered his body through the back of his neck with a thought, vanishing without a trace in the blink of an eye.

Han Shuo then smiled and gave his body a shake. Four Han Shuo's appeared in thin air. Apart from his own body, the three were formed by the yin demons. They were truly marvelously incredible.

The earth elite zombie hadn't the slightest clue of what had transpired and was obviously confused. He stood there unmoving, looking dumbly at Han Shuo.

After a while, the earth elite zombie grinned bashfully and moved his stocky figure, instantly standing next to the leftmost Han Shuo. It reached out a left index finger to point at Han Shuo, meaning “I found you!”

There was a marvelous connection between the two, so Han SHuo didn't find it odd that the earth elite zombie could identify him. As he watched the earth elite zombie look at him with an honest smile, Han Shuo's thoughts moved again as the three yin demons transformed back into three beams of black light and returned to Han Shuo's body.



Han Shuo continued to practice quickly transforming the three yin demons into replicas of himself. He repeated this a dozen times until he had a solid grasp on this technique.

The earth elite zombie needed quite a bit of time to identify Han Shuo, but when Han Shuo kept practicing, the earth elite zombie used the connection between the two to identify the real Han Shuo with lightening speed as soon as replicas appeared.

The earth elite zombie thought that Han Shuo was playing a fun game with him and ceaselessly identified the real Han Shuo, not feeling tired or bored at all. It kept grinning with a silly, honest grin and didn't possess the cold ruthlessness that a zombie should have at all. This made Han Shuo some worry about whether or not the zombie could develop quickly.

Han Shuo wasn't Chu Cang Lan, so he couldn't bring this zombie warrior around with him wherever he went and attend all sorts of events. Therefore, Han Shuo thought for a moment and decided to send the earth elite zombie to the dimension that he'd come from.

He wasn't worried about the earth elite zombie's strength. After refinement from his secret arts, the earth elite zombie was certain to become a very useful helper to him. However, it'd just been born from the earth right now and seemed a bit naive and simple. It would need to grow quickly.

The little skeleton seemed to have grown into a strong, omnipotent presence in the other dimension; even Han Shuo wasn't sure of how strong the little skeleton was now. Eventually, one would run into some enemies that one would have to hide from, so it might actually be a very good idea to send the earth elite zombie back home.

"I'm going to introduce a friend to you. He has my presence on him, you'll definitely like him." Han Shuo thought for a moment and smiled at the earth elite zombie.

Han Shuo then used his connection with the little skeleton to chant an incantation, summoning the little skeleton. Once he arrived, the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie stared silently at each other.

The purple eye in the little skeleton was glimmering with vitality, and he seemed quite interested in the earth elite zombie. He walked up to it and reached out a stark white hand bone to pat the honest zombie's shoulder, and used the other hand to pound his own chest, making a hand gesture to Han Shuo.

He seemed to mean that, I'll take care of him, don't you worry!

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# Chapter 220: Saving up for a rainy day

Both dark creatures had Han Shuo's life essence, so they naturally felt a sense of affinity towards each other. He could see threads of empathy slowly begin to flourish between them.

The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie were staring at each other, seemingly in the midst of a broken conversation. After a short moment, they both turned to stare at Han Shuo anxiously.

"Alright, I will send you guys back!" Han Shuo smiled slightly and replied when the two guys simultaneously expressed their desire to leave. With a spell, the small skeleton and the earth elite zombie vanished without a trace.

After the two of them departed, the cemetery of death fell back into silence. The ground settled into stillness, and with the birth of the yin demons, the yin demon cave stopped operating.

Han Shuo looked around and realized there was nothing of further significance in this place. He ruminated briefly before walking towards a valley where the dwarves resided.

"Han! What brings you here?" As soon as he entered the dwarf's valley, these guileless little dwarves displayed their passion and showered him with a continuous stream of friendly greetings.

The last time Han Shuo had come here, the dwarves had obtained a large amount of food and daily necessities from him. Now, all their elderly and young were adorned in thick, cold-resistant cotton-padded clothes, had cozy stoves to warm themselves and enjoyed an abundant food supply to relieve their hunger. Not even the freezing ice storms of midwinter were scary anymore.

Along the way, Han Shuo could detect the satisfaction and contentment brimming in dwarves' faces. When these dwarves saw Han Shuo, their faces exuded thankfulness and welcoming as they bellowed to one another, spreading the news of Han Shuo's arrival.

“Uncle Han, this is for you!” When he made his way to the center of the valley, a six-year old, snot-nosed dwarf kid ran up with a sugar hawthorn stick in hand. The kid presented a piece of barbequed meat, roasted to glistening perfection, in his delicate voice.

“Thank you, dear child!” Han Shuo smiled as he bent down and patted the head of the dwarf child, who was only a few dozen centimeters tall, while taking the piece of meat with his other hand.

The adult dwarves surrounding them all smiled kindly. The atmosphere was extremely harmonious, attesting to the deep sense of goodwill they bore towards Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo entered the center of the village, he saw the familiar faces of the dwarf warrior Bennett as well as the village chief Calvin. He smiled and asked, “Elders. How has everything been recently?”

“Dearest Han, you’ve taken the cold away from this winter! Everyone has warm clothes and enough food. No one will starve to death this winter!” Chief Calvin’s face was filled with gratitude. He faced Han Shuo and expressed his debt using dwarven etiquette.

In the beginning, Han Shuo hadn’t helped these honest dwarves out of the goodness of his heart. But the more he got to know them, the more he understood that these stubborn dwarves were actually very easy to get along with, and their generosity towards friends was unbelievable.

He had won their friendship at an unknown time, but the way they went about their business had also won them his goodwill. He’d planned on just using them in the beginning, but now treated them as good friends that he could depend on.

“That’s good, good! Let me know if there’s anything you need. I’m going to go back to the world of humans soon, and I’ll be able to bring you whatever you need!” Han Shuo had a kind smile on his face as he spoke leisurely with Calvin.

Calvin waved his hands, touched. “No need, we can easily make it through this winter already. We’ll use our own efforts to repay you when spring comes. You know that we’re a hardworking species. Children need

to be raised thus since young and we need to avoid instilling lazy habits in them.”

Nodding understandingly, Han Shuo said. “I see. Ah, yes. I’d planned on asking you to refine some weapons and armor for me this time. Would that be inconvenient for you, elder?”

“Han, you’re speaking like an outsider. We’re friends, why would anything be inconvenient! Prey is scarce in winter, and there are very few places in the Dark Forest that we can freely move around in. Forging weapons is our hobby, it would be very fun to make use of our idle time to forge more weapons. This is no problem at all.” Calvin didn’t hesitate at all when he agreed, and he looked rather happy as well.

“Truly, Han. We’ve been wondering how to repay you during this time. Asking us to forge weapons for you now means that we no longer have to rack our brains anymore.” Bennett laughed heartily, expressing the dwarves’ sincerity to Han Shuo.

When he saw that the dwarves were still filled with gratitude at Han Shuo bringing them provisions, as well as their desire to not take advantage of their friends, Han Shuo felt a bit shamefaced at the dwarves’ kindness and honesty.

He’d approached them with ulterior motives at first, and was now rather embarrassed by their outpouring of genuine emotion.

“Mm, you don’t need to do anything for now because I haven’t thought of what kind of weapons I need. I’ll bring the raw materials over next time when I think of what weapons I need!” Han Shuo said.

After departing from the dwarves’ valley, Han Shuo didn’t linger in the Dark Forest but returned to the Valley of Sunshine through the cemetery of death.

When he retrieved the magic sticks and walked out of the room, he discovered that it was completely empty. He was a bit taken aback, and unsure of when everyone had left.

Han Shuo had completely handed over the matters of the Soul Destroyer

mercenary band to Trunks, and matters of money to Phoebe. Emily was in charge of all the random Dark Mantle affairs, and Gilbert was Phoebe and Emily's bodyguard.

The setting sun on the horizon left the clouds in the sky afire as dusk loomed. The Cairo mercenaries were everywhere in the valley, taking care of security in shifts, so Han Shuo wasn't too worried about everyone's safety.

Seeing he was the only one left in the storefront and he had nothing else to do, Han Shuo took out the thick tome of necromancy from the cemetery of death and slowly started studying it.

He'd deployed the lost art of the Canopy of Necromancy to great effect on their trip to the Rainbow Sickle hideout last night. If it hadn't been for light grand magus Ferguson's timely arrival, the dark creatures in the vicinity of the spell would've been able to continue wreaking havoc and destruction, displaying uncommon battle strength.

Even after absorbing the memories of necromancer Clarendon from the Calamity Church, there had been no knowledge of the Canopy of Necromancy. He didn't have any knowledge of reviving corpses either.

This meant that the tome of necromancy in the cemetery was the pinnacle of necromancy magic. There was a vast amount of knowledge and spells contained within, including ones that had been lost.

These items were exceedingly useful to Han Shuo. After receiving Clarendon's memories, Han Shuo's understanding of necromancy magic had already reached the level of archmage. He could understand many of the obscure and profession-specific sentences within, and had no need to consult Fanny about anything anymore.

Time always passed by so swiftly when he was studying magic. The sky had grown completely dark in the blink of an eye, and soft footsteps from outside jerked Han Shuo from his reverie.

His thoughts raced as he sent the three yin demons flying outwards. His hasty surveillance revealed that it was Trunks and Gilbert returning together.

“Bryan, good news. I think you’ll be very happy!” Trunks said happily when he walked in.

Starting, Han Shuo was surprised. “What good news?”

“Remember Odysseus and the six others who adventured with you in the Dark Forest?”

“What about them?”

“I saw them enter the valley when I was returning today. Their strength is exceptional, and they have a deep relationship with you. Our mercenary band has only just formed and needs people like them. I think they’d want to join us if you invite them!”

Han Shuo was delighted when he heard Trunks’ words, “Good news indeed. Odysseus and Gordon are two senior swordsmen, with Aphrodite being a water archmage. The thunder journeyman mage, and the elven female archer Nia as well make up an altogether strong team.”

“If they join us, I think our band’s strength will be rounded out immediately. It looks like we are indeed quite lucky, heh heh!”

“They seem to be protecting someone this time. I spoke with them and they said they’ll come by tomorrow and catch up with you. It looks like there will be no problems!” Trunks smiled.

Han Shuo’s brow suddenly furrowed as he listened to Trunks. He looked at a tree not too far off in the distance and said lowly, “Mister Edwin, since you’re already here, come inside for a chat !”

# Chapter 221: Refusal to the face

The yin demons had been released into the surroundings, so no movements around the storefront would escape Han Shuo's notice. Even if the other was a dark grand magus, it would be impossible for him to move about within Han Shuo's territory with no one the wiser.

When Edwin and Belinda had landed on the tree in the distance, Han Shuo had already used the yin demons to mark their movement, which had led to him calling them out without hesitation.

Even if Han Shuo had been alone in the shop, the formation in the courtyard would allow him to be completely fearless in front of Edwin, let alone the presence of Gilbert and Trunks by his side.

Edwin and Belinda were obviously stunned by Han Shuo's frightening perception. Dumbfoundness filled Edwin's face as he revealed himself through the thick cropping of branches, looking at Han Shuo in the yard. He called out, "How did you discover me?"

"Nothing is impossible!" Han Shuo shouted back coldly. He then shot a look to the two by his side, revealing a calm smile. He pointed elegantly at a few of the empty seats in the yard and threw his head back to say, "Since you two have the mind to, why don't you come over for a chat? I don't feel any killing intent from you, so it doesn't appear that you're here to kill me this time!"

Having reached the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo now had a keen sensitivity to the natural killing intent that would emanate from experts, perhaps also a function of his own increased desire for blood. Up in the tree, Edwin and Belinda were casting curious and cautious looks into the yard. Their expressions were calm with no hint of killing intent.

Edwin was even more astonished after Han Shuo's words. His look at Han Shuo was full of surprise and shock. He kept trying to read something from his face.

Edwin revealed a wry smile after a while and shook his head, "I'm here with sincerity this time, but I can't see if you harbor an intention to kill me



or not. Your yard is too dangerous, so I won't come down for now. Otherwise, I may die thanks to this group of young but frightening children!"

He brought Belinda with him when landing softly on the shop roof, seemingly very concerned about the strangeness within the yard. The two of them didn't dare draw near the courtyard and seemed to be on their guard against any kind of sudden ambush.

To be honest, Han Shuo did indeed wish that the two of them would land in the courtyard. He could then use the formation as well as Gilbert and Trunks' strength to kill them, and save himself the effort of always being on his guard against an ambush from Edwin.

It was a pity that Edwin was a sly old fox and wouldn't easily fall into his trap. Edwin had already investigated the happenings in the shop of the previous night and deeply understood that this shop was fully capable of swallowing people. This was why he didn't dare land inside.

Since his plans had failed, Han Shuo didn't continue his good attitude towards them. His face dark, he said impatiently, "If you're not here to kill me, are you here to cooperate against Ferguson? He's a heavyweight in the church of Light and is now diametrically opposed to you. You're his true target."

"You're wrong! Perhaps you don't even know yourself, but you've become the hated enemy of the Church of Light! They'll spare no cost to make you disappear from this world now!" Edwin looked deeply at Han Shuo and said lowly.

"Oh? Is that so? Ferguson doesn't represent the entire Church of Light. I think my grudge with Florida isn't so deep as to make the entire Church of Light move against me. You're just saying frightening things to raise an alarm!" Han Shuo mocked.

Looking at Han Shuo with a pitying expression, Edwin said slowly, "Your miraculous performance last night made the Church of Light realize your terrifying aspects. Your little skeleton being unafraid of the radiance of light created even more trouble for you. Ferguson will make a move

against you even if not for his grandson Florida now, because your existence strongly threatens the Church of Light.”

Han Shuo fell silent after these words. He wasn't stupid, but had simply never thought about this matter seriously before. When Edwin reminded him of this, Han Shuo recalled that the last couple of times necromancy magic had fallen, the Church of Light had seemed to play an important role every time.

Light magic had a fatal effect on the dark creatures of necromancy magic. When necromancy magic was at its peak, hordes and packs of dark creatures had ravaged the lands. The Church of Light had then sent out large numbers of believers to use the simplest of light magic to deliver a devastating blow by bathing the dark creatures in light magic.

Han Shuo thought carefully and quickly realized the truth in Edwin's words. He'd refined the little skeleton and zombies from his secret arts, making them impervious to light magic attacks. This was an intolerable truth to the Church of Light. It looked like he'd unwittingly become embroiled in enormous trouble.

When Edwin saw Han Shuo remain silent, his brows deeply knitted together, and his face becoming darker and darker, Edwin understood that Han Shuo had realized how serious things were. He smiled faintly and reached out a finger to point at Han Shuo. He spoke with an extremely bewitching voice, “I'm sure you know how influential the Church of Light is in the Profound Continent. Apart from the Calamity Church continuously fighting against them, there are very few powers that can withstand them.”

“Don't hesitate. As long as you join our Calamity Church, we can forget all our previous grudges. Our necromancers' study of dark creatures will reach unparalleled levels as soon as you join. Large armies of dark creatures will then raze and loot all the Church of Light strongholds, making everyone and everything fall under our rule.”

“And you, you will become the most respected person in the Calamity Church. You can have anything you want. Wealth, women, and power will

all be within your grasp. What a wondrous thing! I'm sure that with your intelligence, you'll be able to imagine the glorious future ahead!"

"Honored master, he makes a lot of sense. Agree!" Gilbert became incredibly excited when he heard about wealth and women.

"Shut up!" Han Shuo glared fiercely at Gilbert and then looked back at Edwin. "My apologies, although your suggestion is tantalizing, I don't think I can agree. The Calamity Church has an awful reputation. I don't want to become a public enemy."

The Calamity Church was a power that everyone hated on the continent. This church hid in the shadows and was a force that no country could ignore.

They possessed a fervent faith to destroy, and a stubborn desire that was hard to understand. They were at odds with all kingdoms and religions on the Continent. If he did join such a church, Han Shuo would become the enemy of all the nations. This was something he was absolutely unwilling to see.

Not to mention that it was very difficult to use magic cultivation methods to refine dark creatures. He would need to expend an enormous amount of resources and manpower. He wasn't sure if he could mass produce light magic resistant dark creatures either. Even if he could, according to the Calamity Church's teachings and canon of destroying all, the Continent would then be enveloped in a shroud of blood and fire and ultimately become a wasteland. This was also something that Han Shuo didn't wish to see.

Han Shuo's unhesitating and resolute refusal perplexed Edwin. He'd planned on trying to further convince Han Shuo, but a beam of black light flashed through the air from afar and shot towards Edwin on the roof.

"You should all die! I'm going to get revenge for big sister Elaine today!" Like a furious tigress, an enraged Emily shattered the air as she sped towards Edwin, staff in hand and hair dancing wildly.

Casting a disdainful look at her, Edwin raised his hand and blocked all attacks with a wall of darkness. He then looked at Han Shuo and smiled

slightly, “Don’t be in such a hurry to decline. I think you might change your decision when the Church of Light makes their move.”

Edwin didn’t continue to tarry after he finished speaking, vanishing without a trace with Belinda in the blink of an eye.

Edwin was a grand magus. If he wanted to leave through the air, no one there was capable of hindering him. Emily and Phoebe both refrained from foolish pursuit as they landed in the courtyard.

“What’s going on?” Emily looked at Han Shuo and asked.

He sighed softly with a wry smile. “I’m in big trouble!”

“What’s wrong? What kind of trouble could’ve given you a headache?” Emily had been with Han Shuo for so long but she’d never truly seen him at a loss.

When Han Shuo had described all that had happened, the two girls were also greatly shocked. They immediately understood the importance of the matter and frowned, looks of anxiety on their faces as no solutions seemed to present themselves.

The Church of Light was different from the Calamity Church. They were the most influential religious organization on the Profound Continent, and had a large network amongst the populace. There were a large number of believers worshipping the Church of Light in any country, and their combined influence was stronger than any small kingdom.

“If all of the Church of Light believers are like Ferguson, then I don’t think much of this church either!” Han Shuo sneered dismissively in the end.

“No, there are many who are kind and just in the Church of Light. At least, those I know have characters worthy of admiration. Ferguson isn’t a bad sort either, he just spoils his grandson Florida too much. He often ends up wiping Florida’s butt after some willful action or another. This is the reason for the slow shift in his character.”

“There are many necromancers in the entire Continent apart from the Calamity Church. I think the Church of Light won’t try to kill you as long

as you don't join the Calamity Church. Not all believers of light are that unreasonable!" Emily thought for a moment and comforted Han Shuo.

"It's difficult to say. This matter is indeed a bit thorny. But if the Church of Light wants to make a move against me for no reason, I won't be merciful either. No matter what excuse they have, I'll kill someone first if they try to kill me!" Han Shuo thought for a moment and said resolutely.

"Master, no matter what you do, your loyal servant Gilbert will serve you faithfully!" Gilbert didn't miss an opportunity to fawn on Han Shuo.

"Trunks, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band will make all actions in your name in the future. Don't tell anyone the relationship between the mercenary band and me. Otherwise, I'm afraid that with my identity, it would bring unnecessary trouble to the band!" Han SHuo thought for a moment and suddenly said to Trunks.

"Bryan, do you think I'm afraid of some trouble?" Trunks was a bit unhappy and said coldly.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo responded, "Don't think random thoughts. The mercenary band is mine, but don't publicize that for now. You can announce that after I take care of this Church of Light matter. You have to know that our mercenary band has just started at this moment, and I want to expand more quickly as well, so I can't let this matter affect it at this time!"

Trunks' expression returned to normal after Han Shuo's explanation. He smiled faintly and nodded, "You're the chief, I'll do what you say. That's the rule of the mercenary band!"

"What were you two doing today? Why weren't you in the shop during the day?" Han Shuo looked askance at Emily and Phoebe, having settled Trunks.

"I brokered an enormous deal and disposed of everything you gave me. We now have seventy thousand gold coins. Apart from those needed to form the mercenary band, I'm temporarily holding onto the rest for you!" Phoebe said.

“Younger sister Cecilia, one of the three heavyweights in charge of all Dark Mantle matters outside of the Empire, suddenly arrived in the valley today. I immediately went to meet her, and was delayed because we decided to catch up for a while.” Emily looked at Han Shuo and explained. She paused, and smiled faintly, “Because I talked about my cooperation with you, she was very curious about you!”

# Chapter 222: Making a move myself hurts the body!

Cecilia was one of the three heavyweights in the Dark Mantle, ascending to her position at a young age. She was legendary within the Dark Mantle, and was greatly admired by all members.

She'd had been traveling to various kingdoms all this time, in charge of foreign policy matters. She rarely made a trip back to the capital if there was nothing urgent.

As a central location between three countries, the Valley of Sunshine was a very special existence. That Cecilia was here meant that she must have an important mission, otherwise she wouldn't have dithered here.

Han Shuo didn't have many designs on this legendary woman, even if she was rumored to be very tempting. He was only a bit surprised when he heard Emily say that she was interested in him and didn't say much else.

"Bryan, I need to talk to you alone. Come find me later." Phoebe stretched and walked towards her own room, murmuring, "What a long day, let's take a bubble bath and relax first."

When Trunks and Gilbert saw Phoebe leave, they immediately started making faces at Han Shuo. Emily curled her lip and gave a very soft, low snort. She was likely a bit angry.

"Trunks, make a list of what weapons our mercenaries will use. I'll ask the dwarves to forge them soon." Han Shuo said to Trunks as he suddenly remembered.

"The dwarves live in a very mysterious place. How did you find them?" Trunks was quite shocked as he looked at Han Shuo with surprise.

"Thanks to some fortuitous occurrences I have a good relationship with a dwarf village, and can ask them to forge some weapons for me. Mm, I can bring this with Phoebe later. She can purchase some rare metals for me so that the dwarves can forge even sharper weapons."

“I see. Alright, I’ll think about it tonight and then give you a list tomorrow.”

Looking up at the sky, Han Shuo said, “Mm, it’s getting late. Everyone should get some rest.”

“Honored master, Miss Phoebe has just returned to her room and hasn’t even started filling the tub with water yet. Aren’t you a little anxious?” Gilbert sniggered lewdly, his voice laced with a double meaning.

“Gilbert, if you really are getting blue balls, I can give you some gold coins so you can go to those alleyways and take care of your issues!” Han Shuo looked sideways at Gilbert and suggested.

Trunks guffawed and clutched his stomach, gasping between laughs, “He already tried today, but even though he was willing to spend a large amount of money, all of the girls in the valley think that he’s an incredible pervert due to his previous actions, so no one dares serve him.”

When he heard that Gilbert really had attempted to go whoring, but hadn’t been able to find anyone willing to serve him, Han Shuo couldn’t help but laugh heartily, “A little lewd dragon is a little lewd dragon alright. It’s too bad he can’t be lewd even when he spends money! You’re truly sad!”

Gilbert’s look of dejection turned to a look of anger, complaining loudly, “It’s all because that you wanted me to collect virgin’s blood that I can’t get any girls. Now you even laugh at me! I feel so shunned!”

“How low, so disgusting!” Emily rolled her eyes at Gilbert with extreme disdain. She snorted coldly and walked off to her own room.

“Hey hey, are you getting something wrong here? Master told me to collect it, why aren’t you yelling at him?” Gilbert cried out loudly, aggrieved when he saw Emily scorn him so much.

“Alright, if you really can’t hold it in, you can fly to a farther city to take care of your needs. I know it’s the personality of you dark dragons. Master is willing to give you gold for whoring, don’t worry!” Han Shuo laughed oddly and ignored Gilbert, heading for Emily’s room.



Although Han Shuo and Phoebe were in a relationship in name, the two of them had yet to develop to that point. Han Shuo could only look for Emily when he had to take care of some bodily needs.

“Eh? Didn’t Miss Phoebe tell him to go visit her? Why did he go visit Madame Emily instead? Eh, is he walking to the wrong place?” Gilbert looked at Trunks and spoke in incomprehension.

Rubbing his chin, Trunks looked as Han Shuo entered Phoebe’s room, a thoughtful expression on his face. He smiled, “Stop poking your nose into your master’s affairs. You should uphold the principle of ‘Talk less, do more’.”

After Han Shuo had entered Emily’s room, he directed one of the three yin demons surveilling the shop to take up guard outside her room. He smiled cheekily and walked further in, laughing softly, “Alright alright, don’t be mad.”

“Go, go find your little Phoebe!” Emily said huffily as she glared at Han Shuo.

“Heh heh, I’d need to find my little Emily first. Phoebe can wait.”

Han Shuo walked to Emily, smiling as he didn’t wait for her to resist. He held her in his arms and his hands roved over her body, invading her luscious curves. When Emily was panting heavily, her emotions took over as she began voluntarily coordinate with Han Shuo’s actions. The two quickly shed their clothes and entangled themselves with each other with an air of familiarity.

When Emily’s body had softened into a ball of cotton candy, exhausted after Han Shuo’s multiple vigorous charges, the bit of ire left in her heart from earlier quickly vanished without a trace. Her skin was flushed red as she curled lazily in Han Shuo’s embrace. Her slender fingers tapped lightly on Han Shuo’s chest as she murmured lowly. “I know I shouldn’t be mad, but sometimes I can’t help myself.”

Running his large hand over Emily’s smooth back, Han Shuo said softly, “It only means that you care about me. You don’t need to explain. It’d be even more odd if you weren’t mad.”

Han Shuo was spooning Emily and murmuring sweet nothings to her, completely forgetting about the passage of time. He'd forgotten what Phoebe had said before. But in the other room, Phoebe had waited a long time after she'd showered and changed. She began to grow impatient when Han Shuo took his sweet time coming.

She put on her clothes and adjusted them, leaving her room and crossing the yard to walk towards Han Shuo's room. She knocked, "Bryan, can I come in?"

Han Shuo had discovered her movements when Phoebe had pushed open her own door. When he saw Phoebe make a beeline for his room, he hastily started putting his clothes on. "Damn it, I forgot what Phoebe said just now."

Deathly afraid of being caught in bed, Emily also had a panic stricken expression on her face as she hastily put her clothes back on and carelessly pulled her hair up into a bun. She urged Han Shuo on, "You should hurry on back. Things'll be bad if she discovers this."

Nodding, Han Shuo walked to a window in the back and jumped out, approaching his own room from the back wall. He then used his cultivation skills to open his window and flipped inside, casting a look over his appearance in the window and opening the door with an awkward expression.

"Why did it take you so long to open the door? I told you to come find me just now; why didn't you come?" Phoebe pouted at Han Shuo and asked suspiciously when she saw that his pants were loose. "What were you doing just now; how come you haven't zipped up your pants?"

Han Shuo's expression was a bit panicked because he felt guilty. Inspiration struck and he hurriedly responded, "No, nothing. I was going to the bathroom."

"I see!" Phoebe giggled and replied understandingly. Smiling, she walked towards Han Shuo and looked coquettishly at him. "You should still pull up your pants properly before opening the door. Look at you now, gosh!"

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Phoebe stooped down with a faint

smile as she spoke and reached out to pull up his pants.

However, a strong, odd smell hit her nose from his pants when she did so, assaulting her nose and mouth.

This strange smell made her immediately cover her nose and cry out, "What is this; why does it smell so weird?"

She looked closely at his pants as she spoke and noticed some white spots on the fabric of his thighs. It looked like some liquid had just dried.

Her stunning cheeks suddenly burned hot as she abruptly realized what those spots were. She was so embarrassed that she wanted to find a hole to hide in, standing there dumbfounded as she froze.

;Shit! Damn! I'm dead now! I forgot to clean myself just now. The only other woman in the store is Emily. It looks like the gig's up, Phoebe's definitely going to throw a tantrum.' Han Shuo was apprehensive when his thoughts spun wildly. "Eh... uh.... um... things aren't as you think!" Han Shuo frantically explained as he hurriedly pulled his pants up, unable to conceal the panic in his expression.

Phoebe stood up with a lowered head, as her cheeks and neck burned, not daring to look at Han Shuo. She turned and headed back outside, but suddenly found her voice and her sense of humor as she reached the doorway and murmured in an exceedingly low voice, "Bryan, it's been tough on you. I'm your girlfriend, but you still have to take care of such things yourself. Um... I'm just not ready yet. Give me some more time. Don't do this in the future. I've heard people say that it really harms the body to do this to yourself!"

Phoebe delivered these words with a reddened expression as Han Shuo watched, dumbfounded. She then left like she was fleeing, and rather seemed more ill at ease than Han Shuo.

"Hey hey, things aren't as you imagined!" Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry as he watched Phoebe's retreating back.

The next day. Morning

Phoebe, Emily, and Han Shuo all had on very awkward expressions in the

morning. No one knew what to say.

Particularly Han Shuo. He'd been misunderstood by Phoebe but had no way of explaining himself. Explaining would land him in more trouble instead.

Trunks and Gilbert looked ambiguously at all of them, especially Gilbert. He kept chuckling under his breath and said to Han Shuo, "Honored master, did you have a wonderful night? Aha, I think it must've been one worthy of dreaming about again and again."

"Shut up!" Han Shuo flew into a rage and glared fiercely at Gilbert.

"Bryan, here's a list of weapons. If the dwarves can forge these, it'll definitely greatly increase our men's fighting abilities and passion!" Trunks handed over a scrawled list of weapons.

"Eh, I still have some matters to take care of. I'll be going now." Emily was alright, but she still felt a bit shy after the previous night's events, and so was the first to leave.

"I'm also going to leave too." Phoebe also expressed her intentions when she saw Emily leave.

"Phoebe, wait!" Han Shuo opened his mouth.

Phoebe's face suddenly flushed hotly as she didn't quite dare meet Han Shuo's eyes. She only flicked a shy glance at Han Shuo, "What is it?"

"Eh? The frosty Miss Phoebe can be so shy as well? It looks like what happened last night altered even Miss Phoebe's personality!" Gilbert finally 'confirmed' that something had happened between Han Shuo and Phoebe last night.

"Lewd dragon, don't think everyone is as shameless and perverted as you! I'll stab you with my sword if you keep spewing nonsense!" Phoebe was also enraged as she rolled her eyes fiercely at Gilbert, threatening him with a icy look on her face.

"I need all of these things, buy them for me." Han Shuo took out a list and handed it over to Phoebe, asking her to obtain the written items.

Taking Han Shuo's list, Phoebe assented softly and didn't say anything else before quickly leaving the shop.

Not long after she'd left, Han Shuo was discussing matters of the valley with Gilbert and Trunks when he noticed through the yin demons that Odysseus and his crew was looking around a bit cautiously at the surroundings. They were standing in front of the door, not having daring to enter.

It seemed like everyone in the Valley of Sunshine had heard of this storefront's infamous reputation. Odysseus and them were no exception as they adopted an exceedingly cautious attitude due to its reputation of a curse.

"They're here!" Han Shuo smiled faintly and stood up to open the door.

# Chapter 223: Invitation

“Long time no see!” Han Shuo stood outside the door and greeted Odysseus’ group with a half smile.

All six of them cheered when they saw Han Shuo appear, their faces brimming with genuine joy. Odysseus and Gordon even barrelled towards Han Shuo to hug him.

“It really is you! What are you doing here?” The touchy feely Gordon looked at Han Shuo with surprise after he let go.

“Heh heh, come on in. It’s not as frightening as you think, it’s very safe here!” Han Shuo moved aside and gestured for them to come inside.

The six had been rather apprehensive about this place before they’d confirmed that Han Shuo was inside. After hearing his words, they stopped dithering and strode in, making for the center of the yard.

Odysseus’ crew was made of three warriors, two mages, and one archer. Odysseus was a senior swordsman; Gordon and Angelo, journeyman swordsmen; Aphrodite, a water adept mage; Bard, a thunder journeyman mage; and Nia, a female elven archer.

After their last foray into the Dark Forest, not only had they gained incredible treasures, but their strength had reached new heights. From their badges, Han Shuo could tell that Gordon had advanced to senior swordsman, and Bard to adept mage.

“Bryan, this place is Valley of Sunshine’s famous cursed shop. I’ve heard people mention the legends of this place the last time we were here. There’s a warning that no one should enter this shop. How come you’re living here?” Gordon was a straight shooter, completely unable to hide his thoughts. He looked around the yard when he entered the shop and asked Han Shuo as soon as he’d sat down.

“Legends aren’t necessarily real, and those curses could be manmade as well. We’ve been here for so long and haven’t run into any danger.” Han Shuo didn’t explain the blood water demons to them.

“How’ve you been?” As the captain, Odysseus was dependable and upright. He looked at Han Shuo and smiled in greeting.

“Not too bad. What have you encountered since leaving the Dark Forest? Gordon and Bard’s strength have greatly increased, not bad at all!” Han Shuo said.

“We went to Zajoski City after parting ways with you and sold what we’d gained in the Dark Forest. We obtained a sum of money and upgraded our equipment, as well as getting Bard a staff that enhanced his strength. After that, Gordon and Bard reported to their promotion exams since they felt they were ready. After passing the exams, we took some protection missions and arrived near the Valley of Sunshine. We entered the valley this time because we were protecting a merchant caravan.” Odysseus smiled slightly and slowly went over all that had happened since they’d parted ways.

Flicking a glance at Trunks, Han Shuo thought for a moment and looked at Odysseus. “We’re friends here, so I’ll speak candidly. Trunks and I have formed a mercenary band, and there’s only a few members right now. I would love it if you joined so we can increase the size of the band.”

Odysseus and the others were all taken by surprise by these words. They looked at each other, at a loss of how to respond.

Snapping his attention back after being dazed, Odysseus looked at Han Shuo and said, “Bryan, you’re not kidding are you? Why did you think of forming a mercenary band? You’ve always been a lone ranger, and you don’t seem the sort who’d want to form a mercenary band?”

“That’s very true. But we’ve already registered the name. I think if the band is run well, the future will be quite bright. Would you guys be interested in joining?” Han Shuo smiled at Odysseus and asked him with great sincerity.

“Just what’s going on, can you tell me about things?” Odysseus seemed interested, but knew that he couldn’t be hasty and questioned Han Shuo closely.

Han Shuo went over the origin and details of the Soul Destroyer

mercenary band. He didn't purposefully conceal the points about Trunks' hatred or Han Shuo's recent run-ins with Florida.

The other five's expression noticeably shifted after Han Shuo had finished, having obviously not anticipated that so much would happen with Han Shuo and Trunks in the Valley of Sunshine in such a short amount of time. They were all very excited and itching to sign up. "I think I need to discuss this in great detail with them before giving you an answer." As the captain, Odysseus naturally needed to ask the other five for their opinions and thus couldn't give a response on the spot.

Nodding, Han Shuo smiled, "I understand, please take a few days to think about it!"

The six and Han Shuo fell into talking about the fun things in the Dark Forest. The six didn't leave until it was almost noon.

Trunks would occasionally toss in a word or two, but Gilbert felt a bit bored sitting there. His shifty eyes kept checking out Aphrodite and Nia. He only stopped, pouting, when Han Shuo glared at him a few times.

"Let's go out for a walk!" Han Shuo said to Trunks and Gilbert after the six had left.

"Where are we going?" Trunks was a bit confused and asked.

"The situation in the Valley of Sunshine is rather complex right now. Our original target was Florida, but now that Ferguson's joined the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, I think we need to discuss his arrival with Laureton. We can also obtain more information from Laureton to decide our next course of action." Han Shuo said calmly.

This time, the group made their way easily to the Cairo mercenary band without meeting any obstacles. However, before they'd made it past the enormous square, they heard an earth shattering explosion from the depths of the Cairo mercenary band.

When Han Shuo and the others rushed over, they found that a building had toppled over, black smoke spilling out of it. Several charred, bloody corpses were scattered around the building. Standing in the center, the



bald Laureton was similar to an infuriated beast, seemingly a step away from going berserk and emanating an exceedingly dangerous aura as he roared at his men.

Harris was standing not too far from the chaos with an equally darkened expression. He seemed to be in a awful mood and wasn't as polite as usual when he saw Han Shuo and the others walk over. He looked angrily and guiltily at the corpses on the ground and seemed to be blaming himself.

"Eh... it looks like we haven't come at the right time." Han Shuo pursed his lips after walking up.

Restraining the anger in his heart, Laureton sucked in a few deep breaths and turned his head to Harris, "Bury these brothers well. I'm going to find out who did this and rip him apart!"

Harris didn't say much as he nodded his head painfully, then started directing the mercenaries who were converging on all sides. They lifted the bodies carefully and started cleaning up the premises.

"Come with me." Laureton had a black face and snorted softly, walking towards the largest building.

It was obvious that the three had chanced upon the aftermath of an ambush on the Cairo mercenary band. They took a close look around but discovered no traces of any enemies, and so had no idea what was going on.

When Laureton entered his own house, he waved his hands randomly around to indicate for them to find a stone stool. He spoke with a darkened face, "The enemy wants to kill me. The room that exploded was where I usually take care of the daily matters of the Cairo mercenary band. I usually go there at noon."

"However, I was delayed by some matters today. When I was ten meters from the building entrance, I felt a strong magical pulse radiate outwards, with the explosion happening immediately. It looks like a magical device was set up beforehand, otherwise, it wouldn't have exploded so timely. I almost died inside."

“There are certainly those who belong to other factions in your mercenary band. This wouldn’t have happened otherwise. In addition, when I was fighting Florida in front of the gates to the Valley of Sunshine last time, the Rainbow Sickles shouldn’t have gotten there so quickly to save Florida. I started suspecting something then, and today, it seems like my suspicions were warranted.” Han Shuo thought for a moment and responded.

“That’s for certain. If I can arrange my men to infiltrate other factions, then the others can certainly do so as well. It was just too dangerous this time, I almost died. I wonder which faction did this.” Laureton growled with a darkened face.

Seeing that Laureton had his own thoughts, Han Shuo said no more. Although Laureton seemed all brawns and no brain, his mind was actually quite calculative. No wonder he could replace the previous Rainbow Sickle mercenary band to be the most powerful in the valley.

“Florida’s grandfather, Ferguson, the light grand magus of the Church of Light has arrived. Florida has also been transferred to another place and I can’t find an appropriate time to make a move against him. I’ve come to find you this time to figure out where Florida has been moved to.”

“Since you have men in the Rainbow Sickles, I think you might know this info. If I don’t know where Florida is, then I have no way to find the most appropriate timing to strike. I’ll need you to tell me where he is.” Han Shuo thought for a moment and told Laureton.

“I already know what happened last night, but since that sly old fox Ferguson has arrived, I think it’d be rather unrealistic to assassinate him now. After your attacks last night, Florida is certainly even more well protected now. Even if you know where Florida currently is, you won’t have the chance to make a move!” Laureton’s expression had completely returned to normal now.

Han Shuo understood Laureton’s words, but now that his three yin demons had formed and he had an earth elite zombie at his beck and call, Han Shuo had full reason to believe that he would still have a chance to

succeed after he knew where Florida was, no matter how heavily guarded he was.

“I understand everything you’ve said, but I still hope you can tell me where Florida is.” Han Shuo laughed confidently.

It was obvious that Laureton felt that Han Shuo was overreaching himself. Although he understood Han Shuo’s strength was uncommon, he felt that even if Han Shuo leveraged the power of the Cairo mercenary band, he still wouldn’t have much of a chance to kill Florida.

“Alright, I’ll keep an eye out and send someone to notify you if I have news of Florida.” Laureton’s voice had grown cold as an impatient expression began to appear on his face.

Han Shuo knew there wasn’t much to discuss beyond that and nodded, leaving with Trunks and Gilbert.

“What the hell! We’re doing him a favor and his attitude is so vicious!” Gilbert started complaining loudly as soon as they’d left Cairo mercenary band’s territory.

“If you were almost blown to pieces, I think your attitude would be worse than his. It looks like Laureton was truly frightened today.” Trunks looked at Gilbert and smiled.

“Mm, Laureton was indeed in a bad mood today. I wonder if he’ll be unable to control himself and make a move shortly.” Han Shuo chuckled and paused. “It looks like chaos is growing in the Valley of Sunshine. I think we should change our plans. I’ve got a better idea now.”

# Chapter 224: Counter assassination

“What should we do?” Trunks asked.

“The depths of the Valley of Sunshine are too murky, and our power is too weak. We don’t have the ability to fight against any side. No matter what the final result is, control of the valley won’t fall to us. In the end, our mercenary band is too weak.”

“As such, it’s not a wise move for us to become involved at this time. For now, we can set aside our feud with Florida. When they’re injured and bleeding from fighting each other, we can take advantage of that to recruit men to expand our power. The most important thing is to grow our strength and not become involved with them.”

“The shopfront that I need is rumored to be an unlucky place. No matter who’s in control of the valley, they won’t know how to use it, so it’ll remain empty with no one taking up residence. I’ll be able to obtain it sooner or later. There’s no need for us to be confined to one place because of it.”

“Not to mention that Laureton isn’t a kind sort. Our security is far from guaranteed during our stay in the valley. If Laureton loses his temper one day, then we might turn into enemies. At that time, it would be difficult for us to leave the valley.” Han Shuo continued calmly after careful consideration.

“You mean that we should temporarily leave the Valley of Sunshine?” Han Shuo’s comments had been long, but to distill it down in a simple manner, he was advocating that they take a seat on the mountain and watch the tigers fight. After some thought, Trunks was able to grasp his intention.

“We’ll leave the Valley of Sunshine, but not necessarily its sphere of influence. We can imitate the three other factions and expand our influence to the outskirts of the valley. With the gold and your connections, you can make use of this time to recruit more mercenaries. We can slowly increase our strength when they’re busy fighting each

other.”

“In addition, I need to leave for a while as well. If I remain here and the Church of Light discovers me, I’ll bring unnecessary trouble to the mercenary band. I can make use of this opportunity to ask the dwarves in the Dark Forest to forge the weapons you need. I’ll pay the forest trolls a visit as well to see if I can get anything out of them.” Han Shuo’s mind was quite nimble as he quickly and calmly made plans.

When Han Shuo had finished, Trunks smiled and nodded. “There are a few more months until the fight for control of the Valley of Sunshine ends. Now that we have enough gold for our base, I can make use of this time to attract more experts to join. Perhaps they’ll be of some use in critical moments.”

“Yepp. Let’s go and discuss things with Emily. We should leave earlier rather than later.” Han Shuo looked at the sky and started thinking about what to do when they leave the valley.

As they made their way back, the streets were bustling. All sorts of bizarre and exotic wares were on display by merchants from various kingdoms, catching the eyes of passersby.

From stockily built orcs wearing thick furs, to beautiful elves with pointed ears, all sorts of races were looking at the items on the streets, trying to identify where their profits would come from.

Han Shuo was moving through the crowd when a sudden sense of danger rose in his heart. It was as if enemies from the shadows had locked onto him with killing intent, planning on giving him a lethal blow.

Having reached the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo had a frightening sensitivity towards other people’s killing intent towards him. Even though he was on the crowded and bustling streets, he could still clearly feel that concealed burst of killing intent. It was really quite incredible.

His thoughts moved as he sent the three yin demons flying out soundlessly, gusts of air drifting through the void, slowly dispersing and moving into the blind spots around Han Shuo, probing for the origin of that killing intent.

Thanks to the yin demons, Han Shuo could clearly see all around him within several meters. He quickly sifted through the people around him, trying to identify the source of the danger.

On the blind spots to the left of a shopfront, a flawless, exquisite face came into view. Like the edge of a blade, the female elven archer Maxine's eyes held a cold gleam. She was looking sharply at him and holding a strangely designed bow in her left hand. She seemed to be waiting for the prime opportunity to deliver a fatal blow.

Next to her stood thunder mage Asa. His face was equally ruthless as he gripped a magic staff in his right hand. He seemed to be ready to make a move at any time.

However, in this crowded and busy street, Han Shuo's group was surrounded by merchants of all nationalities. Conducting an assassination in such an area needed an exquisite, near perfect grasp of timing, or it would be impossible to succeed.

A cold smile suddenly appearing on his face, Han Shuo continued walking forward without a hitch. The three yin demons kept an eye on Maxine and Asa's movements as he considered how to handle their plans.

He suddenly dashed around a corner on the streets. Trunks and Gilbert also vanished without a trace.

Maxine and Asa had seen the three walk forward, but suddenly disappear around a corner. Slightly surprised, they looked at each other. Their hidden bodies couldn't help but join the crowds as they tried to take a look at what had happened around the corner.

"Where are they?" Asa scanned the corner when they arrived and asked with a slight frown when he didn't find them.

At that moment, the streets reverberated with a low howl. A jet black beam of light screamed through the air as it twisted through the crowd. A pair of glistening fangs, at the head of what looked like a gigantic snake winding through the air, came to bite down on the two.

The sudden change completely wrecked their plans. Maxine's thin eyes

narrowed into a slit as the Demonslayer Edge shot towards her chest; she dashed upwards towards the roof and fled into the distance without a second thought.

Behind Maxine, a ghastly wail tore its way out of Asa's mouth. The cry galvanized the crowd, engulfing the street in chaos as everyone ducked and sprinted for safety, wanting to flee before the unknown danger arrived.

The mercenaries who were following the merchants and in charge of their safety immediately surrounded their employers before identifying what had gone on in the surroundings.

Thunder mage Asa's right hand, the one clutching the magic staff, had been chopped off because of Maxine's departure. The severed stump spewed blood everywhere.

The Demonslayer Edge sprang back into the air, circling back ruthlessly as it attempted to reap Asa's life as well. However, Asa was still an experienced mercenary. After that first shriek, he kept his mouth shut even in the midst of such horrifying circumstances.

He didn't hesitate. In a situation where he might lose his life in the next second, his empty left hand swiftly picked up his severed right hand as he deployed the levitation spell without pause. He took to the skies and a circle of lightning formed around him, turning him into a electric man.

The Demonslayer Edge once again flew towards Asa as the electric currents sparked madly. When the Demonslayer Edge closed in on his back, the electric currents invaded it, interrupting its charge and stopping it a hair's breadth away from Asa's body. At that moment, a series of crackles and pops resounded from his body.

The electric net that surrounded Asa poured into the Demonslayer Edge with fierce electric power. This threw the magical yuan that Han Shuo had infused into the Demonslayer Edge into disarray. With that, it didn't take Asa's life.

Although Asa hadn't been stabbed to death, the wildly rampant magical yuan within the Demonslayer Edge crashed into him like an enormous

boulder. His body trembled like a kite with a broken string, almost plummeting from the sky with his violent swaying. He finally caught himself with a stumble and shakily flew into a room, crying for help.

“Let’s go. Asa’s injured even worse than Florida now. I think it’s becoming more and more unrealistic that the Rainbow Sickles will be able to win out over the Cairo mercenary band in this time’s struggle.” Han Shuo laughed coldly and walked out of an alleyway with Gilbert and Trunks.

“Devious master, why not take this advantage to kill him? We just need to stick him again and Asa will be dead without a doubt?” Uncomprehending, Gilbert looked at Han Shuo in confusion.

“Asa fell into a rest stop of the Cairo mercenary band. Even though the Cairo mercenary band and the Rainbow Sickles are covertly fighting each other, everyone within the valley is under the protection of the Cairo mercenary band. No matter whether the mercenaries want to or not, they’ll have to raise a hand to help Asa. We can’t kill Asa there or we’ll offend Laureton.” Trunks explained to Gilbert.

“Yep. When I ambushed Asa, the Cairo mercenaries didn’t say a word and no one came out of their rest stop to help him. This is already helping us out. You, stupid dragon, should use your brain more and not just think of dirty things from day to night.” Han Shuo lectured Gilbert in an exasperated tone.

“It’s a pity that Maxine escaped. That woman has a very finely honed sense of danger!” Trunks spoke with some regret.

Nodding, Han Shuo agreed. “Mm. It was indeed a bit of a pity that Maxine escaped. Perhaps it’s because she’s adept as she is in assassination that her senses are so keen. The woman hiding in the shadows is much more dangerous than Asa. You must be careful and not give her any openings.”

The three of them chatted as they made their way back to the shop. With the three yin demons around him, no one and nothing could escape Han Shuo’s observation, so they didn’t run into any further trouble.



There were some exotic flowers and grass placed in front of an orc's shop, as well as some exquisitely knotted small trees. One of them had three golden, glittering leaves and milky-white stalks. They were as durable as stalactites and shone with a faint, white luster, immediately catching Han Shuo's attention.

He'd observed this shop through the yin demons. He spoke to the other two, "Come, let's take a look at this shop."

Having long since grown used to Han Shuo's peculiarities, the two of them didn't say anything and followed behind Han Shuo, walking towards the orc's shop.

Several uncommon flora and fauna attracted Han Shuo's attentions. Some of them had refreshing scents, and others had bizarre shapes with vivid colors. Many of the small trees had translucent roots like a beautiful jade. It was a wonder how they'd grown.

Han Shuo drew nearer to the three golden leaves and leaned over to sniff them. A clean scent drifted into his nose and mouth, refreshing his mind. Han Shuo stared at those three leaves, examining them closely for a bit. He reached out and rubbed the rock-like roots, thinking of something with a furrowed brow.

Gilbert and Trunks were staring at Han Shuo with a peculiar expression. They didn't understand his actions at all, and didn't know why he was suddenly interested in such bizarre flora and fauna.

After a while, Han Shuo's eyebrows suddenly twitched as a crazed delight filled his eyes. He observed all of the strange plants even more closely afterwards, his whole being filled with an unspeakable excitement like he'd suddenly picked up some treasures.

Gilbert and Trunks looked at each other, unsure of what Han Shuo had discovered. They stood there and watched his strange performance, completely befuddled.

Sweeping his eyes over the wares in front of the door, Han Shuo took in a deep breath and said to Gilbert and Trunks, "I need these special plants. Come, let's see if there are other gains inside."

His excited expression slowly returned to normal after his words as he walked inside.

# Chapter 225: A heavenly treasure

The shopkeeper was an old, yet tall and strong orc. Even in the heart of cruel winter, he just had on a thin shirt. Thick hair covered his coarse skin as he lazily rested in his shop.

There were many exotic plants everywhere in the shop. These strange flowers and grasses came in vivid colors, and the shop was filled with a refreshing scent.

Han Shuo only flicked a slight glance at the old orc as he walked in and started looking amongst the plant life himself, identifying them, and looking for what he needed.

In Chu Cang Lan's memories, he'd spent a lot of time researching the methods of pill refinement. He'd also refined some pills himself.

However, apart from a pill cauldron and a recipe being of the utmost importance in pill refining, the next most important thing were the ingredients. The more precious the pill, the rarer the ingredients. Most of them were heavenly treasures, and one needed them in sufficient quantity to refine the pills.

This time, the leaves glittering with a golden color in front of the old orc's shop with roots like rock had attracted Han Shuo's attention.

Using the methods in his memories, he began to closely examine the fauna in order to identify them. After careful scrutiny, he was able to confirm that these strange plants were the ones that only grew in caves with stalactites. These were Goldmarrow Grass that had formed after absorbing the rock essence within the caves for a hundred years as well as the yin qi of the heavens.

Goldmarrow Grass was a heavenly treasure of great yin. If combined with a couple of other ingredients, one would be able to refine the transformative Reform Pill—a pill that would thoroughly excavate all of a mortal's bones and meridians, completely transforming their body to make it suitable for demonic and magical cultivation.

There was also a small ruby-colored tree with several red fruits on its branches. The flaming fruits were round and translucent, sparkling with a faint crimson light beneath the sunlight. They each seemed to be like a miniature sun.

When Han Shuo looked at them closely, he grew even more certain that these were the fire attribute treasures, Sunblaze Fruits. If someone cultivating the fire attribute ate this fruit, then their strength would increase immensely for a short amount of time thanks to the power of the sun filtering down to them.

However, if someone not inclined towards the fire attribute ate the fruit, they wouldn't be able to hold up under the fiery power within and would be burned to a crisp by the fruit. When he turned to cinders, the spirit power of the fruit would slowly dissipate into the skies.

Apart from the Goldmarrow Grass and the Sunblaze Fruit, Han Shuo also discovered other treasures such as the Dragonfly Fruit, Hundred Year Vine Heart, and Extreme Frost Grass in this shop. These were all precious materials that pill refiners needed. Han Shuo naturally wouldn't let them easily out of his sight now that he'd discovered them.

After a while, Han Shuo laid out all the exotic spirit plants he knew on the counter in front of the old orc. He smiled, "Elder, how much do these go for?"

The old orc had been long since keeping an eye on Han Shuo's movements as he lazily sat there. He finally stood up when Han Shuo placed these items in front of him.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectation, the stocky old orc didn't immediately name a price. He looked at Han Shuo with interest instead and asked, "Do you recognize these items and know what they're used for?"

The old orc's voice was raspy and resonant, seemingly a bit awkward when he formed the syllables of human speech. His two nostrils huffed with air as he spoke, looking a bit odd.

"No, I just think they're a bit strange and wanted to take them home for

some further study.” Han Shuo smiled. The old orc was a bit disappointed when he heard that Han Shuo didn’t recognize them. He muttered self deprecatingly to himself, “Of course. So many pharmacists had no idea what this is, how would you know what they are?”

Pointing at the Sunblaze Fruit, the old orc said to Han Shuo, “Curious human youngster, these things aren’t fun at all. They grew out of an area of poor dirt in our home and no one dares play with them. For instance, this red fruit? Even if some fierce beasts eat these fruits, they’d be burned to death by poisonous flame.”

“And, these strange flowering grasses. You’ll be able to feel a bone deep chill if you place your hand on their leaves. Whoever eats them freezes into ice cubes. You’re not a pharmacist, so you should probably not try to mix them up. According to what I know, some pharmacists suffered great harm when they tried mixing these.”

It was obvious that the old orc didn’t know the marvelous effects of these heavenly treasures and treated them as scary poisonous grass. The Sunblaze Fruit and Extreme Frost Grass were treasures of utmost heat and cold. Ordinary people would indeed be injured if they ate them since they couldn’t digest the spirit power within. It was normal for him to have this kind of misconception.

Laughing lightly, Han Shuo smiled, “Don’t worry, I’m not using these myself. It’s just that I know a good pharmacist who’s good with exotic plants. I just want to give these to him. Of course, I’ll remember your reminders and tell him the peculiarities of these plants.”

“Then alright. It was very difficult for my children to bring them over from the far barren wastelands. Give me a hundred gold coins for all of these. This is a fair price. Some pharmacists would be greatly interested in them and be willing to spend a great deal of money to buy them.” It was obvious that the old orc didn’t know what these items could be used for in the hands of someone like Han Shuo. A hundred gold coins wasn’t even enough to buy one of their leaves.

In consideration of the orc’s kind reminders, as well as the possibility of

obtaining more of these plants in the future, Han Shuo generously threw down five hundred gold coins. “Thank you for your reminder, elder. Your kindness was worth four hundred gold coins. Otherwise, my friend might’ve ended up in trouble. Mm, if you have more of these plants, please bring them from the barren lands. I’ll come over when I’m free and purchase them for high prices.”

“Oh, honored guest, your generosity will be rewarded. Thank you!” The old orc emotionally accepted a bag of five hundred gold coins. His gaze at Han Shuo was quite different as he spoke happily.

“Wait a second.” A clear shout suddenly came from outside the door as a beautiful girl, one that made all three guys sigh, sashayed in.

She had a tall and slender body that was covered by a light purple dress. Her brown hair flowed like a waterfall as a pair of limpid eyes lay gently beneath her delicately arched brows. She had a charming nose, and small red lips that dotted her face. Her flawless, tender skin and oval shaped face rounded out all the elements that a beauty should have.

She looked only in her early twenties, but had the air of one used to holding power and having weathered many a disaster. Although she wasn’t purposefully revealing it, she had a natural gravitas to her bearing, as if she could easily decide someone’s life or death.

“Hi, beauty, talking to me?” Gilbert blew a sharp whistle and looked at the lady with excitement as he flirted with her.

“Not you!” She flicked a glance at Gilbert and responded calmly without looking at him again. She walked towards Han Shuo and raised a slender finger to point at the Extreme Frost Grass. Her limpid eyes looked at Han Shuo as she said, “Can you sell that poison grass to me?”

Shaking his head, Han Shuo smiled, “I’m sorry, no!”

The beauty looked askance at Han Shuo after hearing his rejection. She hadn’t thought that Han Shuo would reject her so decisively. Her pretty brows knit together as she asked again, “I can pay a hundred gold coins just for this blade of grass!”

He shook his head again and confirmed, "I'm sorry, not selling!"

Having met with rejection twice, she knew that there was no chance she would be able to obtain the grass. She looked meaningfully at Han Shuo and said with disdain, "A man with no chivalry. It looks like Emily's words weren't that true." It was Han Shuo's turn to be surprised after hearing those words, "Are you Mistress Cecilia?"

Nodding her head coldly, Cecilia threw her head back and looked at Han Shuo, speaking proudly, "That's me. Mister Bryan, what will it take for you to give me the grass?"

"Nothing!" Han Shuo responded and smiled, "It's very nice to meet you, Mistress Cecilia. Good day!"

Han Shuo didn't even look at Cecilia after he finished speaking, circling past her to unhurriedly walk outside the shop.

# Chapter 226: Violence

“Honored master, this doesn’t seem like your style. How come you’re suddenly so indifferent to a beauty?” Gilbert spoke, a look of utter confusion on his face.

“First of all, I have a use for the grass, so I won’t be giving it to her. In addition, Cecilia throwing her weight around in front of me just because her rank is higher than mine is the kind of attitude that really leaves a bad taste in my mouth, so she won’t get anything from me.”

He’d heard from Emily that Cecilia was a priest and had also focused on pharmacy. Her talent in the area of medicine was quite high. Although she didn’t take the front line in combat, an expert priest and pharmacist like her would be of the utmost importance in critical times.

A person like her could enable the warriors and mages to recover their energy swiftly in battle, and could use some priest magics and medicines to quickly stabilize wounds, allowing allies to return to the battlefield in short order.

Han Shuo didn’t tarry outside after leaving the old orc’s shop, returning to his base of operations. Phoebe and Emily were bathed in the setting splendor of the sun and sitting lazily on two large chairs in the courtyard, chatting happily about something.

When he walked in, all eyes shot to him. After a day’s passage of time, the two girls had natural expressions on their face and didn’t have the awkwardness from the morning. Beneath the rays of the evening sun, their charming faces were tinged with red. With eyes full of tenderness, and a blush on their cheeks, they looked like two stunningly cute wives waiting for their husband’s return.

In that instant, Han Shuo’s heart was suffused with warm contentment. He felt that both women were so beautiful, and if they could still interact so harmoniously after the truth was revealed, that would be wonderful for any man.

“What are you thinking about, standing there with a silly smile?” Phoebe



would only appear friendly and down to earth when interacting with Han Shuo, that gentle tone only for him.

“No, nothing!” His beautiful wish could only be thought about at the moment. From Phoebe’s personality, she wasn’t the sort who would easily compromise. Therefore, Han Shuo maintained a natural expression on his face in case he made her unhappy.

“Bryan, I’m afraid I’ll have to leave first this time. I’ve just received a mission that I need to coordinate with younger sister Cecilia. I can’t stay in the Valley of Sunshine any longer!” Emily looked at Han Shuo longingly as she spoke apologetically.

He first blanked, and then thought deeply. Han Shuo understood that as a senior executive of the Dark Mantle, she did indeed have many things she needed to do and couldn’t stay in one place forever. Nodding, Han Shuo revealed an understanding smile. “I understand. It’s unsuitable for us to stay in the valley in the short term as well, so I’m preparing to leave too.”

As Phoebe and Emily stared in surprise, Han Shuo quickly repeated the reasoning he told Trunks and the others, laying out their gains and losses. Since his decision was correct, he quickly gained Phoebe and Emily’s agreement.

“Then, what should we do next?” Phoebe focused her beautiful eyes on Han Shuo’s body as she asked softly.

“Being in charge of the Boozt Merchant Guild, I don’t think you can keep staying in the valley either. Why don’t you go do your own thing? I’ll take care of a few matters and then go find you in the capital. Trunks has enough gold for now. I think with his abilities and connections, he’ll be able to build up his strength better staying in the outskirts of the Valley of Sunshine.”

“Alright. It looks like we’ll need to temporarily separate for now. Here, these are the items you needed. The Valley of Sunshine is a remarkable place. It looks like you can find whatever you want as long as you’re patient!” Phoebe took out a pile of exotic ores and some rare metals from

her space ring and placed them in the center of the yard, smiling at Han Shuo.

These were the items that Han Shuo wanted to pass onto the dwarves to forge weapons, and some he wanted to keep for personal use as well. He was planning on refining some small treasures in his spare time. Phoebe had already given him the materials to refine the wood elite and water elite zombie earlier.

Now that all the materials for the wood elite zombie had been collected, it was a perfect time for Han Shuo to head towards the forest trolls' sacred ground and start the wood elite zombie in the place of extreme wood, aiming to form it as soon as possible.

"Oh right, Trunks. Keep an eye on Odysseus and the others. I don't know how long they'll need to consider. I think with your familiarity of the valley, you'll be able to contact them at any time. I've already explained the situation to them. It's up to them if they want to join the Soul Destroyers or not." Han Shuo said to Trunks after thinking for a bit.

"Don't worry, I know what to do. The Valley of Sunshine and the Dark Forest aren't too far away. I think it won't be too difficult for the two of us to remain in touch." Trunks smiled faintly.

Han Shuo and Trunks had already decided on a point of contact between the two locations on their way back. Han Shuo didn't tell him about the cemetery of death, but gave him a marker for the waterfall where he often trained.

The group of five thoroughly discussed the details again. Han Shuo and a few would slip out under the cover of night. Thanks to Gilbert, they wouldn't need to leave through the entrance and could slip away soundlessly. Only Emily would stay behind for another day as she needed to leave with Cecilia. She could also give Laureton a heads up as well.

The four immediately split up after leaving the Valley of Sunshine. According to Han Shuo's instructions, Gilbert flew Phoebe to the City of Zajoski, helping her use the transportation matrix there to safely return to the Empire's capital and then reconvene with Han Shuo at the cemetery of

death.

Trunks bid farewell to Han Shuo and moved into the depths of the forest, vanishing without a trace in the blink of an eye.

Han Shuo strolled leisurely in the direction of the Dark Forest after parting ways with his group, not even employing the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven.

He was planning on purposefully revealing his movement this time so he could attract Ferguson's attention, so that the latter wouldn't keep pursuing Trunks because he didn't know that Han Shuo had left.

His expression was easy and carefree on the path out of the Valley of Sunshine. He traveled on foot, without any steeds, and seemed wholly unaware that he'd become a target beneath the pure moonlight gently falling from the night sky.

The four great powers in the Valley of Sunshine patrol everywhere at critical moments to prevent any accidents from happening. When Han Shuo took the initiative in exposing himself, everything seemed to fall into place. By using the three yin demons' surveillance, he easily found several groups of people trailing him.

When one of the pursuers seemed anxious and left swiftly with his companions, running towards the location of the Rainbow Sickles, Han Shuo understood that the Rainbow Sickles would arrive very quickly. Furthermore, Ferguson from the Church of Light was also guaranteed to drop everything on hand to deal with Han Shuo. He was the most dangerous "latent threat" after all. With the three yin demons at his side for surveillance, the little skeleton and earth elite zombie as backup, and being at the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo was confident that he could leisurely escape any encirclement with the extremely fast Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven.

Therefore, Han Shuo acted very casually the entire time. He walked serenely towards the direction of the Dark Forest, waiting for Ferguson's group to hurry over. He would then move away from the Valley of Sunshine during their pursuit so that they would understand he was

leaving the valley.

In the depths of icy winter, the accumulated snow on top of the mountains revealed a freezing world, wrapped in silver beneath the bright moonlight. It didn't seem overly dark even at night, as the reflection of the moon and snow caused the silvery white world to appear so silent and beautiful.

Under the moonlight, Han Shuo's lone figure cast a long shadow on the ground covered in the silvery white snow. Even some of greediest of merchants weren't willing to go out on such a cold night. Thus, even on the busiest roads, he didn't meet a single merchant caravan.

After leaving the main path, Han Shuo continued into the vast Kerlan Mountains. After he had walked for more than an hour and had arrived at a rather dense forest that was even more remote, Han Shuo discovered, through a yin demon, a small merchant caravan that was being furiously destroyed by cruel bandits. There weren't that many bandits, just a dozen or so, but each one of them was beyond vicious. They were shouting savagely, completely ignoring the merchants' pleading and slaughtering the men with sneers while they robbed the carriages. Several young women were stripped completely naked, and helpless screams wailed out as they were all forcefully pressed onto the trees beside the carriages as they were raped. To hear their cries was to feel one's heart bleed.

There were several muscular men that looked like mercenaries on the ground around the merchant group's carriages. They'd been decapitated and their blood had already dried, dying the ground in a dark red color. It looked like they were the guards killed in the first wave.

It was clear that the small merchant group had taken the risk to travel through the night, thinking they wouldn't be noticed by bandits in the dead of winter's night whilst taking such a silent and small path. Who were they to know that they'd made a mistake, and met with a small group of bandits. This was why such a cruel situation had arisen.

Han Shuo was not a very kind person. He had watched calmly as he once directed forest trolls to pillage places, but he'd never killed the innocent,

and would never do anything atrocious like raping women. They say that bandits have their own morals, and Han Shuo did feel like he did as well.

However, the merchants had already given up all their merchandise, and were kneeling on the ground, begging while continuously kowtowing. Despite that, they were still decapitated by the laughing, sneering bandits. Han Shuo could not hold himself back after seeing this sort of situation, these wretched actions by the bandits that disregarded rules. This completely infuriated him.

Without any greeting or bullshit, Han Shuo, who had seen all the atrocious deeds through the yin demons, burst onto the scene. Due to his anger and intent to kill, a thick, demonic aura smashed onto the scene in a dominating manner alongside Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had a hideous expression on his face, his eyes crimson. His cold and ferocious expression was extremely terrifying, as his aura couldn't help but surge outwards. He used his hand to slice towards the neck of one of the bandits who was raping a woman.

The left hand that he'd chopped out with shone like dark jade, a shining sharp knife. With a "pfft" sound, the bandit's head flew upwards as his neck spurted blood everywhere.

"Ahhh..." A terrified scream rang out from the mouth of the woman underneath the bandit. The woman who'd been suffering through all this suddenly saw the person on her body lose his head, as blood splashed all over her. She couldn't help but scream in abject horror.

"Who is it that dares poke their nose into our business?! Don't you know that our boss is the Butcher?" A bandit with a mustache, that was just about to kill a merchant, suddenly turned his head back and roared.

As expected, it was Gustav the Butcher's people. Of all the bandit powers around the Valley of Sunlight, only Gustav the Butcher's bandits would be so savage and ignore the rules!

Han Shuo didn't wasting time blathering, letting his actions speak for themselves. His darkened face and flood of killing intent was frightening as he revealed the ruthless side of a demonic cultivator in front of these

brutal robbers.

He charged the man and sent a fierce punch crashing down on him before he could react. The punch closed in like a sharp mallet, punching a hole through the mustached robber. When Han Shuo pulled out a fist dripping with blood, even the robber's crushed organs could be seen through the enormous hole.

Han Shuo's heart was filled with fury as he panted heavily, like a demon king who only had slaughter in his eyes. He used a violent, perverse ruthlessness to rip the robbers to shreds. He tore one robber apart with his bare hands, and crushed another's bones with one blow from his fists, hot blood spraying all over him.

A bloody whirlwind blew as the dozen or so robbers were turned into stray pieces of flesh. Compared to the innocents they'd killed, their downfall was so much more frightening. Not a single corpse remained whole.

Han Shuo made use of the yin demons to discover where Ferguson and Maxine had gone. He suppressed the bloodlust in his heart and walked heavily towards the Dark Forest, not spending another second in the carnage strewn scene.

## Chapter 227: Leaving with ease

A broad river blocked the way to the front. The river's waters surged and frothed, rushing to a plane of lower elevation.

Han Shuo stood in front of a towering tree, panting heavily, barely managing to suppress the wild craziness in his heart. His eyes were blood red as he looked back at the two slowly approaching him.

Their figures gradually became clearer beneath the bright night sky. Ferguson was using magic to bring Maxine along with him. They appeared in Han Shuo's vision like two floating clouds.

"You're finally here, I've waited a very long time!" Killing intent billowed and weaved around him as a blood red light encircled Han Shuo's body. This crimson light was the strange energy of fear and resentment that had been naturally absorbed by his body when he killed the robbers just now.

"Although your methods are cruel, you did save those people just now, meaning you're not an immoral person. I've already investigated you and know you're not from the Calamity Church. But the matters that you hold in your hands are too dangerous for this world, so I must capture you and imprison you forever in the Church of Light. Rest assured, I won't take your life!" Ferguson's body flew to a nearby branch as he looked calmly at Han Shuo.

The female elven archer Maxine's charming body alighted gracefully, notching an arrow as she did so. As she took aim at Han Shuo, a feeling of danger suddenly surged in his heart and he couldn't help but cast a few more glances at Maxine.

"The Calamity Church has nothing to do with me, and I have no way of using my knowledge to reform large amounts of dark creatures. I can tell you clearly that I won't be joining the Calamity Church. In fact, we're actually enemies. However, if you keep pursuing me, I won't care if your reputation is good or bad, I'll kill whoever threatens me without a moment's hesitation." Han Shuo repressed the mad thoughts in his heart as he spoke viciously with a scowl.

“Sorry, not killing you is already my biggest concession. I can’t allow you to leave, because what you hold is too dangerous for us.” Ferguson shook his head and responded resolutely. It looked like there was no room for negotiation.

Laughing wildly, Han Shuo nodded. “Since this is the case, there’s nothing for us to talk about then. I won’t go easy on you if you dare make a move!”

Han Shuo rose into the air before he lost his reason and transformed into a beam of red light, flying towards the Dark Forest.

Whoosh!

Maxine shot out the arrow that she’d long since notched, and it fractured the air like a bolt of lightning. An ear piercing howl followed it as it closed in on Han Shuo like a shadow. It didn’t seem like it would stop until it tasted blood.

Grand magus Ferguson also didn’t remain idle. As Han Shuo’s body catapulted itself through the air, Ferguson waved his staff, sending a blinding light shooting towards Han Shuo. The current of energy gave Han Shuo a dangerous feeling.

He’d been shooting through the air when he felt the attack near. His charging body suddenly screeched to a halt as he activated the Demonslayer Edge with a thought, sending it careening out of his sleeve to intercept Maxine’s arrow. Han Shuo circulated his magical yuan and focused the violent aura around him onto his right arm.

A bloody glow radiated from his right arm as that enormous strength hurtled towards the beam of bright light with a force akin to the raging river beneath him.

A resounding explosion accompanied the resplendent clash of white and blood red light, blooming in the air like a wondrous firework. There was a strange and fey beauty to it.

Han Shuo’s body tumbled from the sky like a rock in the aftermath of this magnificent sight. He fell audibly into the river and was instantly



swallowed by the raging waters.

Ferguson and Maxine hovered above the spot Han Shuo had impacted the water, waiting. They looked at the water, not quite sure what to do.

They waited for quite a while as the river churned and frothed. Han Shuo had seemingly vanished without a trace, with nary a hint of surfacing from the river waters. Ferguson and Maxine were both incredibly astonished.

“With the strength that he displayed, he can’t possibly have died that easily. Why hasn’t he floated up onto the river’s surface? There’s no way he can go so long without breathing!” Ferguson looked around his surroundings with astonishment as he faltered, uncertain.

“Perhaps he’s already dead. He would’ve surfaced a long time ago otherwise. No one can go that long without breathing!” Maxine was also greatly confused as she guessed hesitantly.

“He must’ve been swept downstream if he hadn’t died. Come, let’s go downstream!” Ferguson was certain that Han Shuo was no longer there after a while and flew in the direction of the river’s flow with Maxine.

After the two had vanished, dark grand magus Edwin and the female alchemist Belinda walked out of the shadows of a towering tree.

“It was a good thing that we were a ways away. Otherwise, we would’ve been discovered by that old fox Ferguson. It looks like Bryan’s met with a lot of trouble!” Edwin’s heart was still pounding.

“With Ferguson and Maxine both attacking him, he must’ve been knocked into the river. He hasn’t emerged for such a long time, perhaps he’s already dead!” Belinda guessed the same as Maxine as she looked down at the frothing waters.

Shaking his head with a smile, Edwin said resolutely, “No, he’s definitely not dead! Bystanders have the clearest sight, and I noticed a couple of details that were off while they fought. Although Bryan’s weapon also fell towards the river along with Maxine’s arrow after they clashed together, its path was steady. According to what you saw before, his weapon must still be within his grasp. This means Bryan hadn’t fallen into the river

unconscious, nor is he dead, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to control his weapon!"

Belinda thought back with surprise after hearing Edwin's words, and agreed, "That's right, he must still be alive!"

"Heh heh, the stronger he is and the more he can protect himself, the more advantageous it is for us. We'll have the chance to grab him as long as he's not dead. He's certain to appear again. Before that, we'll need to understand all that we can about him. We must have him!" Edwin left with Belinda after a low cackle.

In a place far away from the spot where Han Shuo had fallen into the broad, surging river, a figure shot into the air like a sharp arrow, decorating the air with a spray of water. After getting its bearings, it shot towards the Dark Forest.

Edwin's judgement had been entirely correct. Han Shuo's concentrated aura on his right hand had completely defended against Edwin's strong light attack. He hadn't been injured at all. He'd recalled the Demonslayer Edge into his hand before he'd fallen into the river and flown along the depths of the river, avoiding Ferguson and taking to the sky again after.

Han Shuo had been planning on fighting Ferguson, but thanks to Edwin's haste and desire to see everything, he'd revealed himself to one of the three yin demons. This changed Han Shuo's mind as he then decided to hide in the river and hasten away from that place of trouble.

With Han Shuo's strength, as well as the little skeleton and earth elite zombie, plus his magical cultivation and necromancy magic, even though he might not have been able to triumph over Ferguson and Maxine, he was confident that he'd be able to leave at will. The two of them would never be able to stop him.

However, Edwin and Belinda's appearance made Han Shuo have to give up the idea of a pitched battle. To Han Shuo, those two from the Calamity Church were just as irritating. If they ambushed him while he was fighting Ferguson and Maxine, he'd be in a world of trouble.

Therefore, after weighing the gains and losses, Han Shuo felt that there

was nothing to be gained in staying. So he decided to avoid them and use magical cultivation to make his escape using the bottom of the river.

The last time Fanny and the others had gone to the cemetery of death, they'd spent about ten days to reach the place. Thanks to the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven, Han Shuo saved a lot of time and only took a day and a night to fly there. He arrived in the cemetery of death on the evening of the second day.

Although he'd rested three times along the way, Han Shuo had still exhausted quite a bit of magical yuan reaching the cemetery of death. He was forced to rest and recover again.

He placed the three yin demons outside the cemetery of death to wait for Gilbert's arrival, meditating for the night. By the next day, he was completely recovered.

The cemetery of death was enshrouded by a powerful boundary, and those within never felt the rays of moonlight. It was enclosed within a dark and sinister atmosphere all year long, and stark white bones were piled all over the ground, making this a sacred ground for death.

When he saw that Gilbert had yet to return, Han Shuo had no choice but to take out the materials that Phoebe had given him and look over them one by one.

Han Shuo had asked her to collect materials that would be used in the dwarves' forging, but also items that he'd be able to use in refining some magical treasures of his own.

The demon infant had fully taken shape and he was now in the bloodlust realm. He could absolutely refine some treasures now. Not only did he want to temper the Demonslayer Edge all over again, he also wanted to craft some useful little baubles for himself.

# Chapter 228: Murder weapon

Han Shuo stayed in the cemetery of death for two days in a row. He sat cross legged among the stark white bones. The Demonslayer Edge floated in front of his chest while bolts of blazing lightning surrounded it.

Han Shuo held his breath as he gazed calmly at the Demonslayer Edge, occasionally using his hands to release beams of the spellfire, or biting his finger to drip out a few droplets of blood essence. He slowly used the demon infant in his abdomen to wash the Demonslayer Eye over and over again with his magical yuan.

Han Shuo held some ores of rare metals in his hands as two balls of red, blazing flames slowly covered his palms. The scorching magical fire had a terrifyingly high temperature that slowly melted the durable metal ores, causing them to turn into colorful liquids that fell onto the hovering Demonslayer Edge.

Before Han Shuo had formed the demon infant, he didn't have the ability to refine magical treasures, that was why the basic shape of the Demonslayer Edge had been crafted by the famous dwarven smiths. After the dwarves had understood Han Shuo's intention, they'd worked on it for several days and nights as they mixed the sharpest metals into the Demonslayer Edge.

Experiences afterwards had shown that the Demonslayer Edge was beyond sharp. After all, Han Shuo had spent a huge amount of money for it and it'd been lovingly crafted by the dwarves. Normal metal weapons were always sliced in half without a doubt by the Demonslayer Edge.

However, it wasn't enough for a true magical treasure to merely be sharp. It would only count as a type of magical treasure if it had some special effects.

As a powerful weapon in Chu Canglan's memories, the Demonslayer Edge would only be able to display spectacular effects when used by a demonic cultivator of the bloodlust realm after it is successfully refined. The "slay" in Demonslayer Edge clearly described its effects, it was

inseparable from massacre.

The truth was such as well. When the Demonslayer Edge was successfully refined, a demonic cultivator who's reached the bloodlust realm could absorb the terror and hatred of his victims when using the Demonslayer Edge to kill, forming a natural, demonic aura around him. If the Demonslayer Edge was deployed to its truest abilities, then the weapon absorb the terror and hatred of the deceased into the hilt of the blade.

When the Demonslayer Edge had absorbed enough of this strange power, the terror and hatred can naturally form a Demonic Soul within the Demonslayer Edge. This would cause the Demonslayer Edge to become a peerless, sentient weapon.

As the bearer kills more and more, the Demonslayer Edge would more absorb increasing amounts of negative energy. When the Demonic Soul finally forms, just as the enormous amount of terror and hatred stored within the Demonslayer Edge could cause opponents to lose their minds, so could the Demonic Soul within the blade could shatter all confidence.

Apart from this, when the Demonslayer Edge becomes a powerful weapon and has its own consciousness, it will also have other unbelievable effects. Han Shuo could even turn the Demonslayer Edge to turn into another double for him, one that possessed the ability to continuously evolve and gain more frightening energy just like the main body.

However, quite a few exotic materials were needed in order to form such a powerful weapon. The amount of these materials were outside of Han Shuo's expectations. Aside from the rare metals mixed in when the dwarves were crafting it, Han Shuo now needed to continuously fuse even more rare materials into it. He had to ensure its formation by adding in magical yuan, blood essence, and using the demon infant to refine it bit by bit.

The process of refining the Demonslayer Edge was not fast. It was a slow one that slowly fused the materials into the Demonslayer Edge, a gradual process that required magical yuan, the demon infant, and blood essence.

It would not be accomplished within a day.

During these two days, Han Shuo merely slowly absorbed the materials that the Demonslayer Edge required into himself, and used the magical yuan, demon infant, and blood essence to build a closer link with the Demonslayer Edge in order to construct a good foundation for it.

In this way, when the Demonslayer Edge was not used, it could turn into a small ball the size of a grain of rice, and hide in the blood essence that Han Shuo used to nourish the demon infant, continuously providing the blade the energy it needed to be refined. When Han Shuo attacked and slaughtered others, the Demonslayer Edge could come out instantly and absorb the energy of the deceased from Han Shuo's victims.

Only when the Demonslayer Edge absorbed enough energy of the deceased and formed the Demonic Soul within its hilt, was it truly formed and a peerless weapon, a terrifying magical treasure.

Two days passed swiftly. On this day, Han Shuo was nurturing the Demonslayer Edge within himself and slowly recovering through meditation. He noticed through the yin demons that Gilbert was returning.

He came back to himself and stood up, taking out the "Eye of Darkness" and letting Gilbert in through the boundary. When he entered, Han Shuo discovered that Gilbert's eyes were darting too and fro, an exceedingly lascivious smile on his face.

"What happened? Look at the way you're smiling. With your speed, two nights and a day would've been enough for you to return to the cemetery of death. What too you so long?" Han Shuo looked askance at Gilbert and interrogated the other.

"Heh heh, I'm just a bit late, aren't I? What's the harm? I've already dropped off Miss Phoebe safely at Zajoksi City, don't worry!" There was an unexplainable element of lewdness to Gilbert's smile, making Han Shuo feel quite out of sorts.

Looking at the dark dragon suspiciously, a thought formed in Han Shuo's head when he saw that the dark dragon had a trace of weariness on his lewdly smiling face. He couldn't help but cry out, "Did you take

advantage of this time to go whoring in Zajoski City?”

Gilbert didn't feel awkward when this question was asked as he nodded with a lusty chuckle. “Honored master, you're very smart. My grandfather was right. The taste of women is so marvelous! The two wenches were so thirsty, we rolled in the sheets all night long! That's why I was late.”

Indeed, the dark dragon race was known for their depravity. Just like looting and stealing were in the forest trolls's innate nature, so was lewdness in the dark dragons'. This was a characteristic specific down to their core that no one was able to change. Han Shuo understood Gilbert's actions, but was surprised to see his weariness. “It's rumored that you dark dragons are renowned for your dominating prowess in this area. Can it be that two women in one night was enough to tire you out so fully?”

“Honored master, this was my first time. I had a long time with both of them and then flew back. Is this kind of accomplishment not enough? I've heard that human males are really weak in this area, there's no one they could've been as amazing as me.” Gilbert puffed out his chest and said with great pride.

Shaking his head disdainfully, Han Shuo said, “If it was me, I could spend as long as I wanted with them and not only would I not be tired, I would become even stronger!”

“Psht! Keep boasting! Although you're very strong master, you're still a human. Human abilities in this area isn't as strong as us dark dragons!” Gilbert said scoffed dismissively and then proudly reaffirmed himself. It looked like this mindset was deep rooted in his brain, and wouldn't be something easily changed.

There was truth in Han Shuo's words. With his abilities in the bloodlust realm and some evil magic arts, he could make it so that he never flagged, and could even use evil ways to harvest yin to replenish yang and recover his energy. Not only would this not harm himself, but the act of intercourse would increase his strength. It was magical.

Some magical arts either harvested yin to replenish yang or vice versa. The “Chant of Thrills” was a happy way of dual cultivation that brought

gains to both sides.

Han Shuo only understood these secret arts after he'd fully gained Chu Cang Lan's memories. He hadn't paid much attention to it, but suddenly thought that perhaps he could use the "Chant of Thrills" to bring gains for both him and Emily when they spent time together.

Therefore, when he thought about the secret arts, Han Shuo sank into temporary quietness. He thought back to those secret arts and slowly contemplated their possibilities. There were some that didn't require the internal essence or magical yuan from either party, and only made use of certain techniques to refine one's body.

There were also a few strong methods that needed a cooperation between internal essence and magical yuan. But only a little bit of each was needed. If they were deployed successfully, the the results of that time's lovemaking would be incredible.

"Lewd dragon, tell me honestly, if your tribe conducts these acts repeatedly, will your dark dragon bodies suffer harm in anyway?" Han SHuo thought for a moment and suddenly asked Gilbert.

"Of course, regardless of tribe, the body will be injured if too much of this is done. Us dark dragons are no exception. We particularly need to abstain from this when we need to evolve, or the damage to our bodies will be even greater. However, this is our innate nature to us, and there are many dark dragons who can't control themselves, still giving free reign to their desires when evolving. Not only do they not evolve, but their rank is decreased as well. This is nothing out of the ordinary." Gilbert answered truthfully when faced with Han Shuo's questions.

Dragons were the strongest, super rank magical creatures. However, there were also divisions amongst the super rank. There were five levels overall, with their ranking completely opposite of other magical beasts. The strongest was level five, and the newly born were level one.

For one such as Gilbert, having evolved not even once, he was a level one creature. The lowest amongst the super rank, he only had a few of the characteristics of the dragons and heightened attack power.



“Heh heh, little lewd dragon, you’ve followed me for so long and I haven’t given you anything at all. This time, master will make it up to you in one go. I’ll teach you a wondrous technique that lets you not exhaust yourself when you go whoring. It’ll make you stronger instead, and you can still do it when you’re evolving!” Han Shuo looked at Gilbert and cackled oddly.

“I don’t believe you, how could such wondrous techniques exist in this world? This isn’t true! Don’t lie to me!” Gilbert obviously didn’t believe Han Shuo and shook his head uncaringly.

“You’ll believe me alright!” Han Shuo walked towards Gilbert and placed a hand on his shoulder. A bit of magical yuan flowed into his body and slowly traveled to his abdomen.

“What, what is that!” Gilbert was shocked and cried out in surprise, “Why does it feel like a small snake has climbed into my body!”

“Don’t move! This is master investigating the makeup of your body!” Han Shuo shouted softly and prevented Gilbert from moving.

The magical yuan traveled in Gilbert’s body in a circle according to Han Shuo’s thoughts. He discovered that Gilbert’s anatomy was indeed a bit different from his. Han Shuo thought for a moment, and moved his magical yuan in Gilbert’s body according to a specific method.

Half an hour passed like this. Han Shuo flipped up Gilbert’s clothes and dripped a drop of blood essence onto his belly button. After which, Han Shuo said lowly, “Follow the trace of the snake’s movement, and try to control it. Slowly direct it into your belly button. If you can do this, you will be able to possess this sort of miraculous martial technique in the future.”

Han Shuo released the hand that he’d rested on Gilbert’s shoulders after saying this and looked at the dark dragon. Gilbert’s head was covered in sweat as he followed Han Shuo’s instructions with a face full of terror and nervousness. However, he was still unable to find the proper way.

Han Shuo could not guide him in this critical moment. Gilbert had to learn the trick of this himself in order to use it with familiarity. The drop of blood essence that landed on his belly button was like a seed that could

use to turn the tides, it can provide a hiding place for the magical yuan that Han Shuo injected into him, allowing him to successfully use the secret arts of harvesting yin to replenish yang.

Han Shuo had done all he could, since Gilbert's body structure was different from a human's, his success was up to himself. Although it would theoretically work, Han Shuo wasn't sure, and so he measured up Gilbert in a perturbed manner.

Gilbert hurriedly gazed towards Han Shuo after a moment and shouted anxiously, "Alright, it's in, I did it! The little snake returned to my belly button." Han Shuo was quite glad to hear this, and asked quickly, "Then how do you feel?"

"Hard. I'm hard, very very hard!" There was a small tent on the lower part of the Black Dragon Gilbert's body as he responded frantically while looking at it, unsure of what to do.

"Hard is good, hard is good. Haha!" Han Shuo laughed, then said proudly. "Very good, lewd dragon, you did it!"

# Chapter 229: Favored son of earth

With Han Shuo's tutelage, Gilbert had finally grasped the evil method of harvesting yin to replenish his yang after half a day.

Gilbert had been highly skeptical at first, but slowly started believing it was true when his body began to change. He still wasn't fully convinced of the magical effects until he really confirmed some things though.

"Remember, you can only steal a little bit of yin energy each time. You'll kill someone if you take too much though." Han Shuo reminded him gravely after Gilbert had fully grasped this new technique.

If the sinister methods of harvesting yin to replenish yang was used adequately and only on one woman at once, not much harm would come to the woman, but if this technique was used too often or an excess of yin energy was absorbed, it would harm the woman. In severe cases, her life might even be lost.

Gilbert seemed to understand after Han Shuo's repeated reminders, murmuring, "I know. Who knows if this is even useful? I'll let you know after I've tried it!"

Han Shuo and Gilbert then traveled together to the dwarves' valley. Gilbert stayed outside as Han Shuo entered by himself to chat with Calvin. He handed the list of weapons and all the materials needed to Calvin, and left the valley after concluding their discussions.

With Gilbert present, Han Shuo saved a lot of spare effort and rode on Gilbert's back. The two of them flew towards the forest trolls' sacred ground in the depths of the Dark Forest.

After flying for half a day, Han Shuo and Gilbert arrived at the place where they worshipped Datara.

The forest trolls guarding the place recognized Han Shuo and didn't stop him, letting him enter freely and took up the duty of protecting him.

Even though it was the dead of winter, the place of extreme wood generated the thriving air of spring in the forest trolls' sacred ground.

Lush undergrowth, towering trees, and high shrubs all grew exceptionally well. Flowers bloomed in charming shades of red and purple, filling the air of the valley with a fresh fragrance of greenery.

Only a vibrant green color, as far as one could see, met the eye. All the plants were growing so perfectly and incredibly strong. A thick earth qi suffused the surroundings. The towering trees covered the skies and the old roots of the tree tangled together with utmost force. This was why the forest trolls had built their sacred ground atop these trees.

When he arrived, Han Shuo told all the forest trolls to clear out of this area. He then took to the skies and observed the layout of the land and elements. He identified some crucial landmarks according to Chu Cang Lan's memories before landing on the roots of an ancient tree.

This tree was the most ancient and largest of all the trees in this place of extreme wood. It was several dozen meters tall. Its richly interlocking branches were filled with light green, life blossoming in abundance from its twigs. It looked quite old.

Han Shuo stared at this tree for a long and finally said apologetically, "I'm sorry, you've occupied the best spot. You must hand over the earth qi that you've been absorbing. I can only sacrifice you!"

He sent out a beam of light from his body, concentrating it in his hand and acted without hesitation, starting to dig at the roots of the ancient tree.

"Honored master, do you need my help? Gilbert asked enthusiastically as he saw Han Shuo start to dig at the roots of the old trees.

Han Shuo thought for a moment and nodded, halting the movements of his hands. "No need, but thanks for reminding me. With the earth elite zombie, I don't need to do any of this myself at all!"

He sang out an incantation as soon as he'd finished speaking, summoning the little skeleton and two other dark creatures.

The little skeleton's bones were translucent, as if they were made of jade. A faint light of the soul circulated through his purple eye. As he stood

there with his bone dagger in hand, a natural sense of danger emanated from him. The seven bone spurs on his back gave others an exceedingly evil feeling, like they were seven weapons waiting to reap their lives.

The earth elite zombie's eyes were sparkling with the same yellow-brown light that emitted from its body. The light covered the armor of his body like a thick layer of dirt. It was blinking its eyes right now and seemed to be looking at Han Shuo with confusion. It seemed to be saying, "Why did you summon me?"

From the appearance of the little skeleton and earth elite zombie, Han Shuo discovered that the two seemed to be continuously evolving—particularly the little skeleton. He gave Han Shuo an odd feeling. Ever since the little skeleton had gained his own sentience, he had started acting with more and more purpose, forming an odd sort of demeanor with his bearing.

"I've a mission for you. Create 49 holes of the same size in the area and then connect them with moats!" Han Shuo thought for a moment and then spoke at the blinking earth elite zombie.

The honest zombie nodded shyly and before continuing to blink at Han Shuo, not making a move. He seemed to be waiting for further instruction.

Pausing, Han Shuo immediately reacted. He sat down cross legged and began rifling through his memories. His brain seemed to be a marvelous machine as the layout of the entire place of extreme wood immediately appeared in his mind, pointed out the location of all 49 holes according to Chu Cang Lan's memories, and overlay them onto the scene in front of him.

When Han Shuo had completed this process, there was a complete schematic in his mind. The earth elite zombie dived into the ground upon receiving Han Shuo's next order.

The entire place of extreme wood suddenly started churning violently, like a sinuous earth dragon was traveling underground. Earth shook and mountains trembled as hills were formed. The earth elite zombie was like a small dragon playing leisurely amongst the rippling waves of the

enormous sea. A large or small hole would appear whenever he revealed himself from the ground.

The earth elite zombie was the most efficient and wondrous construction worker as he worked, accompanied by rumbling sounds. It perfectly recreated the scene in Han Shuo's mind using its own strength and its natural command over the earth.

Enormous changes had occurred in the entire place of extreme wood in a very short amount of time. 49 holes had appeared, and hundreds, thousand of ravines connected the network of holes.

It was an exact replica of the scene in Han Shuo's mind! To have done it so this perfectly in such a short amount of time, and with the power of one alone, the earth elite zombie was likely the only character to be able to do so.

"Amazing, too amazing. This fellow is too wonderful!" Gilbert looked at the earth elite zombie in complete shock. This fellow had caused such a thorough change in such a short amount of time!

"Now you know his strength, hmm? The earth elite zombie is the favored son of heaven. He can hide under the earth as an assassin, and can leave immediately through the ground if his attack fails. Even if someone evades his attacks, they'll be unable to capture him." Han Shuo laughed heartily with pride and glanced sideways at Gilbert.

Having done all this, the earth elite zombie surfaced from the largest hole. The thick clods of earth were as if pure air to him, unable to form the slightest obstruction to him. He seemed to be emerging from water, giving others an extreme visual impact.

He took out a large amount of material from his space ring and filled the empty ground in front of him. They were so many items that they eventually formed a small mountain. He then used his mental connections with the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie to place the numerous material into the holes, following a particular order.

After doing everything, Han Shuo sighed comfortably, "All of the ingredients have been placed inside, there's just one thing missing now."

“Why is that hole empty and nothing’s been placed in it?” Gilbert looked at everything happening around him with interest. He took a look around after Han Shuo had finished speaking and noticed that there was a hole, the size of a human, right next to Han Shuo. It happened to be next to the oldest and largest tree root.

“Duh, that hole is the center of the formation and only the master can enter it!” Han Shuo rolled his eyes at Gilbert and explained haphazardly.

He started chanting as soon as he’d spoken, summoning a few zombies and decided to use the same method of having them fight each other to select a suitable candidate.

Just when Han Shuo was about to do so however, the earth elite zombie hastily shook his hand and walked in front of Han Shuo, blinking frantically as he tried to convey something to Han Shuo.

He also waved at the little zombie as he did so, miming and gesturing as he conversed with the little skeleton, seemingly wanting the little skeleton to persuade Han Shuo as well.

Han Shuo was surprised and held his breath in concentration, looking carefully at the earth elite zombie and the little skeleton, slowly trying to understand the message that the two were sending over.

The earth elite zombie seemed to understand what Han Shuo was about to do and kept waving his hands around. After communicating with the little skeleton, the little skeleton also reacted and joined the earth elite zombie in explanation. Short, muddled bursts of messages kept being delivered to Han Shuo’s mind.

After a while, Han Shuo looked at the two in surprise. “You mean, you guys have a suitable candidate?”

The earth elite zombie and the little skeleton both nodded forcefully upon hearing these words. The little skeleton even walked next to the zombie warriors that Han Shuo had summoned and beat them up a bit, knocking them all into the ground.

The little skeleton then stood proudly in front of them and gestured

nobly with a puffed out chest. He seemed to be saying these fellows are junk. They're not worthy of receiving such amazing treatment.

Han Shuo finally understood after watching for a while. He nodded and smiled, "Alright, I'll send the two of you back and give you some time to catch the zombie warrior of your choice. I'll try to summon you three together afterwards!"

The little skeleton and earth elite zombie all nodded their heads firmly after Han Shuo had spoken. He could feel the joy and excitement in their hearts.

Smiling, Han Shuo gave them a few reminders and chanted again, sending the two back to their old homes. His heart was full of surprise. He hadn't thought that the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie would behave so interestingly.

"These low level dark creatures have their own intelligence now?" Gilbert was mystified as he sighed with astonishment at Han Shuo.

"Don't voice those words in front of them, or they will definitely be mad. They might even beat you up. They're outside the range of dark creatures now. I think even high level dark creatures won't have the amazing powers that they have!" Han Shuo flicked a glance at Gilbert to warn him from voicing foolish words around them.

Han Shuo felt the little skeleton's summons from the other plane after a short while, and chanted the incantation again to resummon the two.

A light flashed by as the little skeleton and earth elite zombie carried a thin, frail, yet exceedingly tall zombie in their arms. He was as thin as a bamboo shoot and had a green countenance to his face. There was no light in its pupils. It was obvious that it could only obey commands.

The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie shouldered the thin zombie warrior over, despite the discrepancies in their heights. One was tall and the other short, they presented a comical sight.

The little skeleton pointed to the new zombie warrior amidst Han Shuo's surprise and gestured, seeming to say, "He's one of ours!"



# Chapter 230: The little skeleton's faction!

Taken aback, Han Shuo stared dumbly at the tall, thin zombie warrior. His eyes roved over the little skeleton and earth elite zombie, finally asking with surprise. "One of ours? One of yours?"

Nodding, the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie seemed a bit proud. Their empty hands gestured at Han Shuo as a flood of messages bombarded Han Shuo like electromagnetic waves.

After he'd taken a while to sort through the information, his heart was filled with astonishment as he looked incredulously at the two fellows. "You mean, you have your own minions and domain in the other dimension?"

The two of them puffed out their chests at the same time with supremely proud expressions. They looked like they were guffawing with laughter as they nodded. Han Shuo had obviously hit the spot.

On the other side, Gilbert looked at Han Shuo communicating slowly with the dark creatures and also felt it to be incredible when he understood what was going on. He couldn't help but go "Eh?" to express his astonishment.

After he recovered from his surprise, Han Shuo's thoughts spun as he couldn't help but laugh heartily, "Not bad, not bad, both of you've done well!"

With Han Shuo's current knowledge of necromancy, he knew that as he continuously improved, he would eventually be able to directly surpass the limits of space one day and descend upon that miraculous dimension alongside the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie. Furthermore, if Han Shuo reached the level of a Magister necromancer, he could even use large-scale teleportation formations to directly connect the two dimensions and teleport personnel. In that case, if the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie developed a powerful faction in the other dimension, they would be able to completely share resources when Han Shuo's necromancy reached a certain level. The possibilities caused Han

Shuo to become very excited.

The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie were both beyond happy at hearing Han Shuo's praise. The little skeleton pointed at the zombie warrior that he'd been supporting, and then pointed at the hole beside him, gesticulating Han Shuo to use this zombie warrior to refine into a wood elite zombie.

Han Shuo nodded and gave a faint smile to show that he understood. He waved towards the little skeleton and signaled him to drop the tall and thin zombie warrior into the hole.

When the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie carried the zombie warrior to the hole, the little skeleton placed it down, then looked up at it. Purple light continuously shone out from the purple eye, as if he was giving some sort of orders to the zombie warrior.

After a while, the little skeleton went on its tiptoes and comically tapped on the zombie warrior's shoulders, seemingly telling it to "work hard", just like a general encouraging its subordinates. It was as if the tall and thin zombie only had the intelligence to obey. After receiving the orders of the purple eye, the zombie warrior nodded stiffly, understanding the little skeleton's meaning and jumped down into the hole. It laid down in the hole in a docile manner and looked at Han Shuo, waiting for his next action.

Seeing that everything was set, Han Shuo took a deep breath, and familiarly dropped two droplets of blood essence onto the zombie warrior, then cast a Dark Seal spell, gaining a deeper connection with the zombie warrior.

After that, Han Shuo crossed his legs and sat down. He gave an order to the earth elite zombie, then sent out rays of black light from his hand into the prone zombie warrior.

After receiving Han Shuo's orders, the earth elite zombie dove into the soil, disappearing instantly like an eel. With the efficiency and speed of an earth dragon swimming around, it quickly filled in the forty nine holes, returning the area back to its former even plane.

When Han Shuo's final seals landed on the body of that thin and tall zombie warrior, the surrounding soil of the hole quickly flowed over his body, covering it as if guided by some sort of power. Then, the earth elite zombie rose up back up and dusted off its hands with a relaxed expression.

"Spirit power of wood, listen to my commands and immediately take your place!" Han Shuo formed two hand seals as he thundered, sending a cloud of black light into the tall, thin zombie.

Suddenly, the forty-nine holes that have been filled and flattened rose up. Natural, green strings gradually linked up together into a dense net, as if woven by spiders. The thin and tall zombie warrior's hiding place was at the center of this net.

In the blink of an eye, thick earth energy all gathered towards the center, as if linked by the green bonds. From afar, it looked like little streams flowing towards the river in the middle, resulting in a strong visual impact for spectators.

While this happened, some of the thick weeds further away were gradually wilting. Even the largest of the ancient trees, filled with powerful branches, slowly changed at a rate visible to the human eye due to the loss of earth energy. Everything was being absorbed by the thin and tall zombie warrior at the center. In order to create him, all the vegetation in the surroundings had to wilt.

"This, this is amazing! Master, how did you do it? Gilbert couldn't help but exclaim as he stared at the enormous changes around him.

"All of the plants around the place of extreme wood need to spit back out all the wood qi they absorbed over the years. The day that the wood elite zombie forms is the day they fully wilt and die. Survival of the fittest. Only the most superior survive in this kind of environment, that's their fate!" Han Shuo said cruelly.

Gilbert looked around and then stared at the earth elite zombie and the little skeleton, "What do we do now?"

"Nothing much, we'll leave and take a walk around the forest trolls'

residence. With the protection of the forest troll warriors, there shouldn't be anything untoward. The changes in this area will become more obvious with the advent of time. I'll instruct the forest trolls not to bother about this."

"When the zombie absorbs all of the wood qi here and transforms into an wood elite zombie, he will naturally contact me and I'll come to wake him!" Han Shuo said faintly.

He left with the little skeleton and Gilbert, heading for the forest trolls' village, arriving after half a day's travel.

When Han Shuo arrived with the little skeleton, they were greeted by the atmosphere of a holiday. As their protector, the little skeleton was viewed as the materialization of the great god Datara in this world. The successful raid last time and Han Shuo's large supply of living necessities had made the forest trolls trust Han Shuo more and more.

The old forest troll priest presented himself in front of Han Shuo after a short while, kneeling down and kowtowing in front of Han Shuo and the little skeleton.

"Hello, how have things been lately?" Han Shuo asked with a faint smile after telling the priest to rise.

"Thanks to your noble and wonderful guidance, we have enough rations to weather the winter. No merchants are willing to pass through the Dark Forest in the cold of winter, so we're all resting in the village and haven't gone out to hunt!" The old priest responded respectfully and appeared quite at ease.

Nodding, Han Shuo said warmly, "Good. Train some more warriors and priest for the tribe this winter. Train them well, they'll be put to good use when spring comes again!"

"We promise to listen to the liaison's orders and train the children well! The old priest nodded and promised.

"Mm, send some more warriors to protect the sacred ground. The great god Datara will be resting within for a while. No one is to enter the sacred

ground without my orders. All abnormal occurrences within the sacred ground are because of the great Datara. Don't be surprised."

Han Shuo knew that the formation of the wood elite zombie would cause the area to change. He notified the forest trolls beforehand just in case, so that they wouldn't disrupt Han Shuo's plans.

"Don't worry, we'll do as the liaison says and guard the area well!" The old priest didn't ask why before promising confidently. He appeared quite at ease when he didn't have to worry about daily life.

"Alright, if I have further orders, I may come myself or send this fellow. Heh heh, I think you must know who he is?" Han Shuo smiled and pointed to Gilbert behind him.

"Of course, this is the strong Mister Dark Dragon, the humble servant of the liaison!" The old priest had been with Han Shuo on his trip to the underground cave last time, and knew everything about how the dark dragon had formed a contract with Han Shuo. He naturally understood where Gilbert had come from.

When he'd thoroughly gone over all that was to be done, Han Shuo didn't tarry and left the forest troll village. After he sent the little skeleton back to his old home, Han Shuo rode on Gilbert and headed further into the depths of the Dark Forest.

There was a mysterious tribe in the furthest depths of the Dark Forest, full of very powerful and terrifying existences. Of course, in such a place, there would naturally be more ferocious magical beasts, mystical plants, as well as some natural treasures that only appeared in legends.

Han Shuo had wanted to refine some pills, so he wanted to try his luck in the depths of the Dark Forest, in hopes of finding some mystical grass in order to replenish some of his basic materials.

After flying for a while, Gilbert took the initiative to let Han Shuo down. He actually muttered with a hint of fear, "This Dark Forest really isn't right, just now, I felt like my back grow cold, as if something treated me as prey. It's too unbelievable!"

“Your feeling should be right, I too felt a very powerful aura that locked onto the two of us just now. However, I wasn’t able to find out what sort of powerful aura it was, or where it came from. It looks like the Dark Forest is truly beyond mysterious. Let’s not fly in the sky anymore, so that we don’t attract the attention of some powerful beings!”

When Han Shuo felt that powerful aura, he immediately sent out the three yin demons to scout. However, he was unable to determine where the aura came from. After the three yin demons had completed one scouting run, they weren’t able to find any irregularities. However, that didn’t leave Han Shuo at ease, but rather made him even more cautious.

What was surprising was that the depths of the Dark Forest didn’t seem to be affected by the cold winter. The freezing air gradually disappeared as the two of them ventured deeper, while the surrounding temperature gradually rose. Indeed, it bore similarities to the place of extreme wood. Here, the thick and dense trees reached for the sky. There were springs along the way as they walked in, several of them decorated with white mist rising out of them.

Thanks to the vision from the yin demons, Han Shuo saw all sorts of fierce, high level creatures along the way. Harpies, deepwater pythons, frost eagles, medusas, manticores... all of these rare creatures continued to appear in the yin demon’s vision. Sometimes, he even spotted more than one together.

These high level creatures were hard to see on the outskirts of the Dark Forest. There was often only one of these high level creatures in a large area. Most adventurers would evade them if they bumped into them, deathly afraid of being attacked by them.

However, they’d turned into the most common of existences within the depths of the Dark Forest. There were even many exotic plants growing in specific places, ones that Han Shuo had never heard of or seen. There were enormous flowers growing on these strange fauna.

Han Shuo saw through the yin demons that a giant flower bend when a windblade wolf passed by, ensnaring the wolf with its stamens. The thick

stem moved like a neck, as it chewed and swallowed the wolf. The wolf was quickly digested amidst a thick pool of blood, and not even the bones were spat out.

There were some strange looking plants with leaves like human hands. They also had the same frightening destructive power. As soon as magical creatures approached them, they would be entangled by their thick branches and be strangled to death.

“Follow me closely. Danger lurks everywhere within the Dark Forest. No wonder Trunks kept reminding me that although the gains were great in the forest, one might lose their life at any time!” Han Shuo spoke calmly to Gilbert, and cautiously moved forward.

However, even though he spoke those warning words, he was actually the one who lost his cool right after, sprinting towards something with a face full of glee.

# Chapter 231: Blood essence grass

A plant with a big, fan-like leaf was protruding from fiery red rock crevice. Sparkling red lights flowed through its entire body.

Drops of bright red liquid dripped down from the hanging leaf of this odd plant. Crystal clear, the liquid drops looked like red diamonds as they fell onto the rock, emitting a sizzling sound as well as a plume of red smoke. The smoke then disappeared near the roots, as if absorbed by the latter.

Han Shuo's body moved with a speed much faster than Gilbert anticipated. In just a moment, he was already below the leaf, his mouth wide open to catch the dripping red liquid.

Drip... drip...

The blood-like red liquid fell onto the tip of Han Shuo's tongue with a soft plop. When the red smoke rose up with a sizzle, he took a deep breath and inhaled it all. Under the watchful eyes of Gilbert, Han Shuo's cheeks gradually glowed red.

Not knowing what was going on, Gilbert looked at Han Shuo's weird actions in perplexion, thinking that his master was becoming increasingly mysterious.

The plant had been originally hale and hearty. However, with every drop of crystal red liquid trickling down the leaf, crimson patches appeared on its body, which then slowly became one with the red rock.

By the time the liquid stopped trickling from the leaf, the strange plant became rock-hard, sticking firmly to the red rock below.

Han Shuo's whole body had turned blood red by this point. He immediately sat down on the spot, his whole being seemingly made of blood, a faintly bright, red layer of smoke surrounding his body.

Han Shuo slowly opened his eyes. He let out a long, low whistle and said with high spirits, "The depths of the Dark Forest are indeed unfathomable. To be able to encounter this Blood Essence Grass that strengthens my



blood essence, it appears my luck isn't bad at all."

"What is it?" Gilbert asked with surprise as he stared at the rock-like plant.

"The Blood Essence Grass is a vile plant. It continuously absorbs the energy of the surrounding plants after formation. If it's surrounded by evil plants that feast on the flesh and blood of humans and beasts, then the blood of their victims will also be devoured and refined by the roots of the Blood Essence Grass."

"The process has to operate for a hundred years before the Blood Essence Grass can produce a fan-sized leaf. Once this leaf forms, it will then proceed to spit out the condensed blood refined during the past hundred years to be reabsorbed into its roots. It can then absorb the surrounding vitality even faster, and the radius it can absorb will also expand."

"After another hundred years, the Blood Essence Grass will give birth to another leaf after absorbing enough vitality from the surrounding carnivorous plants. This cycle repeats for a total of nine hundred years. If the Blood Essence Grass can successfully evolve each time, it will eventually become a blood essence that can move freely, possessing sentience just like humans. Every plant within a ten mile radius would be under its control. This is an incredible art!" Han Shuo smiled as he explained the origin of the Blood Essence Grass to Gilbert.

"So amazing. Then, what effect did the blood red liquid have on you? How old is this Blood Essence Grass?" Gilbert asked, surprised at Han Shuo's explanation.

Han Shuo gave a proud laugh and said, "When I absorb and refine the essence of the grass, I can transmute it into my essence blood. In the future, it'll prevent me from expending too much magical yuan. What a pity this Blood Essence Grass seemed to only be around three hundred years old. If it'd been nine hundred years old, after being transformed by my essence blood, it would possess the miraculous effect of bringing the dead back to life. If I suffer a cut, the healing speed of the wound will be

visible to the naked eye!”

“It’s that magical? Perhaps there are other Blood Essence Grasses inside the Dark Forest. We can search for them!” Gilbert exclaimed in excitement after being dumbfounded for a while.

Paying no heed to the excited Gilbert, Han Shuo took out the Demonslayer Edge, and carefully dug up the red rock on which the Blood Essence Grass had grown. He shook off the soil around it, and finally placed the clump of red rock into the space ring.

“What does the stone do?” Gilbert curiously asked.

“This is a Blood Essence stone. This is a valuable material, very useful!” Han Shuo knew that Gilbert wouldn’t understand even if he explained everything, so he responded half-heartedly.

Taking a look around, Han Shuo saw nothing else worthy of attention. Only then did he proceed to the deeper depths with Gilbert, his heart growing increasingly curious about the Dark Forest.

However, the strong presence appeared again not long after they set off. Han Shuo couldn’t help but frown, his body halting in place.

“Who or what are you playing at? Are you done yet?” Han Shuo shouted impolitely after he coldly took a look around.

Possessing such a strong presence and being able to avoid the three yin demons’ eyes, it would at least possess intelligence, if it wasn’t human. Such a powerful creature lurking around and eyeing him and Gilbert as if they were prey made Han Shuo extremely uncomfortable, and he couldn’t help but lash out violently.

His shout echoed through the ancient forest with no response. After listening for a while, there was still no additional sound. Evidently the powerful presence hadn’t responded to Han Shuo’s words.

“There really is something stalking us!” Gilbert could apparently sense the danger with his instincts and couldn’t help but cry out.

Nodding, Han Shuo said softly, “Indeed, and we have no idea what it is.

Even I have no way to trace it. It looks quite powerful too. We'll have to be careful; don't give it any advantage!"

No matter what this creature was, if it was confident in dealing with Han Shuo and Gilbert, it wouldn't be lurking around in the dark and would have gone on the offensive already. Yet, it chose to hide, which meant this creature didn't have confidence in defeating them both. As such, Han Shuo wasn't too worried.

With the three yin demons around, it was impossible for this creature to ambush them. Although Han Shuo was on the alert, he felt no fear at all. On the contrary, he was even curious, and more determined to lure this creature out and take a look at what it really was.

The clear moonlight shone down in the depths of the night. Under the rays of the moon, the shadows of the towering ancient trees were etched on the ground, looking like the capering limbs of demonic figures.

Han Shuo and Gilbert were resting in the branches of a ten meter high tree. Gilbert leaned lazily on the tree trunk as he napped, deeply asleep.

Han Shuo's posture was straight, his breathing even, his heartbeat slow. He sat cross-legged like an erect javelin with his eyes closed, silently refining the essence of the Blood Essence Grass that he'd taken in earlier in the day.

After who knew how long, Han Shuo's closed eyes suddenly snapped open from his meditation. His bright eyes shone in the night, pupils sparkling as they swept the area.

The three yin demons had taken positions around Han Shuo, to his back, left, and right. They were closely examining the surroundings for any anomalies. Suddenly, the yin demon at the back found ripples appearing on the surface of a nearby lake. It was followed by an enormous, transparent shadow that slowly rose from the surface of the lake.

The watery being was colossal, on par with Gilbert in his dragon form. Nine heads on slender necks slowly appeared out of its bulk. After emerging from the pool, the originally transparent watery body gradually turned more and more immaterial, until it completely disappeared.

However, a strong presence subtly radiated from that direction, giving off the exact same feeling from the past two days. Han Shuo watched attentively for a while and discovered the wind flowing a bit oddly from that direction, as if encountering an obstacle in the void.

Tapping the soundly sleeping Gilbert, Han Shuo abruptly woke up the dark dragon. Gilbert turned his head to look around, and asked in a low voice, "What's going on?"

"The super rank magical creature, the Hydra!" Han Shuo responded lightly.

Hearing his words, Gilbert's face paled as he said in a stunned voice, "No wonder, my grandfather said that the Hydra has a skill that allows it to use the power of water to conceal its body, falling into a wondrous invisible state. In addition to its powerful presence, its whole body is also venomous. I can't believe that it's set its sights on us!"

"This Hydra has likely evolved only once, so no wonder it was following us but didn't dare to act! Make your preparations, we'll teach it a lesson!" Han Shuo whispered, his whole body remaining unmoving. He continued to sit there, waiting for the Hydra to arrive.

Gilbert understood and but still pretended to continue sleeping, snoring lightly.

# Chapter 232: Lewd Dragon, Lewd Snake

A terrible stench along with a powerful presence came crashing down even before the hydra arrived.

Han Shuo was unable to capture the hydra's figure even through the three yin demons. However, he was still able to speculate its approximate location due to the odd changes in the wind.

As the hydra flew over, the clear ponds in the surrounding area were instantly polluted, turning them into gutters that spat out foul odors. The wet ground also slowly became unusually dry, revealing a dark brown color. It seemed like the surroundings were affected by the hydra's abilities.

Han Shuo summoned the Demonslayer Edge, and made his preparations with Gilbert as the hydra approached. He planned on unleashing an unforgettable strike the moment the hydra closed in.

The stench in the air gradually grew worse and worse. Han Shuo had been resting with his eyes closed but became briefly disoriented when he inhaled the revolting aroma. Upon filtering the air with his magical yuan however, his body swiftly returned to normal.

As a member of the dark dragon tribe, Gilbert's physical body was powerful, and he was capable of spitting poison. Furthermore, the natural resistance of a dragon's body was strong enough that the fetid poisonous gas could not affect him.

Suddenly, the hydra's moving figure seemed to stop beside a tree that reached towards the skies. The wind currents also stabilized and stopped changing. The hydra seemed to have landed there.

Han Shuo was shocked. Just as he was wondering why the hydra didn't approach, four waves of dark brown liquid spurted out like a fountain towards the tree that Han Shuo and Gilbert were sitting in.

A noxious stink instantly filled the air. Unusually rancid, when the magical beasts in the area inhaled this putrid stench, their bodies

straightened and abruptly froze.

Higher leveled magical beasts like the harpy and two windblade wolves all ran away in a panic after scenting the stinking air. None of them dared to stick around. They clearly knew of the terrifying danger present in their surroundings.

After cursing under their breath, Han Shuo and Gilbert instantly shifted. Gilbert leaped and landed on a tree even further away, while Han Shuo rose into a high vantage point in the sky.

While he rapidly flew up, Han Shuo took the opportunity to chant necromancy spells, summoning the little skeleton and earth elite zombie at the same time, who organized themselves with great teamwork. The little skeleton took up a position beside Han Shuo, while the earth elite zombie hid into the ground.

The branches of the tree that Han Shuo and Gilbert stayed on shuddered when the four waves of dark brown liquid splashed onto it. All the blooming leaves wilted almost instantly, and only a dessicated trunk was left of the once towering tree. It was as if it had experienced a long period of drought.

“Hydra, you’ve finally appeared!” Han Shuo laughed coldly in the sky and launched an attack with the little skeleton. The bone knife and Demonslayer Edge flew directly towards the concealed hydra.

Gilbert’s roar also sounded out from the side at the same time. In human form, he gradually grew in a ball of black light, finally turning into his dark dragon form. He rushed towards the hydra with his claws and fangs and shouted in a resounding voice, “Despicable hydra, you will pay!”

The concealed hydra plainly didn’t think that Han Shuo and Gilbert could find its tracks. Han Shuo’s Demonslayer Edge and the bone knife had already connected with its body before it was able to react.

A sharp scream tore through the silent sky. After getting injured, the hydra’s enormous body was no longer concealed. Coiled atop a sky-reaching tree, it was completely exposed to Han Shuo and Gilbert.

At that moment, two of its long necks were dripping blood, and the remaining seven heads shuddered. It seemed like the tree the hydra was on was unable to withstand its pained writhing as it snapped with a large creak, bringing the hydra's body down with it as it fell.

At this moment, a huge crack suddenly appeared on the brown ground. Intense rumbles sounded from deep within the earth, as if a terrifying danger awaited the hydra's impact.

As a super rank magical beast, the hydra naturally had the ability to fly, but it was just writhing in pain as it fell.

However, when one of the snake heads caught sight of the ground underneath it fracture into a large ravine, the hydra was scared mindless. It struggled frantically, finally halting its descent and rising upwards again.

Faced with the threat of death, it seemed that the hydra's no holds barred struggle bore fruit. However, the attack from the ground clearly did not end there. Just as the hydra rose a bit in the air, it noticed several sharp mounds suddenly rise up from the ground and charge towards its body.

The hydra was extremely troubled in that moment, it hadn't thought that its ambush would result in all this happening. According to its plan, it would silently draw close to Han Shuo and Gilbert, use the noxious poison's fumes to take down the "Dragon Knight" Han Shuo, and then casually deal with the little dark dragon that was a rank lower.

But, Han Shuo, having trained extensively in demonic cultivation, didn't fall to the attack of its noxious fumes like it had planned at all. Furthermore, the appearance of the little skeleton and earth elite zombie also empowered Han Shuo, completely shattering the hydra's plan.

The nine snake heads suddenly started to tremble as its long necks wobbled continuously. The momentum of the mounds that the earth zombie had created was completely counteracted by the fierce streams of poison that the snake heads spat out. While it did so, the hydra's body gradually rose as it frantically flew towards the pool it had first emerged

from, dodging the remaining mound attacks from the earth elite zombie.

A stream of magma suddenly hit one of the snake heads, unusually dazzling within the pitch-dark night. With a terrible scream, the hydra's gigantic fleeing body stumbled. The remaining magical beasts in the area fled in fear as the colossal body snapped trees into twigs as it crashed and fell.

"Wahaha, a second ranked fellow has to flee as well!" Gilbert's voice rang out through the night sky as he carried Han Shuo and the little skeleton to swiftly chase the hydra.

The hydra destroyed all of the towering trees blocking its way as it fled. It suddenly leapt into the pool it had surfaced from just as Gilbert was about to catch up.

The originally clear pool water was instantly polluted and very quickly became mired in filth. When the hydra had come out of the pool previously, the pool had remained clear. Yet the moment it entered now, the pool had changed. This meant that the hydra was unable to control its power anymore, most likely due to it being wounded.

The hydra caused a huge wave of activity the moment it entered the newly formed bog. The mud splashed up around it and a foul odor began to spread.

"Honored master, just leave this to me. Just watch from above. I'm very familiar with this sort of place as well!" Gilbert laughed loudly.

Gilbert had been hiding in a swamp the first time he'd met Han Shuo, using its natural advantages to fight against the dark elves. He was entirely used to fighting and hiding in this sort of place. Now that the hydra was hurt, and Han Shuo was on watch above, he didn't really worry about Gilbert's safety, particularly given his astounding resistance to poison.

"Alright, go on down. Come out or yell if you can't handle things!" Han Shuo nodded and agreed to Gilbert's plan of action.

With a wild guffaw of laughter, Gilbert's enormous body dove into the



marsh with a huge splash. Like an enormous eel, he swiftly began to make his way deeper into the depths .

All of a sudden, a huge commotion rose out in the mire. Gilbert had obviously found the hydra and had engaged in combat. With the swamp as the epicenter, tremors shook the ground, and the soaring trees as well. With this cacophony, regardless of size, all the magical beasts vacated the premises in a hurry.

It was as though someone had tossed in a chained set of bombs, as huge pillars of mud, accompanied by tremendous bangs, erupted from the huge pool. The constant explosions forced the swamp into a terrifying spiral that could not settle.

Occasionally, the hydra heads or Gilbert's huge tail would show itself above the surface of the bog. Looking down from his vantage point in the sky, Han Shuo noticed that Gilbert and the hydra's bodies were entwined together, continuously rolling around in the mire.

“OOOOOH....”

Suddenly, Gilbert's extremely lecherous yell rang out from within the mire.

Then, Han Shuo caught sight of something that shocked him beyond measure. The hydra and Gilbert slowly floated out of the swamp, their bodies knotted tightly together. But the more Han Shuo looked, the less it looked like they were fighting. Rather, it actually seemed like they were getting intimate.

Gilbert's thick tail and sharp claws continuously stroked the hydra's body like human hands. Meanwhile, the nine long necks of the hydra, that were once struggling fiercely to escape from the dark dragon, began to wrap closer and closer around the dark dragon.

Rays of dark light had begun to surrounding the two entangled super rank magical beasts at some unknown time. The two enormous bodies slowly condensed, and gradually became two muddy people—a man and a woman who were entwined together.

Furthermore, they were two naked humanoids that were tightly embracing each other!

# Chapter 233: Conquer

Han Shuo stood in the sky as he watched the development taking place below, completely astonished. He was completely dumbfounded as he stood there frozen.

Gilbert and the hydra had become two naked mud people entwined around each other. The originally intense battle became an “intense battle” of another kind. Passionate cries and roars rang out, giving Han Shuo a complete eye opener!

The dark dragon race was lewd. All hydras were female and were hardly anything proper as they’d always been a synonym for the word ‘pervert’. The fact that these two beings could turn such an intense battle into another kind of “intense battle” meant that they were truly lusty. It really shocked Han Shuo.

The two mud people were rolling around together intensely and churning through the mire. Since their bodies were covered in mud, their original appearances could not be seen. Han Shuo could only discern that the hydra was female from her voluptuous body.

The busty lewd hydra entwined with the dark dragon and copulated fiercely. Heavy breathing kept on ringing out and echoing through the quiet night sky, causing people’s lust to rise!

Han Shuo had been watching intensely, while finding it all slightly baffling. Suddenly he felt someone tug on the corner of his shirt. He turned his head, and saw the purple eye of the little skeleton sparkle as he reached out with his bony claw to point at the dark dragon and the hydra that were in the heat of the moment. He sent Han Shuo a question, “What are they doing?”

Han Shuo replied, “Uh...”

The little skeleton tugged on the corner of his shirt again as the light in his purple eye swirled around quickly, showing that he was clearly very confused. It was as if he couldn’t understand what was going on no matter what, so he questioned Han Shuo again.

“The dark dragon is conquering it. Little kid, don’t ask so much!” Han Shuo couldn’t evade the question, so he just laughed weirdly and tried to skirt around the question.

Only half of the earth elite zombie was in the ground starting from an unknown period of time. It waved its hands around wildly, also looking at the two people in the mire with confusion, wondering if it should get closer to attack.

The mire was very wide and filled with extremely poisonous liquid. If the earth elite zombie rushed inside, it would be unable to make full use of its powers. Not to mention that the current situation was very odd, Han Shuo hastily issued a mental command for the earth elite zombie’s movements to halt.

The two people on the surface of the mire gradually sank back in and disappeared from Han Shuo’s line of sight. However, the huge commotion inside the mire did not vanish accordingly.

Han Shuo knew that the grand battle between a lewd dragon and a lewd snake had not stopped even after they had disappeared. The battle location had merely shifted to underneath the surface.

Seeing that he couldn’t see anything with his eyes anymore, Han Shuo descended from the sky to land beside the earth elite zombie. He patted the earth elite zombie’s shoulder and praised, “You did very well!”

The earth elite zombie had hidden in the ground earlier and used his powers over the earth to pose an immense threat towards the hydra. Power that could tear the earth apart and form a fissure excited Han Shuo quite a bit. This meant that it had already developed a very good battle awareness after staying with the little skeleton for a while.

Now that it would be rather difficult for the hydra to threaten Han Shuo anymore, he landed and praised the earth elite zombie, chanted the spell once more and sent the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie back home.

He then leapt onto a towering tree beside the mire, sat down with his legs crossed, and started to adjust his breathing while watching the

commotion within the mire.

As he did so, a loud sound rang out from afar, as if a huge being was passing nearby.

Han Shuo had been adjusting his breathing, but immediately sent out a yin demon to travel towards the source of the sound and discern what was going on.

An azure cyclops, roughly eight or nine meters in height, its muscles as firm as boulders, was moving its stone-pillar like legs as it hurried along its way. The mountains shook with each step, seeming as terrifying as a landslide.

All of the trees were flattened in his path, like a bulldozer had been driven over the ground, flattening it thoroughly. Even some hard boulders were crushed into dust. This clearly indicated that the azure cyclops had an enormous strength that rivaled that of a god's.

The cyclops seemed slightly anxious as it was walking at a very fast pace. The shuddering of the ground caused all of the magical beasts in the area to flee their nests in order to make way for it.

Han Shuo was shocked as the large sound traveled further south. It was likely that even the hydra and Gilbert would feel quite troubled if they met with that enormous fellow with a body as strong as boulders, embodying a terrifying strength.

Just as Han Shuo thought that, a huge commotion rang out from the mire. A whirlpool was spiraling at the center of the mire as streams of brown mud were shot out. It seemed that the lewd dragon and the lewd snake had reached the climax.

As he expected a howl sounded out from within the mire after a while. The mire and its foul stench miraculously regained its purity in an extremely short amount of time. The contaminated muddy water gradually sank down, while clear pool water slowly appeared along the surface with bubbles.

Gilbert's naked body leapt out from within. His muscles dazzled as the

mud on his body was washed clean.

Gilbert laughed maniacally with indescribable excitement and pride in his voice after breaking through the surface of the pool. He looked down at the watery pool as he couldn't restrain lewd laughter from bursting out of his mouth. He was clearly very cocky.

"Honored master, you are a living god of this world. You hold miracles that surpass the laws of the natural world. You have allowed your humble disciple to have a technique that can rule the entire Dark Dragon City. I must continuously praise you. Oh, you're truly too great!" Gilbert blurted out a bunch of flattering words continuously after leaping out of the water.

The sincere tone, the passionate emotions, the goosebumps-inducing words surpassed any flattering that he'd done before. Gilbert was truly excited and joyful in this moment, he wasn't purely being fawning towards Han Shuo.

"What, you used that technique?" Han Shuo chuckled oddly as he gazed at Gilbert in a smiling, yet not smiling manner.

Gilbert nodded continuously and loudly in a truly excited manner, "Of course, it's too amazing. That female snake was completely dealt with. She can't even move now."

"What's the situation now?" Han Shuo momentarily blanked, then asked Gilbert quietly in a sneaky manner, as if he was afraid of the hydra in the deep pool overhearing him.

Gilbert quietly gave a lecherous laugh and said, "Honored master, I already stole some of the essence from her body during the process. I can already feel my body reaping enormous benefits."

"Will this hydra be a threat to us anymore?" Han Shuo nodded, then frowned before he asked calmly.

"Don't worry, she definitely won't. Furthermore, I have a way to rope her in, so that master can gain another powerful helper!" Gilbert promised confidently with a smile of unmeasurable lasciviousness.

“That’s good. I’ll believe you this time since you’re so confident. I hope you don’t disappoint me!” Han Shuo chose to believe Gilbert after witnessing his feat with the hydra and nodded in agreement with his suggestion.

“Then, let’s depart for now. She needs a very long period of time to rest. We’ll come back and find her after she recovers!” Gilbert gazed towards the clear pool reluctantly.

“That’s alright. I saw a cyclops hurriedly running towards a direction just now. Let’s go over there to see what’s going on!” Remembering the actions of the cyclops, Han Shuo became interested and spoke thoughtfully to Gilbert.

It was said that the cyclops were the servants of the gods. Legends spoke of their miraculous ability to forge weapons and find special ores. They liked to eat humans and had strong bodies and stubborn personalities. Their living habits were very similar to the dwarves. Another legend said that cyclops were actually a type of dwarf, but they had unbelievably large bodies, as well as terrifying destructive abilities. It was said that they lived in huge buildings.

Their bodies were as hard as boulders. It was unknown whether they had the ability to find strange ores and rare mining fields due to this sort of body. This was an innate ability that made all alchemists green eyed with envy.

When the cyclops had hurried on so anxiously just now, Han Shuo naturally thought of its instinctive abilities and wondered if the cyclops had discovered some special metal ore and was rushing to dig it out.

“Perhaps this cyclops found a good location, or is planning to mine some sort of special ore!” Gilbert clearly knew about the instinctive characteristic of the cyclops, so he couldn’t help but cry out.

Han Shuo nodded and smiled, “Come, let’s go and see. Incidentally, I need some materials to refine a new weapon. Let’s see if this cyclops can help me find some good stuff!”

With that, Han Shuo and Gilbert swiftly followed the path that the

cyclops had been taking.



# Chapter 234: A strong crowd

The gigantic cyclops' powerful body fully depicted its strong soul as it shook the ground and mountains in its path, snapping ancient trees, and causing many beasts to flee.

Even in the Dark Forest, where super rank magical beasts lurked everywhere, very few beings were actually willing to provoke a being as powerful as a cyclops. Having bad relations with such a big fellow was not an easy thing.

Han Shuo and Gilbert followed the tracks that the cyclops left behind and caught up without too much effort. In order to prevent it from noticing them, Han Shuo rode on Gilbert's body and intentionally created a large distance between them and the cyclops.

As they hurried behind the cyclops, Han Shuo carefully surveyed their surroundings and actually discovered several powerful auras that seemed to be interested in the cyclops' actions.

However, the owners of these auras also intentionally avoided the cyclops. They hid far away, unwilling to approach it, and only followed the tracks that the cyclops left behind, seeming to have the same idea as Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo sensed these powerful auras, he immediately told Gilbert to revert back into his human form. He then dragged Gilbert along using the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven to prevent Gilbert's large body from catching the attention of these powerful beings and becoming their prey.

The three yin demons kept watch on the side and continuously paid attention to any approaching danger that might befall them. Danger lurked around every corner in the Dark Forest, so Han Shuo couldn't help but remain vigilant.

Each step of the towering cyclops covered five or six meters. He finally entered a small valley after a long period of rumbling, hasty travel.

A waterfall crashed within the valley, the vegetation green, the lake clear, and strange flowers bloomed. Odd rocks of various colors sat at the bottom of the clear river. They dazzled beneath the sunlight, making the river ripple and shine and the fishes' color even brighter in contrast.

What was surprising was that after the cyclops suddenly became very cautious after arriving at the valley. He set each step down very carefully, as if afraid of breaking the silence of the valley, or disturbing some powerful being.

Following the cyclops from a distance away, Han Shuo hid at a cliff above the valley. He looked down from above, observing the cyclops' movements.

The cyclops advanced forward carefully after arriving at the valley. As it walked, it reached back to undo the huge shovel, heading for the small lake underneath the waterfall.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, the small lake was extremely deep. The cyclops was nearly ten meters tall, and yet the lake water reached his shoulders when he entered the lake.

As careful as the cyclops had been, he caused numerous violent ripples to spread when he entered the lake. Fish of various colors scattered in fear, and the clear waters around his body gradually became muddier, clearly affected by his movements.

When the cyclops moved its hands and started using shovel, the lake water surged even more and the clear surface of the lake became even murkier, as pieces of gigantic rock were flung onto the bank by the moving shovel.

The cyclops was able to determine with just one glance which rocks were useful, and which were useless. He would put away the useful rocks the moment he excavated them and then continued working.

All of the rocks that the cyclops dug out had some sort of muddy silt stuck to them. Han Shuo couldn't determine what they were. However, since the cyclops had become interested in them, and had snuck over to dig them out from such a far distance, they were unlikely to be something

that could be easily found.

Suddenly, several powerful auras descended on the valley. All of them locked their attention onto the cyclops, as if waiting for something.

Han Shuo instantly slowed his breathing and heart rate, and began intentionally concealing his presence. He wanted to prevent anyone from discovering a single trace of him and bringing him unnecessary trouble.

As a super rank magic beast, Gilbert also had a miraculous way of concealing himself. He slowly snuck into the current in the lake after a glance from Han Shuo, continuing to sink downwards until he reached the muddy layers at the bottom of the lake.

As one of the evil races of the underground world, the dark dragons had a natural talent for hiding in mire. When Gilbert sank into the mud and was blocked by the flowing water and mud, even Han Shuo needed to sense very carefully before being able to find a trace of the dark dragon.

After concealing himself, Han Shuo commanded the three yin demons to slowly move around the valley and slowly scout out the direction where he had sensed the powerful auras.

Firstly, there was an old woman, whose face was full of wrinkles, wearing a flaming red magician robe, who stood on top of a branch of a seven-meter-tall tree. From the magical insignia on her robe, Han Shuo recognized that this old woman was actually a fire grand magus. Her vision did not rest on the cyclops. Instead, she kept casting her gaze around, as if more interested in the valley itself.

The second person was a middle-aged hulk. He looked rather handsome, with short golden hair sticking up, appearing very energized. He'd stopped behind a boulder and was focusing his attention on the cyclops itself.

There was a strange aura around the middle-aged hulk. It was actually rather similar to Gilbert's aura. Han Shuo carefully observed the middle-aged man and suddenly understood that he was an adult, golden dragon.

The third powerful being had landed within the bushes. It was a savage, huge ape around five meters tall with long silver fur and a pair of blood-

red eyes. Its long arms ended with sharp fingernails that were akin to knives. There were traces of blood on one of them, as if it had just ripped open a magical beast.

The last person was a beautiful young girl, who was hovering in the air on the back of a pegasus. She had clear eyes, white skin, and a flawless face. A holy aura emanated from her features. She rode atop the pegasus with a straight back and breasts held high, appearing quite full. Her attention was also on the cyclops.

Thanks to the surveillance of the three yin demons, Han Shuo examined the four powerful beings from all directions. He couldn't help but be shocked. The Dark Forest was truly a terrifying place. A single cyclops had attracted the attention of so many powerhouses.

There were four powerful beings, two beasts and two people. The middle-aged hulk was naturally a golden dragon in its human form. As the race with the most powerful bodies amongst dragons, they were publicly acknowledged to be strong. The aura of this middle-aged hulk was as steady as a mountain. He was definitely a powerful being who had evolved at least three times. He wasn't something that a rookie dark dragon could compare up to.

The silver-eyed giant ape had an enormous body that was four meters tall. From the cold sharpness of its nails, Han Shuo could tell that they were drenched in the blood of various powerful men and beasts from within the Dark Forest. The aura of bloodlust surrounded it. Although he didn't know what sort of mutated monster it was, its powerful aura was definitely not weak.

The old woman with a face full of wrinkles was a fire grand magus. Her control over fire magic already reached its peak, so her strength was definitely terrifying.

Han Shuo was unable to determine the strength of the beautiful young girl on the pegasus from her appearance, but since she'd dared to appear here, Han Shuo believed that she wouldn't be an opponent that would be easy to handle. She definitely would've never appeared if she didn't have

extreme confidence in her own abilities.

When Han Shuo had fully appraised the four powerful beings that were hidden, he immediately contacted Gilbert, telling him to stop moving to prevent an unfortunate disaster.

“Roar...”

An enormous roar suddenly rang out from underground. The entire valley shook as the boulders on the cliffs trembled and tumbled towards the small lake.

This roar came from deep within the earth. It was filled with endless fury. The four powerful and hidden existences all displayed varied expressions upon hearing this loud howl.

The golden dragon and the beautiful girl on the pegasus were shocked and didn't know what to do or what was happening. Their gazes shifted from the cyclops towards the lake and stream. However, the fire grand magus and the gigantic silver ape seemed to understand what had happened, and their expressions revealed a hint of eager anticipation.

After that loud roar, the temperature of the originally temperate valley shot up quickly. The lake and the clear river suddenly transformed into a hot spring as steam rose up from them and gradually diffused through the valley.

The cyclops clearly knew what was going on as well. Its originally light-footed actions immediately sped up, as if it was avoiding something and wanted to maximize the most strange ores possible from the lake in a shortest period of time. It frantically sped up its work.

The ground in the valley trembled in accompaniment to the large sound. The ground beneath the lake and river split open. The temperature in the valley rose, causing some of the fragile flowers that couldn't withstand it to wilt. Following that, some branches and bushes cracked as they dried up and started smoking.

Even Gilbert, hidden within the mud, was unable to withstand the rapid rise in water temperature. It nearly turned him into a roasted dragon,

making him want to break out from the mire.

However, Han Shuo noticed that the four hidden powerful beings had raised their vigilance to the utmost. There was an ominous killing intent that filled the valley, as if a large-scale war would unfold at any second. He was extremely shocked and hastily stopped Gilbert. Han Shuo told him to banish the thought of leaving the river bottom so that he wouldn't become the first target to be attacked.

Han Shuo was fiercely stopping the dark dragon's action and telling him to leverage the convenience of the mud to leave the valley. This was to prevent him from unfortunately becoming the target of everyone's attacks and dying a terrible death.

Gilbert withstood the pain of his body being burnt and used the dark dragon's natural talents to move to a place of lower temperature, gradually leaving the valley and disappearing in the direction of the river's current.

A terrifying roar sounded out from underneath the ground not long after the dark dragon left. The river and lake seemed to be torn open as magma gushed through to them. The scorching hot temperature made everyone feel extremely uncomfortable.

Ten or so flaming red rock giants, that seemed to be constructed from magma, slowly stood up where the magma was gathering within the river.

The body of these giants were red like iron brands; there seemed to be magma continuously circulating throughout their bodies. Each of them were as huge as the gigantic silver ape, and appeared very savage as magma flowed in their eyes. As the magma spread through the water, they rushed towards the cyclops.

"The Scorching Demon Generals, they really are here!" The old woman, who happened to be the fire grand magus, couldn't help but exclaim with a face full of excitement.

The huge silver ape appeared extremely ferocious. There was a savage light sparkling within its blood red eyes. It was anxiously waving its thick arms around at this moment, as if it was prepared to rush in and fight, but

hesitated like it was waiting for something.

The golden dragon and the pegasus girl seemed to be targeting only the cyclops. They clearly hadn't thought that this situation would develop and froze, trying to quickly think of something.

While the four hidden powers were slowly gathering ideas, the magma constructed Scorching Demon Generals charged towards the cyclops.

The cyclops no longer dared to stay now. It picked up its shovel and once again stepped out heavily, hoping to quickly leave the valley behind and avoid the attacks of these demon generals.

The temperature within the valley rose up swiftly, immediately cracking the surrounding ground and wilting all vegetation in an extremely short period of time. The scorching temperature emanating from underneath the ground caused Han Shuo to feel very uncomfortable.

Yet, just at this moment, Han Shuo closed his eyes and relaxed his body, as if wanting to perceive his surroundings more clearly.

After a while, Han Shuo opened his eyes and light sparkled in them. He gazed down into the valley that had been turned into a sea of fire and muttered, "Yes, yes, it should be a place of extreme fire down there!"

# Chapter 235: Sea of Fire

“ROAR!”

Another terrifying roar rang out from beneath the ground, the valley trembling vehemently throughout. Large boulders on the cliff tumbled down, while the gigantic boulders that formed the waterfall creaked madly, as if they were about to crumble at any moment.

An extremely powerful aura subtly seeped out of the cracked ground. The roar's powerful sound wave caused the wilted trees to suddenly crash to the ground and the earth to rupture very quickly, forming a huge ravine.

Han Shuo no longer sent his three yin demons in separate directions for surveillance. Instead, he immediately called them back to his side to verify the disturbances in his surroundings. Han Shuo also couldn't help but vault away from the rocks and take to the air because the scorching heat had already transformed the boulders into bright red heated irons.

The scorching demon generals that'd stalked out of the magma attacked the cyclops without any hesitation. In concert with the terrifying sound blast, the demon generals sent streams of magma from the river shooting towards the cyclops' enormous body.

Three four-meter tall demon generals strode out from the ground's depths and blocked the cyclops' path of retreat as their flaming bodies charged towards the cyclops.

The cyclops's enormous body was twice as tall as the demon generals'. Its azure muscles sturdy as granite, the huge shovel it was holding with both hands became its weapon to block the attacks. Every single swing embodied monumental strength and caused gusts of hot air to spin wildly within the valley.

Loud crackling explosions continuously echoed near the cyclops' body as every swing of the shovel deflected a stream of magma, causing a spray of sparks to fly everywhere. Rocks hidden within the magma exploded on contact, shrapnel flying off in all directions.



When some wilted small vegetation off to the side was brushed by the burning rocks, they immediately went up in flames. Instantly, a raging fire started to rapidly spread, enveloping the entire valley in a burning ocean.

A flaming rock the size of a skull was batted to the side with contemptuous ease. Yet the furious force with which it flew towards Han Shuo forced him to flee in a sorry fashion.

With a loud crack, the flaming rock smashed into the hard rock where Han Shuo had previously been standing. A splendid shower of sparks decorated the air as the searing hot flame burned a hole clear through the boulder, causing the people around to gasp at its miraculousness.

Firespark Stone, the ultimate material for refining weapons! Han Shuo gazed intently at that fiery piece of rock, and immediately knew from those flames what this miraculous rock was. This was the material that cultivators required most of all to refine their weapons – the Firespark Stone.

Han Shuo reached out with his left hand, and a wisp of purple spellfire rose up like a sliver of a soul. It carried a sinister aura and slowly enfolded the Firespark Stone.

The moment the scorching heat made contact with the cold aura, dense white smoke immediately billowed out alongside a squeaking sound. When Han Shuo felt the Mystical Glacial Spellfire take effect, he immediately activated his magical yuan. When his magical yuan covered the purple flame of the Firespark Stone, it flickered up even more beautifully.

Wisps of white mist began to rise from the Firespark Stone. Under the impact of the sinister aura, the fire burning on the Firespark Stone was slowly extinguished as it slowly calmed to a normal appearance, finally becoming a normal fire-red colored boulder, red light sparkling from within like a ruby.

Seeing the flames on the Firespark Stone extinguish, Han Shuo immediately revealed a joyous expression and placed this rock, that was the size of a skull, into his space ring. It would be of great use in the future

when he refined weapons.

Whether they were magical cultivators or demonic cultivators, cultivators couldn't avoid needing some special flames for refining weapons. Some particular materials would only be melted with special flames. The Firespark Stone was very special. If it wasn't exposed to flames, it acted the same as any other rock, not even the least bit warm.

But once the Firespark Stone was touched by the tiniest spark, it would immediately start burning intensely. Only once the energy contained within the Firespark Stone was completely consumed would it become the most ordinary of rocks. During this process, the enormous fire energy of the Firespark Stone was able to melt any material, which made it convenient for cultivators to refine their weapons.

Han Shuo felt extremely happy after laying his hands on a piece of Firespark Stone, and started searching around with a bright gaze in order to find more stones from the sparks in the sky.

At that moment, a fiery streak of a dragon tore through the sky and landed close to the beautiful girl riding a pegasus. There was an even larger piece of Firespark Stone burning where the dragon had landed, shrouding the entire area around it in a sea of flame.

The four experts who'd been hiding in the valley had already raised their vigilance to the limit. Due to the chaos in the valley, traces of some of them had been revealed. They'd all discovered each other, but none of them took action.

For someone to appear in this valley and not be afraid in the face of such a terrifying scene, they either had mental issues, or were powerhouses who had no need to be afraid. All of the experts knew that they couldn't make a careless move without fully understanding the situation. That's why, even after knowing that there were others in hiding, they didn't dare easily blow their cover.

As the larger piece of Firespark Stone burned intensely, it heated up the surroundings, causing the pegasus girl to sweat profusely, releasing a sweet fragrance. Due to the sweat, the curves of her tall breasts became

even more alluring.

There was no way to extinguish the Firespark Stone without special means once it started burning. As Han Shuo looked at the Firespark Stone endlessly consume its energy, he hesitated and finally flew out, moving towards that area.

“Who is it?” The pegasus beauty called out softly. She’d clearly noticed Han Shuo’s actions, since her long eyelashes fluttered quickly as she watched the approaching Han Shuo cautiously.

“I bear no ill will, I just want to pick something up!” Han Shuo called out softly and slowly revealed himself. He was afraid that if he acted too quickly, it would cause this girl to suddenly attack.

Han Shuo was also cautiously on guard during this entire process. He had already called out the Demonslayer Edge, and a yin demon watched her every move and expression. If this girl made the slightest expression of hostility, Han Shuo would mercilessly make the first move.

Through the yin demon’s surveillance, Han Shuo noticed that the arched eyebrows of the girl was furrowing slightly. Two rows of sweat rolled down her fair cheeks, along her neck, and made it into her the depths of her clothing. The girl anxiously urged the pegasus to fly into the sky as she carefully looked at Han Shuo, perplexed. He was approaching her via flight, but wasn’t making any unusual moves.

The piece of Firespark Stone was to the left of the beautiful girl. Since Han Shuo was afraid that she would misunderstand, he deliberately avoided her body, and circled around to land at the center of the intense flames—where the Firespark Stone was located.

“I mean no harm!” Han Shuo raised his head and looked deeply into the eyes of this beautiful girl as he slowly descended from midair. He clapped his palms together and activated the magical yuan, causing a sphere of purple flame to explode into being between his palms. A wave of freezing aura instantly radiated from Han Shuo’s palms.

Someone that could fly was certainly a top expert. This was common knowledge in the entire Profound Continent. When Han Shuo flew over

steadily with a relaxed expression, the girl immediately thought that he was an expert on the same level. Since she saw that Han Shuo hadn't made any actions that displayed ill intentions towards her, she didn't dare carelessly offend Han Shuo either. She only examined him with a pair of beautiful and curious eyes.

When Han Shuo deployed the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, giving form to the freezing purple spellfire, the temperature with Han Shuo at the center also decreased. Using the same method as before, Han Shuo brought over the purple magical spellfire with both of his hands and gradually approached the Firespark Stone.

Intense rumbling smoke suddenly rose up. As the scorching heat aura and the freezing cold aura met, the collision caused once again caused a dense white mist to billow. The Firespark Stone that had been burning intensely started to gradually extinguish amidst squeaks.

The majestic pegasus underneath the beautiful girl was very unused to the inhospitably high temperatures currently in the valley, and had been extremely agitated. It was only due to the girl's continuous control that it did not immediately leave the valley.

However, once Han Shuo's purple spellfire appeared, the temperature around Han Shuo rapidly dropped. It was as if he was a piece of land that the blistering summer was evading. For the majestic pegasus underneath the girl, this was an extremely strong temptation.

The pegasus decided to draw near Han Shuo despite not having received any such orders from its rider. It flew around Han Shuo greedily, as if wanting to stay where the temperature was just right.

Han Shuo, who was focusing on obtaining the Firespark Stone, saw the pegasus' approach and the girl's actions clearly through the surveillance of the yin demons. The beautiful girl was attempting to stop the pegasus from approaching, but was clearly failing.

Han Shuo raised his head and looked at the beautiful girl, revealing a smile of good intentions, signaling that he understood she hadn't approached intentionally, and that she bore no ill will either.

“Thank you!” When the girl smiled, it was as if flowers had bloomed. Her voice was soft and sincere.

“You’re welcome!” Han Shuo lowered his head and continued to use his magical yuan to extinguish this piece of Firespark Stone at the quickest pace possible. He didn’t glance at the beautiful girl anymore.

With the three yin demons, Han Shuo could still keep an eye on the situation of the entire valley even though he was working hard. The scorching demon guards that’d blocked off the cyclops’ way was savagely battling, trying to make the cyclops permanently stay in the valley.

However, the cyclops was twice as large as the scorching demon generals, and possessed an extremely hard body. It was furiously flailing about with the giant shovel in its hand. In a shocking turn of events, he had already hacked two blazing demon generals into several large pieces of rocks that ended up fusing together in the river.

At that instant, a bit of scorching magma splashed onto the cyclops’ azure body, causing a large scalded area. The cyclops wailed in pain, its single eye occasionally glancing at the depths of the magma river, as if scared that a certain powerful being would suddenly break out of the ground.

The fire grand magus was covered in a crimson magic shield. The old woman within had a really excited expression on. Her eyes sparkled as she directed all her attention to the depths of the magma, as if she was waiting for something as well.

The buff golden dragon hulk was completely soaked with sweat in the hot valley. He was slowly moving towards the outside of the valley, as if biding his time to make a move on the cyclops.

The silver fur of the giant silver ape was standing up like needles. When some sparks landed on its silver fur, they actually didn’t leave any burn marks. His tough claws continuously clenched and unclenched as its blood red eyes stayed laser focused on the depths of the magma river, not daring to approach.

“ROAR!”

Another ear shattering roar rang out, and the valley truly started to crumble. The land was ripped apart. The being underneath the ground seemed to be truly furious, as if it was blaming the scorching demon generals for their incompetence. More and more fissures tore open as more magma exploded outwards, spurting in all directions like a fountain.

In what seemed to be an instant, the beautiful scenery in the valley no longer existed. A gigantic ten-odd meters tall thing stood up from the largest crack on the ground, rising along with the boiling magma.

The head of this enormous thing was sharp, its lower body rotund, and it was as flaming red as the scorching demon generals. It seemed to be a huge moving volcano as a powerful aura spread out from its body, seemingly burning the very sky. Swathes of clouds, seemingly set ablaze, covered the sky above the valley, causing the valley to utterly transform into a kingdom of pure conflagration.

As the sky crumbled and the ground shattered, the boulders of the valley imploded, careening downwards. When the gigantic being walked out from the depths of the earth, its enormous body swayed backwards and caused more magma to explode. A volcano had truly erupted!

“It’s actually... actually the Lord of the Flames! No wonder scorching demon generals would appear!” The beautiful girl exclaimed, immediately spurred the pegasus underneath it, yelling. “Leave, now!”

The pegasus, though infatuated with the temperature around Han Shuo, was clearly very happy to hear the girl’s orders. It flew up beautifully and planned to leave this place of trouble.

However, the terrifying Lord of the Flames was furiously burning everything. The burning clouds in the sky were not illusions, they had actually enveloped the valley. When the girl and pegasus flew up, the flaming clouds lit up with intense flames, turning the sky into a sea of fire as well. No one could even think about escaping through the air.

Furious killing intent spread out from the body of the Lord of the Flames. All of the experts realized that this fire manipulator was of a mind to savagely slaughter the intruders that had dared to break into its

kingdom!

## Chapter 236: The strong work together

By the time Han Shuo finally secured the Firespark Stone, the entire valley had already been sealed off by fire. Six powerful beings, including Han Shuo, were all trapped within the valley.

Those six powerful beings, who all had different goals, were about to face the wrath of the Lord of the Flames' surrounded by volcanic eruptions. No one had been fortunate enough to escape.

After the Firespark Stone was stored safely into the space ring, Han Shuo extinguished the purple spellfire between his palms. The surrounding temperature began to rise rapidly once again. Sweat gathered on Han Shuo's body and flowed down like small rivers.

As they were facing a sky filled with fiery clouds, the beautiful girl and the pegasus were forced to land on the ground. They looked up at the flaming clouds with resignation. It looked like they didn't dare to directly break through the ocean of flames that occupied the sky above the valley.

The fire grand magus with the crimson shield floated like the wind, occupying the place between Han Shuo and the girl. She smiled and said, "The three of us are human. I think it'll be easier to communicate between us. Taking a united stand against the enemy at this moment might make it easier for us to survive. What do you guys think?"

When faced with horrifying danger, alliances between the powerful wasn't a bad idea. Besides from the Lord of the Flames, there was also the gigantic silver ape, the cyclops, and the golden dragon. Those three beings were also exceptionally powerful, but it was a pity that they weren't human, making them less than ideal targets to partner with.

"Of course, only by cooperating can we live to walk out of this kingdom of flames!" Han Shuo naturally knew that with his ability alone, he didn't have complete confidence in dealing with any of the experts within the valley. This fire grand magus seemed to at least know what was going to happen. Although he didn't know what she was planning, he could at least wait and see.



“This idea isn’t bad, granny!” The beautiful girl revealed a dazzling smile and responded with a sweet and clear voice.

The fire grand magus seemed to know that Han Shuo and the beautiful girl would agree, she slightly shook the magic staff in her left hand and chanted a mystical spell. A boundary the size of a house instantly appeared around the three of them. The boundary was invisible and formless, but it isolated them from the high temperature. The scorching temperatures from the magma outside was completely blocked off.

The magic shield on the old woman disappeared after she’d formed the boundary. She smiled and looked towards Han Shuo and the girl. She introduced herself, “I’m called Marceau, I come from the Brut Merchant Alliance. I major in fire magic.”

“Bryan Han from the Lancelot Empire. I’m a necromancer,” Han Shuo replied.

“Sophie from the Kasi Empire. I’m a knight. Ugh, and an amateur summoner,” The beautiful pegasus girl answered simply. The moment she said this, she softly chanted a spell and made the pegasus she had been riding the entire time miraculously disappear.

The old woman Marceau and the girl called Sophie seemed to have heard of each other’s name. When the two introduced themselves, the other person revealed a shocked expression. Only Han Shuo was an unknown, and the two were unfamiliar with him. They looked at him in confusion. As an expert who focused on necromancy and could fly, they definitely would’ve heard of him if the Lancelot Empire had such a person. Thus, Marceau and Sophie both assumed that Han Shuo had given a fake name after realizing that they’d never heard of Han Shuo’s name.

In response to the two people’s confusion, Han Shuo shook his head and smiled wryly as he explained, “I’m telling the truth, I only made my debut recently, it’s normal for my name not to be known. There’s nothing to feel odd about.”

“ROAR!...”

The Lord of the Flames’ loud roar rang through the valley. Along with

the terrifying sound wave, its massive body began to chase the cyclops with surprising speed.

Rays of scorching flames danced like flailing ribbons, while the insanely high temperature caused the air itself to crackle and pop. Flames mixed with magma surged towards the cyclops under the Lord of the Flames' manipulation, causing the cyclops to scurry around in an unsightly manner, clearly showing that it wasn't able to stand up to its opponent.

The golden dragon seemed to be targeting the cyclops, but after realizing now that it also faced an enormous threat, it seemed to have given up the plan of immediately dealing with the cyclops. Instead, it paced around the exit of the flaming valley, wondering how to leave.

At that moment, the enormous silver ape beat its chest with a roar, and turned into a bolt of silver lightning as it tore through space, shooting directly at the Lord of the Flames, who was still chasing the cyclops. While in the air, its two razor sharp claws danced in front of its chest, sending out several rays of cold light similar to a sword's fighting aura.

When several flaming demonic generals in the vicinity were hit by the rays of cold light, their bodies crumbled with a huge crack, the pieces swiftly fusing into the magma flow.

Watching through the yin demons, Han Shuo couldn't help but be shocked. He didn't know what sort of mutated magical beast this gigantic silver ape was, but it had such terrifying destructive abilities.

Its two claws could shoot out attacks akin to sword flashes, which seemed to hold tremendous power, like it could tear through anything. The flaming demonic generals, who were just as huge as it was, and had bodies like heated metal to boot, were torn into pieces from afar before they'd even neared the gigantic silver ape's body.

"The power of the gigantic silver ape is very terrifying. I have once saw it tear apart three twin head dragons before. It should be a mutated super rank magical beast! Its target is the Lord of the Flames. I have watched for a while, and found that it had come to the valley three times, but it had never dared to provoke the Lord of the Flames. This time, they might

actually fight!” Granny Marceau had also had been paying attention to the distant commotion as well.

Han Shuo momentarily blanked, then understood that Marceau truly hadn’t come here by chance like himself. She must’ve surveyed the area for a long time, and then chosen to come here during the chaos. However, he didn’t know what she planned on doing.

“Aoooo…”

A loud roar exploded from where the golden dragon was. A gigantic golden dragon, fifteen or sixteen meters long, suddenly revealed its form within dazzling golden light.

After the golden dragon had transformed back to its original form, its long and slender body shook, releasing a terrifying surge of dragon breath that exploded outwards, disintegrating the red boulder that sealed the valley. The sudden explosion caused a path five or six meters wide to suddenly appear in the valley that the Lord of the Flames had sealed off.

As the dragon race with the most incredible fighting abilities, the golden dragons boasted the strongest attacks and defense. They’d always been synonyms for strength and power, and taking on its dragon form had made it even more ferocious. Even the valley that has been sealed shut by the Lord of the Flames was blasted clear by the golden dragon’s dragon breath.

“This Lord of the Flames is a super rank magical beast that has evolved four times, but this golden dragon has only evolved three times. Its decision to give up on taking revenge on the cyclops, and choosing to leave the valley instead is the wiser decision!” The fire grand magus, Marceau, gazed at the large commotion in the distance and calmly explained the situation to Han Shuo and Sophie.

“ROAR!”

The Lord of the Flames let out an earth-shattering howl. When faced with the golden dragon’s dragon breath, it naturally considered it provocation, so it howled loudly to vent the rage in its heart.

All of a sudden, the flowing magma on the ground and the flaming clouds covering the sky all rushed towards the opening which the golden dragon had created, following the will of the Lord of the Flames. The path that was created by the dragon's breath attack was once again sealed shut by the searing flames, magma, and the flaming clouds before the golden dragon had time to leave. This time, it was sealed even tighter. At this, the golden dragon was completely enraged!

As the proudest species amongst the super rank magical beasts, the method that the golden dragon had tried to take in leaving the valley had given quite a bit of face to the Lord of the Flames. However, this rank four Lord of the Flames seemed to truly want to burn everything with its flames, causing the golden dragon to completely lose its temper.

A dominating dragon roar came out from the golden dragon's huge mouth. The golden dragon decided to give up on its original plans. Ignoring the cyclops, it charged directly towards the Lord of the Flames. Along the way, the golden dragon swung its tail, making it so that the scorchingly hot flaming rocks were unable to leave even the tiniest of scratches on its shimmering body.

At the same time, Marceau suddenly exclaimed in joy and said excitedly, "Chance, a chance for us has finally arrived!"

Han Shuo turned around to gaze at Marceau, then said calmly. "I think that you should tell us your plan now. Otherwise, it's impossible for the two of us to blindly follow you!"

"There is a very miraculous existence in the underground domain of the Lord of the Flames. It was only due to this miraculous existence that it was able to evolve four times. I have researched fire magic for many years, and have noticed that that place has a strange kind of fire attribute energy. This energy is different from the usual fire element, it is much more mysterious and mystical."

"Not only did this miraculous location shape a rank four Lord of the Flames, it's also nurtured a mysterious Fire Lotus and many strange rocks. I only discovered this by coincidence. Using the opportunity while the

Lord of the Flames battles outside, I can use my fire manipulation magic and take you guys into that underground world together, and bring out some interesting things. What do you think about that?" Fire grand magus Marceau, looked very anxious as she looked at the other two people and explained quickly.

"Sure!" Han Shuo answered decisively without any sort of hesitation.

Fire grand magus Marceau was definitely a powerful figure. From her to be able to discover this place of extreme fire, and even understand that the fire element energy within was completely different from the energy of the fire elements, it seemed as though she had definitely put a lot of work into studying the place of extreme fire underneath.

Although fire element energy and the fire element were both fire attribute existences, they were two completely types of power. In this world, as long as a mage had mental strength, they can use it to communicate with the fire element and cast fire magic anywhere.

The fire element existed everywhere in this world. According to a mage's mental strength, a fire mage could communicate with the fire element and release fire magic that was either powerful or weak.

However, fire element energy did not exist everywhere. It only existed in some mystical places in the world. Only when a place that coincided with heaven and earth and formed a land of natural treasure, would it be possible for fire element energy to form in some blisteringly hot places after hundreds and thousands of years. Out of these places, the place of extreme fire was without a doubt the best spot to nurture fire element energy. Compared to the fire element that was everywhere, fire element energy was far rarer. If it was then refined by some cultivators who knew how to use it, it could display even more mystical and incredible power.

The Lord of the Flames had always been a magical beast that found it extremely difficult to evolve. However, this one had evolved four times and become an extremely savage fire magical beast thanks to this place of absolute fire. If this Ruler of Flame could evolve once again, it would become an Emperor of the Flames that possessed power and divinity

similar to that of a demigod.

If the Emperor of the Flames could break through the fifth evolution, it would surpass the boundaries of magical beasts and become a fire god with a divine fate, possessing true divine powers as well as powerful fire manipulation abilities.

Han Shuo understood that this was a chance. He had to take a look at the place of extreme fire no matter what in order to see if he had a chance to refine a fire elite zombie. The elite zombies of the five elements was Han Shuo's goal. If he counted this place of extreme fire, he only had a place of extreme metal left to locate. Only when the elite zombies of the five elements were gathered could they use the earth-shattering effects of the formation.

Beautiful girl Sophie was likely targeting the cyclops. She was clearly a bit hesitant to accede to Marceau's suggestion. She contemplated for a while, finally nodding her head lightly, agreeing to Marceau's suggestion.

"Alright, then let's take the opportunity when they're fighting to hurry to the underground kingdom of the Lord of the Flames!" Seeing that Sophie agreed, fire grand magus Marceau displayed a joyous expression, and hurriedly activated a spell. Sparks suddenly arose from the invisible magic boundary covering the three of them, seeming to have the ability to absorb the fire element. As the sparks flew, the surrounding fire element was swiftly absorbed into the boundary.

After absorbing the enormous amount of energy, the boundary contracted bit by bit and emitted a dazzling red light as the temperature inside also gradually rose. Only when the temperature inside the boundary was about forty degrees Celsius and it'd become three or four meters in size, did the temperature stop rising and the space stop shrinking.

"Go!" Marceau, called out softly, causing the boundary to carry the three people and circle around the great battle of the enormous beings. It then descended into the flaming fissure on the ground that was shooting out magma.

# Chapter 237: Fire Attribute Treasure

The temperature within the boundary stopped at around forty degrees, while the magma that spewed out of the crack in the ground was halted outside the boundary, not affecting the three people within its confines at all.

Fire grand magus Marceau clearly found the process very difficult. Since there was a large amount of magical element within the boundary, it meant that she had spent a lot of mental strength in order to shift this boundary.

After the boundary had shrunk to a size of three to four meters, it became rather close quarters. Adding onto the fact that it was a hot and muggy temperature of forty degrees within, it caused the people to feel wet and uncomfortable, even though it wasn't as scorching as it was outside.

However, Han Shuo's body was able to easily handle a temperature of this degree. His body wasn't covered in sweat even though he didn't use his demonic arts to defend himself. Instead, he used this rare spare time to sit down cross legged, calmly adjusting his breathing to recover the magical yuan that he'd expended earlier.

Beautiful knight Sophie wore tight clothes that clung to her great figure. Her sweat soaked through her clothes, making it seem like she'd just taken a bath in her clothes, emphasizing the curves on her body. Due to the high temperature, the sweat on her body flowed continuously as she wheezed erratically, continuously fanning herself with her hands to create a little bit of wind to cool herself.

The fire grand magus was just as focused as Han Shuo as she paid careful attention to controlling the boundary. The wrinkles on her face were like gullies that were currently filled with sweat. They were unable to stop the sweat from slowly dripping down her body due to gravity.

The two yin demons, that had been left in the valley, were surveying everything that was going on outside, so that Han Shuo could find out

everything going on above in order to make the most precise decisions.

After descending into the magma crack on the ground, the boundary continued to sink. As the surrounding flames burned fiercely, bits of magma and loud rumbling sounds shot everywhere. When they collided with the boundary, radiant sparks appeared and created a beautiful scene of an ocean of fire.

Unfortunately, for the three people in the boundary, Han Shuo and Marceau had no spare effort to pay attention to the surrounding scene; while female knight Sophie was uncomfortably covered in sweat creating a burning fire of anxiety in her heart. She naturally wasn't of the mind to pay attention to the beautiful scenery around her.

The three of them and the boundary slowly sank downwards amidst the scorching and brilliant sparks. During this process, fire grand magus Marceau manipulated the direction of the boundary, slowly guiding it to fall towards the earth's center. She seemed to be rather familiar with the situation here.

Finally, the moving boundary stopped. Han Shuo opened his eyes instantly and carefully surveyed the scene around him. He wanted to imprint everything into his mind with the shortest amount of time.

What he saw first was a vast lake of fire. It was like the burning sun as it released scorching light and heat. Turbulent magma emerged in the form of pillars of fire dragon. They shot up up pillar by pillar. They were likely so fierce due to the influence from the Lord of the Flames' powers.

Blazing walls of boulders were around the vast lake of fire. These walls of boulders were red like heated metal as they radiated an intense temperature. They filled up the surroundings with piercing red light, causing the entire area to become a huge space of flames.

There was a strange fire lotus at the center of the fire lake that bloomed miraculously in the turbulent lake filled with magma. It simmered with an unusual red light and seemed to have a sort of tempting beauty as it swayed on the fiery waters.

The three of them were still enclosed by the boundary and floated inside



an opening within the wall of boulders. This moved them safely away from the spurting magma.

“Firespark Stone, Firesun Crystal, Red Onyx...”

Han Shuo exclaimed softly with surprise when he noticed that there were several pieces of magical rocks scattered not far from the cave entrance. They were all weapon-refining treasures of the fire attribute. Their quality was top tier and could be used to refine high quality fire flying swords or be directly absorbed by fire cultivators in order to improve their arts.

“This area is very mysterious. It’s filled with strange energy, and the stones that is nurtured around it are very valuable. If they were embedded into a magic staff, it would definitely give a great improvement to fire mages!” Grand magus Marceau said as she wiped away her sweat.

However, Han Shuo, as a demonic cultivator, could recognize many of the strange stones based on Chu Canglan’s memories even without her explanations. He understood that these special stones all had different types of great effects, and each one of them were highly useful.

“Open the boundary, I have to go and collect some!” Han Shuo felt really excited, but he still spoke with a calm expression.

Marceau blinked, then hesitated for a moment before reminding with goodwill, “The temperature outside the boundary is several times higher than within. I think that the moment you leave the boundary, you will be baked by the high temperature. I would advise you not to take the risk!”

“It’s okay, I think I can withstand it!” Han Shuo used his magical yuan to create a jumping sphere of purple flame to appear in his left palm. A wave of cold breeze air instantly blew up in the forty degrees interior of the boundary, causing Sophie and Marceau to shudder with cold, despite perspiring heavily. Their flowing sweat suddenly stopped, bringing to them a cold feeling.

“What kind of magic is this?” Fire grand magus Marceau couldn’t help but exclaim after seeing the high temperature within the boundary instantly drop, nearly turning into an extremely hot spot into an ice cavern

the moment the purple flames appeared in Han Shuo's palm.

"Hehe, it's just a special type of martial arts, so don't worry, I think I can withstand the high temperatures outside!" Han Shuo gave a faint smile as he looked confidently towards Marceau while holding the ball of jumping purple flames.

"I think you're right!" Marceau nodded and then said. "Pay attention, the moment I count to three, I will send you out of the boundary, so prepare yourself."

Han Shuo took in a deep breath and circulated his magical yuan, moving his fingers on his hands agilely as waves of purple flames appeared from his fingertips.

When Marceau counted to three, the section of the boundary in front of Han Shuo was sheared off, as if by a knife. The high temperature attacked his face as scorching waves of fire broke through the boundary, instantly covering Han Shuo's entire body. Without Marceau's control, the boundary cracked like an egg shell. Not only did it lose the ability to block off the heat wave, it also lost the ability to remain in the air.

The boulders were boiling heat where Han Shuo had landed. If he stepped down, his feet would instantly burnt to cinders. When he activated his magical yuan to cast the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, he naturally didn't forget about the Arts of the Demonic Ninth Heaven. In the moment his feet were about to land on the flaming stone, he suddenly stopped moving in midair.

The yin demon that Han Shuo had left behind in the boundary was paying attention to the two women's actions. Han Shuo himself didn't waste a split second as he used the extreme coldness of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, covering his entire body in white smoke as he planned to act covertly.

When Han Shuo started flying, Marceau and Sophie looked at his actions in shock. They were clearly very surprised. At the same time, when the extreme cold on Han Shuo's body was met with the high temperature, his body was instantly covered with white smoke, obscuring his figure

from their eyes.

“The most magical thing in this area should be that fire lotus at the center of the lake. He’s gone to collect stones to forge weapons, then let’s go and pick that fire lotus!” Fire grand magus Marceau did not seem to care about the unknown rocks around her. Perhaps, it was because she didn’t know what kind of miraculous effects those rocks had and had placed all her attention onto that fire lotus.

The fire lotus had roughly ten bright red leaves that were the size of palm leaves. It was as translucent as a crystal. Strange red light flowed in the texture of every leaf, as if they were nurturing life through flames. The fire lotus was extremely eye catching in the flaming fire lake, giving people a feeling of awe-inspiring beauty.

Fire grand magus Marceau and Sophie were completely captivated by this strange lotus. Both of them gazed at the fire lotus like they were mesmerized. Marceau started moving the magical boundary and slowly approached the fire lotus together with Sophie.

Han Shuo did not activate his arts within the dense white smoke to collect fire rocks. Instead, he quickly dug a large hole and dripped his blood essence into it. His sparkling eyes occasionally glanced over to the fire lotus. while the expression on his face was extremely calm, as if he was quickly thinking about setting something up.

After hearing Marceau’s description before they’d come down, Han Shuo understood that the place of extreme fire had nurtured a fire lotus, and thus formed his own plans. No matter what, the fire lotus could not be obtained by Marceau nor Sophie. As a fire attribute treasure and a spiritual treasure that was nurtured by the place of extreme fire, the fire lotus had the miraculous effect of directly enclosing a zombie in order to help a zombie directly become a fire elite zombie.

The places of the five extreme elements had a chance to nurture treasures of the five elements based on time and special circumstances. The place of extreme earth, place of extreme wood, and the Valley of Sunshine’s place of extreme water may have needed too much time, or

perhaps were not suitable locations, and so no treasures had appeared.

However, this place of extreme fire may have existed for over several hundred thousand years, and had been storing energy during this long period of time. Thanks to the Lord of the Flames as well, it had actually successfully nurtured the treasure of the fire lotus. As the spiritual treasure of the place of extreme fire, the fire lotus had absorbed all sorts of fire attribute power during the thousands of years it had to grow.

Thanks to the existence of the fire lotus, Han Shuo did not need to spend a large amount of time to gather all sorts of materials. He could use secret techniques to build a formation at the place of extreme fire, and start the formation with his blood essence. If he then placed the zombie into the fire lotus, it could help evolve the normal zombie into a fire elite zombie through the nutrients the fire lotus had absorbed over the years, and the dense concentration of fire element energy within the place of extreme fire.

This was an extremely rare chance. Han Shuo would definitely not allow Marceau to take the fire lotus. Therefore, he'd started to organize everything after he exited the boundary.

As Marceau manipulated the boundary and slowly approached the fire lotus, Han Shuo's wave of dense white smoke passed through the caves made from the reddened boulder walls. When the two women saw this, they thought that Han Shuo was taking the chance to collect some unique ores in the surroundings. They didn't know that by using the cover of the dense smoke, Han Shuo had already finished digging the eyes of the formation that was needed to refine the fire elite zombie. Although there was the fire lotus, because there weren't any other materials to refine the fire elite zombie, the connection between eyes of the formation was done using Han Shuo's blood essence. It was fortunate that Han Shuo had swallowed a three hundred years old Blood Essence Grass earlier and possessed enough blood essence. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to successfully use the formation at this time.

After Han Shuo walked around the walls, dug all of the eyes of the formation, and dripped his blood essence into them, he immediately

chanted an incantation and summoned the little skeleton from the other dimension.

“Quick, bring a zombie you approve of. He will have the same treatment as the earth elite zombie!” After issuing the order, he sent little skeleton back to the other dimension before the little skeleton could nod in understanding.

Purple flames then leapt up from Han Shuo’s hand as he activated his magical yuan in the direction that the little skeleton had stood at in order to create a temperate location.

The little skeleton’s body was made out of crystal-like white bones. After multiple refining and training, Han Shuo had enough confidence in the strength of the little skeleton’s body that he knew that this sort of temperature wouldn’t affect the little skeleton at all.

However, if a normal zombie suddenly appeared at such a place like this, it would definitely be in terrible pain due to the scorching high temperature. It might even be directly burned to death. Thus, in order to successfully refine the fire elite zombie, Han Shuo had to make some preparations first, so that the zombie wouldn’t die from the heat once it was placed within.

An urgent call passed over from the other dimension from the little skeleton. When Han Shuo received this call, he immediately cast the spell, resulting in the little skeleton appearing in front of Han Shuo within the temperate area he’d created. When the little skeleton appeared, he was holding a zombie warrior that had an extremely large head.

Perhaps the little skeleton had felt Han Shuo’s anxiousness, and so did not take too long in his search before randomly grabbing a zombie warrior with an extremely large head.

“Alright, it’s you!” Time was tight. Han Shuo saw that everything had been prepared. When he saw the two women approaching the fire lotus, he didn’t have the time to dither as he grabbed the huge zombie and dashed towards the center of the fire lake.

# Chapter 238: Disguise

The closer Han Shuo traveled to the fire lake, the hotter the temperature was. But since the big-headed zombie couldn't withstand the heat, Han Shuo had no choice but to use more magical yuan to activate the Mystical Glacial Spellfire in order to lower the temperature around the two of them.

Zombie warriors was used to the dark and instinctively wanted to avoid to the scorching heat and sunlight. This big-headed zombie was no exception as it kept on shaking in Han Shuo's hands, like it was afraid of that searing fire lake.

However, he couldn't move at all within Han Shuo's vice-like grip. Meanwhile, two waves of dense white smoke quickly neared the fire lotus from the boulder walls and arrived beside Marceau in the blink of an eye.

At this moment, the two women were only a bit more than three meters away from the fire lotus below. Since they were afraid of the temperature being higher than what the boundary could entire, the two of them didn't dare to approach the fire lotus that quickly, for fear of the boundary being cracked open by the high temperature.

"Eh, why are you here?" Marceau was surprised to see the two waves of white smoke near. Although she couldn't see Han Shuo's appearance due to the dense mist, she was able to recognize him from his actions.

"I can't stand the baking of the heat anymore, please let me enter the boundary to rest a bit!" Han Shuo's anxious pleading rang out from the thick must. When the sound had reached them, Han Shuo already stopped next to the boundary.

Fire grand magus Marceau was clearly a bit troubled after he said this. It seemed like it was very difficult for her to bring Han Shuo into the boundary, so she hesitated and debated.

Han Shuo suddenly screamed loudly in one of the waves of smoke next to Marceau. The wave of smoke suddenly sank directly towards the beautiful fire lotus.

Screams rang out from continuously the smoke underneath them, shocking them to the core. This caused the two confused women unable to react.

Although Han Shuo was emitting terrible screams whilst covered by the smoke, he had a calm expression on as he grabbed the struggling big-headed zombie warrior and stuffed him into the bud of the flower.

Han Shuo shot out an arrow of blood from his left index finger, causing it to land directly in the big-headed zombie's mouth. At the same time, Han Shuo also imprinted a dark seal into the zombie's body. A jumping purple flame followed Han Shuo's thoughts and covered the zombie, while Han Shuo sent out rays of dark magical light that surrounded the big-headed soldier.

Han Shuo formed his blood essence into a lotus shape and smacked it down onto the big-headed zombie's head. It was as if he'd triggered some sort of prohibition. All of a sudden, twenty-four rays of scorching blood red lights shot out towards the fire lotus from the holes in the boulder walls.

The rays of fire element energy seemed to be couriers for the dense fire element energy, bringing it to the fire lotus in the center. The beautiful fire lotus let out a blinding, splendid red light that leapt around. It slowly began to retract with a miraculous speed and path. During this, the big-headed zombie that Han Shuo had firmly ordered to remain in the bud became wrapped up bit by bit.

"What's going on, what is this!" Marceau, three meters above Han Shuo, couldn't help but exclaim as she observed the mysterious change in the surroundings and felt fire element energy gather furiously.

However, Han Shuo's pitiful wails completely covered Marceau's exclamations. Marceau had no idea what was going on and had no idea just what what Han Shuo had met with below. She didn't dare descend herself the last three three meters to see what was going on underneath.

Due to the influence of the formation, the thick fire element energy in the surroundings was all sent gathered at the fire lotus at the center to

provide nutrients for the fire elite zombie. When the fire elite zombie formed, the fire lotus that nurtured it may very well become a treasure that the fire elite zombie could employ.

Twenty-four rays of blood red light had gathered at the fire lotus in the center of the cave. The fire element energy that has circled the entire place of extreme fire for ten thousand years was gradually nourishing the big-headed zombie's body through the fire lotus. As long as it continued to absorb the pure energy and trained according to the seal that Han Shuo had left in his mind, the zombie would be able to continuously change itself and become a strong fire elite zombie.

“ROAR...”

A terrifying roar of anger sounded out from above the fire lake. It was as if the Lord of the Flames sensed the change in the kingdom of fire, howled as a result.

Through the yin demon's surveillance, Han Shuo saw that despite holding a slight upper hand even against three enemies, the Lord of the Flames had given up on the fight with the golden dragon, the cyclops, and the gigantic silver ape. Instead, it moved its enormous volcanic body and slowly walked towards the largest crack in the valley.

The fire lotus nurtured by the fire lake was a treasure of the fire attribute. There was special energy inside, and the Lord of the Flames must have some sort of connection with the fire lotus since it was the ruler of this kingdom of flames. Perhaps, the fire lotus had already been branded with its mark, and it treated the lotus as its own forbidden treasure.

Using the formation and touching this forbidden item, even left a living lifeform within that absorbed the fire element energy around it, this must have startled the Lord of the Flames, and it was rushing over to find out what was happening.

At this moment, the petals of the fire lotus have already closed into a flower bud, and started to sink into the fire lake. Han Shuo immediately knew that his job was complete, and continued to scream as he moved



upwards slowly.

Han Shuo's plan has been successful up until now, but he was still unable to know the final results. According to Chu Canglan's memories, Han Shuo knew that after the fire lotus petals had shut tight, it was very hard to open it once again without a special method and particular timing. However, he didn't know whether the Lord of the Flames had a way to open the fire lotus since it was the owner of this fire lake.

Han Shuo knew that there was no guarantee of success, but he had been forced to do this. Otherwise, if he lost this chance, it was unknown when the Lord of the Flames would next leave the place of extreme fire, and there definitely wouldn't be a fire grand magus who would bring him to this strange space.

Therefore, despite not being guaranteed success, Han Shuo needed to make use of this rare opportunity and plant the big-headed zombie into the fire lotus. As for the final result, whether the Lord of the Flames could open the fire lotus or not, would it kill the big-headed zombie or not, none of it was something that Han Shuo could control. It was up to heaven's will!

When Han Shuo's body floated upwards slowly, he intentionally dispelled the purple flames protecting his two legs, and allowed the high temperature of the fire lake to burn his legs. The ends of Han Shuo's trunks were burnt black in an instant, his legs were exposed to the scorching temperature, and they looked like they would be charred to cinders in an instant.

"Save me!" A terrible cry filled with despair rang out from Han Shuo's mouth.

However, Han Shuo's face in the dense smoke had no expression of pain on it. Instead, it was terrifyingly calm. It was like the burning pain on his legs was happening to someone else as he looked at the two people within the boundary with interest.

Fire grand magus Marceau watched the fire lotus slowly sink into the fire lake with a clear expression of regret. She didn't pay attention to Han

Shuo's call underneath, and just kept muttering, "My fire lotus, my fire lotus..." It was female knight Sophie who showed pity for Han Shuo. She wheezed heavily as she pulled on the corner of Marceau's clothes and said anxiously, "Go and save him first!"

Marceau suddenly recovered her senses thanks to Sophie's actions. She looked down in dejection, sighed, then nodded unwillingly and started to chant a spell.

A powerful magic suddenly covered Han Shuo's body. Under the guidance of the fire elemental energy, Han Shuo's body was suddenly pulled into the boundary where Sophie and Marceau was staying through the fire sparks.

When Han Shuo had first left, the three to four meter magic boundary had had a section chopped off. Now that Han Shuo's body squished in once again, the chopped off section did not return, and so the magic boundary that Sophie and Marceau were occupying became very crowded due to Han Shuo's sudden appearance.

Han Shuo had a weak expression on his pale face at the moment. He had been burnt on a large scale from his knees down to his feet. Not only was it terrifying, there was also a terrible smell.

Possibly due to her age, identity, or some other reason, the fire grand magus didn't seem to want to touch Han Shuo within the crowded confines. She squeezed herself into a corner, making the collapsed Han Shuo lean on Sophier.

Han Shuo moved his body difficulty, then called out with fake pain, as if wanting to sit up from the collapsed posture. With his arms pressed against the invisible boundary, he couldn't help but touch Sophie's leg.

After Han Shuo had left, the temperature within the boundary had remained around forty degrees. Sophie was still covered in sweat, causing her entire body to feel uncomfortable from the dampness of the clothes stuck to her body. The plastered clothes fully emphasized her curves and well toned body. Through Han Shuo's unintentional touch, he could feel the firmness of Sophie's thigh, as well as the tremendous power within the

flexible thighs.

The burning of his two legs had been intentional. This level of injury wouldn't affect the function of his legs. Although it looked terrifying and caused some pain to Han Shuo, there was no other impact to him.

Therefore, although Han Shuo cried out softly as he tried to sit up whilst pretending to be in pain, he wasn't in as bad of a state as he appeared. Thus, when his arm unavoidably touched Sophie's straight, slender thighs, he actually had the effort to spare to rate the flexibility and suppleness of her thigh.

Perhaps due to the boundary being very crowded, Sophie treated this sort of frivolous touching as accidental, and wasn't annoyed. Her arched eyebrows furrowed slightly and instead looked at Han Shuo with a bit of pity. She said kindly, "Let me help you!"

Sophie's soft voice rang out beside Han Shuo's ear. As Han Shuo clenched his teeth in pain, she squatted down slightly and use her jade hands to support Han Shuo's shoulders in order to help him up. She then aided him in sitting down cross legged in the boundary.

Due to how crowded the boundary was, it was unavoidable that the two would have body contact. When she hauled upwards on Han Shuo's arms, their arms pressed tightly , and Han Shuo even "accidentally" touched Sophie's full and well curved breasts with his shoulder.

"Thank you so much!" When Sophie helped Han Shuo sit up from his collapsed position, Han Shuo looked at Sophie sincerely and thanked her wholeheartedly.

"You're welcome, it's what I should do!" Sophie's delicate cheeks were bright red due to the high temperature, but the keen eyed Han Shuo noticed that Sophie's cheeks were even redder than before. She even seemed slightly embarrassed. It seemed that the close contact between the two had caused this kind girl to feel a bit awkward.

Han Shuo and Sophie still remained very close together up until now. Although Sophie had intentionally tried to distance herself, due to the crowded quarters of the boundary, the maximum distance of the two's

limbs was not more than twenty centimeters, causing them to smell the scent on each other clearly.

Han Shuo's intense male body odor mixed together with the sweet smell of sweat on Sophie's body. Both of them breathed it in. This special scent was like a miraculous medicine that nourished Han Shuo's eager heart, causing it to palpitate for some reason.

Han Shuo looked deeply at Sophie. His gaze was extremely intense, possibly due to the high temperatures. When Sophie turned her head uncomfortably, Han Shuo greedily took a deep breath, then resumed his normal expression as he flashed a bright smile towards Sophie. He then slowly closed his eyes and started to rest, not wasting any time to restore his magical yuan.

Through the surveillance of the yin demon, Han Shuo saw that Sophie's cheeks had reddened, and her expression seemed rather unnatural. Her long eyelashes fluttered, and she looked oddly at Han Shuo when he started to rest. He was unable to know what she was thinking.

On the other side, Marceau hadn't noticed Han Shuo and Sophie's actions. Since the Lord of the Flames' roar was getting closer, Marceau didn't have any effort to spare to observe what was going on around her. She was completely focused on controlling the boundary and making it gradually rise towards the top where the magma was shooting out.

## Chapter 239: Couldn't help it

The Lord of the Flames' terrifying wave of sound carried within it savage and earth-shattering power. It caused all of the spurting magma to stop, and then fall downwards to the fire lake with an even more ferocious speed.

At that moment, not only was the magic boundary unable to rise anymore, but it fell speedily towards the fire lake below due to the reversed flow of the magma.

"This is bad!" Marceau exclaimed anxiously with a face full of shock. "The Lord of the Flames is controlling the magma and making it fall. I used too much mental strength just now and have no way to control the boundary and fly out."

Han Shuo had been resting with his eyes closed and suddenly opened his eyes. He looked at Marceau, "So we're stuck in the fire lake?"

Kind hearted female knight Sophie was equally helpless in this situation and looked anxiously at the scorching magma roiling towards them, completely unsure of what to do.

Suddenly, Marceau revealed a resigned expression and said to Han Shuo and Sophie, "I'm very sorry, I don't think I can leave the fire lake if I bring you two. I'm sorry!"

An strong pulse of magic suddenly traveled out from the position where Han Shuo and Sophie was at. It felt the same as last time when Han Shuo had left the boundary. As fiery sparks flew, the section of the boundary where Han Shuo and Sophie was located was directly cut off from Marceau's boundary as if it had been chopped off by a sharp weapon.

Without the support of Marceau's magic, Han Shuo and Sophie were immediately drowned by the flowing magma as they fell into the fire lake.

"Instead of the three of us dying together, I might as well escape by myself. This couldn't be helped. Please don't blame me!" Marceau murmured to herself remotely as she watched the two people fall and be

quickly covered by the magma.

“ROAR...”

The earth-shattering roar was growing closer and closer. Marceau's expression turned to shock when she heard that and she no longer dared remain. She controlled the boundary that was clinging rightly to her and inched upwards against the magma that was falling like a waterfall.

“Ahhh...”

Sophie's yell as she fell towards the fire lake was completely covered by the roar from the Lord of the Flames. Aside from Han Shuo, who happened to be right next to her, no one else heard her scream of despair.

Even a female knight with extraordinary abilities, would instinctively reveal her weak side when facing a life or death situation, so this yell of despair was not a shameful act.

However, no one was able to withstand it when this sort of sharp scream was continuously ringing out right next to your ear. Han Shuo was naturally no exception.

“Miss Sophie, can you stop yelling!” Han Shuo couldn't help but say to Sophie with a look of annoyance as he held Sophie's slender waist with one arm.

To his surprise, the remaining magic boundary that was left on the two of them did not suddenly burst due to Marceau's departure. It was instead covered with a dark light. The dense magma in the surroundings continuously crashed against this dark boundary, but the latter didn't move or crack. Only rays of ghostly light slowly seeped out from Han Shuo's body to stick to the dark boundary.

Sophie very quickly realized the situation they were in after Han Shuo's scolding. Her clear eyes swiftly surveyed her surroundings and she exclaimed in joy, “We're actually not dead!”

“Of course, I just recovered some strength. I think we can hold on for a bit more until we leave this mysterious place!” Han Shuo smiled faintly and comforted Sophie.

Sophie suddenly realized that Han Shuo still had an arm wrapped around her waist. She immediately straightened herself uncomfortably, and struggled out of Han Shuo's arm to maintain a safe distance from him.

Seeing that Sophie had recovered from the shock, Han Shuo no longer intentionally took advantage of her. He smiled apologetically and said, "It couldn't be helped just now, I hope you don't mind. The Lord of the Flames will come back very quickly, we have to leave immediately!"

"That Marceau is actually a famous person from the Brut Merchant Alliance, I didn't think that she could actually do something like this. What a petty character!" The kind Sophie swore furiously as she was still very hung up over Marceau's actions.

Han Shuo however, felt that it was natural. He didn't think that there was anything wrong with Marceau's. After all, the three of them had just met and there was no true friendship between them. When danger befell them, everyone naturally had to think for themselves. Marceau had been forced to do what she'd done, so Han Shuo didn't fear any grudge towards her.

That was because he would've done the same if he were in her position!

However, Han Shuo didn't say much, he merely shrugged and smiled, concentrating on circulating his magical yuan as they slowly flew up through the falling magma.

At Han Shuo's level of magical cultivation, he could naturally form a protective barrier around him via manipulating the magical yuan. As long as his magical yuan didn't run out, he could continue to maintain the barrier so that it didn't break, and use it to stop the invasion of the magma and flames.

Compared to Marceau's barrier from earlier, the insides of Han Shuo's shield had a more moderate temperature. None of the various threats in the surroundings could penetrate the barrier. After the barrier enclosed Han Shuo and Sophie's body, their flight speed actually increased greatly as they broke through the obstacles of layers of magma. They swiftly

identified a narrow crack and rushed upwards against the scorching sparks.

Sophie focused on observing Han Shuo's protective barrier during this process and displayed a confused expression. She even reached out carefully her hands and touched the protective shield with black light flowing through it, then mused blankly as she felt the weird texture.

Han Shuo's expression was carefree and confident without pain and suffering he'd shown before as they rushed upwards. This caused the observing Sophie to be very confused. In the end, she couldn't resist as she asked with suspicion, "Are you actually hurt or not?"

Han Shuo understood her meaning the moment she said this and turned to look at Sophie. He smiled wryly and said, "Don't think that I'm fine just because my expression is carefree. I've actually been enduring agonizing pain. It's just that I have to show my strong side in front of a beauty, only then will I leave the image of a powerful man in your mind!"

Sophie obviously hadn't expected Han Shuo to say that. These words were full of ambiguities which Sophie naturally heard as well. She first blanked, then rolled her eyes at Han Shuo with annoyance and laughed, "You're so interesting, who says things like that!"

Han Shuo shrugged and pretended to in pain. He even used his magical cultivation to force himself to break out into a sweat and turned his face ghastly pale. He said with difficulty while panting, "Look, this is my real situation. I might fail at any moment, then we'll both fall into the fire lake together to see that beautiful lotus!"

Sophie was extremely unused to Han Shuo's sudden change in appearance. She said anxiously with great shock, "Don't scare me, I don't care if it's real or not, but I want to see your carefree look of just now!"

"No problem!" Han Shuo laughed heartily as the painful expression disappeared from his face in the blink of an eye. The sweat on his forehead also miraculously disappeared, and he winked at Sophie with an evil smile. He teased casually, "Is this better?"

"Pfft!"



Sophie was unable to hold in her laughter, and she waved her fists to punch towards Han Shuo's chest. She huffed as she waved her fist angrily in front of Han Shuo, "You evil person, you were tricking me the entire time!"

"Haha!" Han Shuo laughed proudly. He then broke through the layers of magma with Sophie in tow and rushed directly towards the crack above.

"You guys are actually fine?!" Marceau, from the Brut Merchant alliance, suddenly exclaimed from a boundary wrapped in magma located beneath Han Shuo and Sophie's body.

Right now, Marceau looked like she was drenched by rain. Her body was soaked in sweat and her face was pale as she huffed and puffed weakly. She moved the magical boundary with difficulty and slowly inched upwards.

Her current appearance was similar to the appearance that Han Shuo had faked. It was obvious that she'd used up a lot of mental strength, and was finding it harder and harder to hold on. When she noticed Han Shuo and Sophie had passed her by like an arrow as they flew straight towards the surface, she was even more shocked.

"Hi, let's meet up there!" Han Shuo casually looked down at Marceau beneath his feet as he responded with a smile. He then activated his magical yuan and ignored Marceau's concentrated gaze as he rushed towards the crack in the ground that was revealing the sky.

One of his yin demons had been left near the underground fire lake, while the other two had remained in the valley all this time. This had enabled Han Shuo to see everything clearly through the three yin demons' surveillance.

When the Lord of the Flames left behind its three enemies without hesitation and wanted to return to the Kingdom of Flames, the enormous silver ape was the only one that went to stop it, but was easily beaten back by the fury of the Lord of the Flames.

Without the cooperation of the golden dragon and the cyclops, the enormous silver ape was unable to defeat Lord of the Flames, it could only

watch as the Lord of the Flames entered the largest crack on the ground and hitched a ride underground with the flowing magma.

As the traces of the Lord of the Flames disappeared, the proud golden dragon seemed to remember the purpose for coming to the valley, and immediately started to attack its previous ally – the cyclops. The cyclops seemed to know well beforehand that this would happen as well as it started fighting with the golden dragon. It carved a passage through the valley, as it fought with the golden dragon, making for the exit.

When the Lord of the Flames landed in his kingdom of flames, the enormous silver ape knew that it didn't have any more chances and left from the path that the golden dragon had torn open after beating on its chest. It disappeared with a few hops.

Han Shuo saw all of this through the two yin demons he'd left in the valley. The yin demon left around the fire lake also noticed the enormous body of the Lord of the Flames at this moment. It was mixed with the flames and magma, and was slowly sinking towards the bottom of the lake.

“Phwee...”

A long whistle rang out from a crack in the ground as a black arrow shot out from within, hovering in the sky above the valley.

Having managed to escape from danger, Han Shuo let out a long whistle as the barrier of black light flowing around him cracked like an egg shell. Rays of black light seemed to wrap around Han Shuo like lightning before it slowly sinking into his skin.

These black lightning wiggled beneath his exposed skin. They seemed to be like moving tattoos and displayed a shocking beauty. With Han Shuo's long whistle, the black light slowly faded away as his skin color returned to normal.

“How long are you going to hold onto me for?” Sophie gazed at the series of changes to Han Shuo's body and couldn't help but glare when she saw that he refused to let go of her slender waist.

Due to the crack in the protective barrier, Han Shuo had been afraid of Sophie falling down from the sky and had held onto her slender waist in hurry just now. When he felt the soft elasticity of Sophie's slender waist, the long whistle earlier had also been indescribably comfortable.

"Eh... I couldn't help it, hehe, couldn't help it!" Han Shuo didn't feel awkward at all as he chuckled. "I don't know that if I let go, would you directly crash to your death?"

Sophie looked at Han Shuo in an unfriendly manner and then pointed below. "I'm only a few meters up from the ground. The surrounding area has not been covered by lava yet. Do you think a knight who has dared come to the Dark Forest by herself would fall to her death from a few meters in the sky?"

“呃.....我想不会，你该趁早提醒我的！”韩硕摸了摸头，嬉皮笑脸的说了一句，挽着苏菲细腰的右手紧了紧，留念的感受了一下她细腰的柔软美妙，这才放手任由她往地面落去。

"Ugh... I think not, you should have reminded me earlier!" Han Shuo touched his head and said with a laughing expression. He tightened his right hand on Sophie's thin waist, then gave a last feel for the miraculous softness of her waist, before letting her go and fall towards the ground.

"Awroo..." The Lord of the Flames' strange roar suddenly rang out from deep within the ground.

By using the yin demon underneath to investigate, Han Shuo noticed that the Lord of the Flames' enormous body had been completely fused into the fire lake. The fire lotus that had sunk into the fire lake was raised in its giant palm. A powerful feeling emanated from the Lord of the Flames towards the fire lotus through some sort of mystical power.

Just as Han Shuo was growing worried, the Lord of the Flames suddenly looked up and called out continuously, then carefully caressed the shut fire lotus as if it was a treasure. The murderous air around it was nowhere to be felt. Instead, it was more like a mother as it brought the fire lotus to its chest as a strange motherly love filled the entire fire lake.

"No way, it's not treating the fire elite zombie as its child, right?" Han

Shuo guessed in confusion as he was completely dumbfounded.

# Chapter 240: A strange place

A ray of red light flew out, showing that Marceau had finally escaped with incredible difficulty. Her wrinkled face was full of dejection as her shining eyes looked around, wanting to understand to fully grasp the current situation within the valley.

The beautiful scenery and the valley full of flowers had been completely destroyed after the four enormous beings' battle. The ravines in the ground were flowing with lava, while raging flames burned in huge holes, filling the air with a burnt smell.

Marceau looked around for a bit and clearly let out a sigh of relief after noting the absence of the golden dragon, cyclops and gigantic silver ape. When she noticed Han Shuo and Sophie staring coldly at her at a distance, she forced an ugly smile on her face. She explained apologetically, "Congratulations to the two of you for gaining a new life. I hope you can understand the special circumstances just now, I had no other choice!"

Sophie's face was full of despise and contempt. She raised her head and snorted. Without looking at Marceau for even a moment longer, she said to Han Shuo still up in the air, "Let's go. There's nothing to be said to this kind of person!"

"Yeah, I think so too!" Han Shuo supported Sophie's suggestion, then looked at Marceau coldly from afar. When he did that, he naturally emitted a wave of savage aura, but he didn't make a move, and instead flew towards the exit of the valley.

Sophie chanted out a mysterious summoning spell from her cherry lips. The pure, white, and beautiful pegasus appeared in the burning valley once again, helping Sophie mount.

The enormous burning clouds slowly dispersed from the skies above the valley after the Lord of the Flames ceased to control them. The wind in the sky blew lightly downwards and slowly extinguished the surging flames.

It would definitely take more than a single day for the fire elite zombie to form. It would be a slow and gradual process. From the yin demon's

surveillance, not only did the Lord of the Flames bear no ill will towards the life within the fire lotus, it even treated and protected him as its child. There definitely wouldn't be an issue with the fire elite zombie's safety.

When the fire elite zombie had absorbed enough power, it would emerge from the fire lotus. When that happened, this place of extreme fire will also become the fire zombie's kingdom of fire. Han Shuo would be able to use its connection with the fire elite zombie to sweep away all of the various fire spiritual stones, so he wasn't in a hurry to collect them.

As Han Shuo exited the valley, Sophie rode the beautiful pegasus and followed behind him at a moderate space, eventually disappearing from the valley as well.

Marceau watched both Han Shuo and Sophie leave with a sullen expression, but didn't take any action. Only a while after the two had disappeared did she gaze at the now clear sky and used a levitation skill to quietly rise into the sky.

Han Shuo mentally contacted dark dragon Gilbert when they'd left the valley. The little skeleton has already been sent back to the other dimension, and the yin demon left in the fire lake also flew out of the ground's crack and met up with Han Shuo.

When the yin demon returned to Han Shuo's side, he also sensed Gilbert's location. Sophie was following Han Shuo at a moderate pace on the pegasus. She gazed at Han Shuo with her beautiful and sparkling eyes, thinking some unknown thoughts.

Han Shuo had a good impression of Sophie. When Han Shuo had pretended to be injured as he flew up from the fire lotus, it had been Sophie who had convinced the indecisive Marceau to let him into the boundary. After Han Shuo had entered the boundary, Sophie hadn't minded the terrible smell and the terrifying appearance of his legs to help Han Shuo sit up.

Sophie's kindness had won Han Shuo's kindly disposition, causing Han Shuo to immediately enclose Sophie in his protective barrier after Marceau had cut them out, and use more magical yuan to protect Sophie.

“I think it’s time for us to go separate ways!” Sophie had been silently following Han Shuo for a while when she finally spoke.

Han Shuo turned around and looked at her deeply. He flashed a dazzling smile and said, “You are a kind and just knight. It was a pleasure to meet you!”

They were about to go on their ways when Sophie also looked at Han Shuo with deep interest, as if she wanted to commit him to memory. After a while, she smiled and said, “Bryan, if you have the time to come and tour the Kasi Empire, I can be your guide!”

“Oh!” Han Shuo was happy to hear that. He then asked curiously. “How should I find you?”

Sophie pouted and glared at Han Shuo. She said strangely, “Did you really just make your debut that you actually don’t know me?”

Han Shuo shook his head and spoke with a laugh, “Are you very famous?”

“The Kasi Empire’s sacred knight, Zoro, is my father. I am the only earth rider who rides a pegasus. If you want to find me when you come to the Kasi Empire, you’ll definitely be able to find me. Goodbye, interesting scoundrel!” Sophie left behind a round of bell-like giggles as she flew in another direction on the pegasus, entering the skies like a little fairy. She completely disappeared in the blink of an eye.

She was the daughter of a sacred knight! Han Shuo was shocked. Only then did he truly pay attention to Sophie’s identity. He never would’ve thought that she was from such a famous family and have such a terrifyingly powerful father.

Currently on the Profound Continent, only the strongest of the strong would have the word “sacred” added on their class. Whether they were a sacred magus, a sacred swordmaster or sacred knight, they were the people that were publicly recognized to be the strongest. Regardless of what country they were in, they would hold an extraordinary position and gain the adoration of all of the people.

People like them held terrifying strength. They could even instantly change the outcome of a battle. They were existences that served as a nation's patron god, and had the strength that caused even kings to treat them carefully. Sophie's father was a sacred knight! No wonder she had such confidence, and rolled her eyes at Han Shuo furiously when he told her that he had never heard of her.

However, there was another type of existence that exceeded the boundaries of "sacred" and gained the title of "divine". They were the closest existence to the gods, and were commonly called demigods!

They were the extreme of every class. They were as rare of the scales of dragons and feathers of phoenixes, and only a few appeared during hundreds and thousands of years. They were called the divine magus, divine swordmaster, and the divine knights. These demigods had the destructive abilities to destroy the earth. Their power were on par with deities. If they could breakthrough even more, they would break through the barriers and become true gods.

It was a pity that no such people had appeared on the Profound Continent yet. Those who held the title of "sacred" were already the peak level of existence.

As Sophie rode away on her pegasus, Han Shuo merely gawked at Sophie's identity for a bit and then flew towards where Gilbert was.

He saw the huge footprints of the cyclops and signs of an intense battle along the way. The two meter long footprints were clearly from the cyclops. All of the towering ancient trees had been knocked down in rows, whereas some smaller hills also had been impacted.

With just a few glances, Han Shuo was sure that it the cyclops and golden dragon had been fighting as they left the valley. Gilbert must've followed the two enormous beings here stealthily.

Gilbert was still following the two powerful creatures. Han Shuo could feel that he was constantly on the move without paying attention to his surroundings. As he followed his contact with Gilbert, Han Shuo fully activated the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven and rushed towards



Gilbert like a ray of light.

The valley had been in an ocean of flames before. Han Shuo only noticed that it was already night after he'd left. The stars shimmered in the sky while moonlight flowed down like water, it was a pity that the passing scenery was no longer beautiful due to the fighting of the two powerful beings.

After Han Shuo flew with all his might for a long distance, he heard a loud sound from afar. It was as shocking as the ground breaking apart. The ground seemed to be trembling due to this voice. In this moment, Han Shuo's distance with Gilbert also seemed to be gradually decreasing.

Just as Han Shuo flew quickly and thought that he would be able to see Gilbert soon, the loud sound disappeared, and Han Shuo's contact with Gilbert was also cut off at the same time. No matter how hard Han Shuo tried, he couldn't sense Gilbert's existence.

Han Shuo was shocked. He had no idea what had suddenly happened. He was completely confused by this sudden change, so once again raised his speed and flew towards the location where he had sensed the dark dragon just now.

Han Shuo was able to reach the scene with a speed of a falling star a few minutes later. Traces of the two enormous beings' fight were still in front of him, but there was a vast area covered in black mist as well.

The area was extremely large. As Han Shuo gazed down from above, he noticed that the black mist covered a 2.5 kilometer radius. The moonlight was completely blocked off by the black mist, preventing it from entering. Han Shuo wasn't able to see anything with his naked eyes either.

Waves of intense evil filled the entire area. There seemed to be some sort of terrifying danger within the black mist. Han Shuo was unable to feel the existence of any living things. It was as if the black mist had completely blocked everything off.

He hovered in the sky for a moment, then released a yin demon towards the area underneath. The formless yin demon descended slowly, then shot into the area of black mist.

Han Shuo's connection with the yin demon was instantly cut off. The yin demon that had slipped into the black mist had instantly vanished in the blink of an eye. Han Shuo was unable to sense its position at all.

Han Shuo was truly shocked now. His connection with Gilbert was due to the power of the contract, so it was possible for the area to block it off. However, the three yin demons were refined by feeding them his own blood essence. Having it disappear after entering that area was truly a bit frightening.

The five kilometer radius below him was completely blocked off by the black smoke, he was unable to see what was going on inside at all. Han Shuo could only feel that it was full of an evil aura, meaning that the existence inside was definitely not a simple one.

"The Dark Forest is truly filled with mystery. This is such a bizarre place! It seems that if I want to understand the situation, I have to go in and figure it out!" Han Shuo muttered to himself as he gazed at the area below. He activated the magical yun in his body to form a barrier that would protect his body and slowly descended into the area below. As Han Shuo slowly approached the black mist, fear, depression, rage, insanity, and all sorts of negative emotions suddenly surged into Han Shuo's mind. It was like a power had tried to invade Han Shuo, trying to cause him to lose his sense of self.

However, the murderous aura that'd formed Han Shuo's body had absorbed various negative emotions in the last two slaughters he'd committed. Being in the bloodlust realm, Han Shuo was also used to the invasion of negative emotions. He was completely unaffected as his expression remained calm and controlled.

"This is rather interesting!" Han Shuo couldn't help but mutter with surprise after feeling that sort of negative emotion rush into his mind. His body suddenly sank and fell directly into the area.

His lost connections with Gilbert and the yin demon was instantly reconstructed. It seemed like the black mist only prevented contact with the outside, but couldn't stop the beings inside from connecting with each

other.

He didn't hurry to find Gilbert. Instead, Han Shuo looked around with fascinated eyes. He planned to fully memorize his bearings first so that he could make the correct decision when facing something dangerous.

Han Shuo's vision was affected by the dense black mist. He was only able to see ten meters around him. This part of the Dark Forest seemed entirely different as it was covered with black mist. He looked around, but didn't find any vegetation within ten meters of him. There were only weird and dark-colored rocks around him.

There was a small green stream beneath Han Shuo's feet. It flowed quietly without any fish in it. When Han Shuo looked up to the sky, the black mist blocked off even the tiniest bit of light. The entire space was dim and filled with the smell of the desolation.

"Mhmm!" Han Shuo exclaimed when he saw a strange stone monument through the yin demon's vision. It was the fact that there were some writing on the stone monument that caused Han Shuo to decide to go and see it for himself.

# Chapter 241: Demigod existence?

AS Han Shuo approached the monument, he saw a row of words engraved in it from far away – Ayermika Cotton!

It was actually Ayermike Cotton's name! This simple row of text shocked Han Shuo greatly. As a citizen of the Lancelot Empire, he had heard a great deal about this person. Every citizen would speak of his deeds in great detail. As the peak existence of dark magic in the Lancelot Empire's history, Ayermika was a divine dark magus that was said to have a demigod's strength in the legends!

Five hundred years ago, Ayermika Cotton had helped the first king of the Lancelot Empire to establish the Empire. It was only with this person's help that the founding emperor of the Lancelot Empire was able to conquer all of the foreign tribes, exile the barbaric beastmen, drive off the greedy and despicable goblins, and stand above the various factions to establish control of the land. Even now, the Lancelot Empire stood firmly upon this land.

In the legends, Ayermika Cotton was a divine dark magus with the abilities to destroy the world. In that era, not only did such a powerful being bring about the existence of the Lancelot Empire, it had also deified his being, resulting in adoration from all citizens of the Lancelot Empire for five hundred years!

Even now, there hadn't been any descendants who could surpass his glory and game!

Ayermika's entire life had been glorified with the legends of greatness. He'd defeated countless powerful people, expanded the borders of the Lancelot Empire, and shattered the fighting spirit and confidence of the foreign tribes. His power had caused all the tribes to submit to the Empire's reign as soon as the Empire's iron hooves landed on it.

However, such a terrifying demigod existence had suddenly disappeared at the peak of his life. The Lancelot Empire had been in its grandest era, having already conquered several countries around it. It was at that time

that Ayermika should've been enjoying glories and honor.

However, he'd disappeared mysteriously, just like that. The first king of the Lancelot Empire had been unable to accept the departure of his true friend, and used all sorts of ways to search for him. They were still unable to discover anything in the end.

There were quite a few versions of the rumors surrounding his mysterious disappearance. Some said that he grew sick of conquest and went into hiding by himself. Others said that he surpassed everything and ascended to become a true god. There were those that said although he'd defeated countless powerful foes in his life of conquest, he had been injured several hundred times. The frail body of a mage was unable to withstand the wounds in his old age, so he'd died in a depressing way.

However, the legends were still just legends in the end! All words were mere illusions before any tangible evidence was produced. Ayermika Cotton's mysterious departure five hundred years ago remained an unresolved mystery!

However, there was a monument with Ayermika Cotton's name engraved on it in such a strange place enclosed by black mist. From the shape and engraving of the monument, Han Shuo was certain that it was a tombstone to memorialize the deceased buried here. Seeing this filled Han Shuo's heart with shock. He wanted to draw close to the tombstone and carefully inspect it.

Just at this moment, Gilbert started moving towards Han Shuo, using their mutual connection. Han Shuo could even feel Gilbert's anxiety.

Han Shuo had already planned to examine the tombstone closely, but due to Gilbert's anxious and swift approach, he set the idea aside. He then increased his awareness so that he was ready before leaping up and landing behind a huge boulder. At the same time, he also sent out a yin demon to fly in Gilbert's direction.

Gilbert, who'd changed into his dragon form, approached swiftly with an enormous roar. He actually wasn't flying, but was using his body to slither forward like a huge python. The gigantic cyclops was chasing him

relentlessly, while the golden dragon that had originally been fighting with the cyclops was slithering on the ground like Gilbert, forgoing a dragon's natural talent to fly.

“Great master, come quickly and save your pitiful servant!” As Gilbert approached swiftly, his eyes shone with frantic light as he continuously bawled out in his deep voice.

Hearing that Gilbert was shouting for Han Shuo to save him, Han Shuo couldn't help but curse quietly behind the boulder, “Dumb dragon, with you shouting like this, anyone would know that there's someone waiting ahead. How can I ambush them then!”

Seeing that he couldn't set up an ambush, Han Shuo cursed lowly as he leapt up into the sky and flew in Gilbert's direction. Then, he let out a dominating whistle in order to notify Gilbert of his presence.

Through the yin demon's surveillance, Han Shuo saw that the cyclops and golden dragon seemed to be chasing Gilbert. Who knew what sort of shitty thing Gilbert had done in order to piss off two enemies enough for them to work together to kill him?

The terrified Gilbert calmed down slightly when he heard the piercing whistle. He then furiously “crawled” over and started complaining before he reached Han Shuo, “Two on one, this is too shameless, too wicked!”

“Damn stinky bug, you nearly ambushed and killed both of us when we were tired from the fight! But whatever, you actually brought us to this forbidden land, making us have no way out. You're the most shameless and wicked!” To Han Shuo's surprise, the cyclops actually let out a thundering curse after a furious roar.

“A shameless person that ran over to someone else's place to steal stuff doesn't have the right to scold others!” Gilbert was clearly more confident with Han Shuo around, so he turned around and mocked the cyclops. He then swiftly moved his huge body and stood in line with Han Shuo.

“You're pissing me off, you damn reptile, I'm going to kill you!” The cyclops was enraged. He roared at the sky and his single eye began to shimmer with a terrifying light as he leaped towards Gilbert.

The majority of the cyclops' body had been scorched by the Lord of the Flames. Its two large azure palms were a mess of blood and muscle. It seemed that the fight with the golden dragon afterwards had caused it quite a lot of harm.

"Shut up! You can beat him and curse him, but you aren't allowed to use the words 'reptile' and 'stinky bug' in front of me! Otherwise, I'll kill you first, you damn one-eyed thief!" The golden dragon roared furiously and howled loudly behind the cyclops.

The golden dragon's body condition was equally as bad. Not only were large patches of its golden scales black, there were also some scales that were splattered with blood. Even its large head had a trail of blood dripping from it. It seemed that the fight earlier had caused it to become severely injured.

"You crazy dragon, do you think I'm afraid of you!" The cyclops and golden dragon had fought their entire way out of the valley, and had become quite angry with each other. Although the cyclops was extremely furious with Gilbert's shameless actions, he had no good feelings towards the golden dragon either. He immediately turned around to argue with the golden dragon, as if they were ready resume their halted fight at any time.

The truth was this as well. The proud golden dragon just couldn't take any provocation. Right after the cyclops' initial thunderous shout, he'd already rushed up with a howl and started fighting with the cyclops. They'd already forgotten about Gilbert and completely disregarded him.

"Eh... What's going on?" Han Shuo was confused by the two enormous beings fighting in front of him. He couldn't help but look at Gilbert, asking him with a wry smile.

"Haha, I saw that they fought along the entire way, so I followed them, and took the chance of moving a large rock that was the size of a small mountain when they were both tired in hopes of smashing them both to death. What I didn't know was that they were rather nimble and managed to dodge it. Afterwards, they chased me all the way here.

I started running frantically without caring where I went, and ended up

rushing into this strange place. The two of them had already lost their sense of reason, and also followed without thinking. Then, I noticed that my power was restrained. Not only did I lose the power of my tribe to spurt poison, I couldn't fly anymore.

“Of course, that dumb golden dragon couldn't fly anymore either. He could only crawl like me. It seemed that like even the cyclops has his power restrained. After a brief moment of shock, they treated me as their main focus of attacks. They started attacking me together with great shouts. I had no other way, so I could only come find you!” Gilbert didn't mind in the slightest, and laughed evilly when he explained his shameless actions to Han Shuo. Looking at his prideful look, he was clearly honored instead of ashamed!

“You truly are despicable!” Han Shuo commented upon hearing Gilbert's description.

“I learned all of this from you!” Gilbert yelled, blaming it all on Han Shuo, as if he'd been that pure when he left the underground world!

Rumble...

Loud collision sounds rang out from where the cyclops and the golden dragon were fighting. Dark colored boulders around them exploded outwards, whilst the cyclops and golden dragon collapsed limply on one side, a large pit between the two of them.

Just as the two enormous beings struggled to stand up and continue their fight, the cyclops shouted in a thunderous voice, “Wait, why isn't the human affected by the environment and is still able to fly in the sky?!”

Upon hearing that, the golden dragon and Gilbert also looked confusedly at Han Shuo, seeming to be filled with surprise and confusion. They suddenly seemed to regard Han Shuo, still able to fly in the sky, as a really special sort of existence.

“Human, there is no magical essence in this forbidden place, so how are you still in the sky?” The golden dragon coiled up from his limp posture with difficulty and raised his head up high. Even now, he still did not forget about the innate pride of his tribe, and seemed to want to suppress



Han Shuo in his atmosphere. He gazed at Han Shuo from above and asked with a tone that was used to interrogate criminals

“None of your damn business!” Han Shuo replied very sharply with a very disparaging tone towards the golden dragon.

Just as the golden dragon was about to roar with anger, the cyclops couldn't help but jeer, “Dumb dragon, do you think someone who can stay in the sky in this forbidden land would be scared of you? Have you not heard about the legend about this forbidden place? Do you really want to die?”

The golden dragon surprisingly shut his mouth the moment the cyclops voiced this thought. His two eyes, that were as large as a human head, quickly shone with a strange brightness. They focused on Han Shuo as he shook his head with disbelief. He rumbled, “Impossible, how is it possible!”

“Great demigod existence, you must have exceeded the barriers of mankind. Please, you must shine your merciful light and take us away from this forbidden place!” Sincere pleading filled the cyclops' eye. Furthermore, his humongous body bent in a weird manner to display respect for Han Shuo.

Even the golden dragon stopped his muttering and gazed at Han Shuo silently. The pride within him made him unable to immediately bow before Han Shuo, but he also conveyed urgent pleading with his eyes.

“What do you mean?” Han Shuo didn't know what to say and looked at the two enormous beings in confusion. He scratched his head in silence for a moment and couldn't resist asking with confusion.

“All the super rank beings in the Dark Forest know of the legend of this forbidden land. There was a shocking battle here five hundred years ago. The legends say that even true gods participated. That battle caused all of the beings in the Dark Forest to tremble. The enormous commotion lasted for three days and two nights. Nobody knows what happened.”

The cyclops showed an expression of lingering fear and continued in his thunderous tones, “None of the powerful beings that tried to come in to

observe the situation were able to walk out of the forbidden zone. Furthermore, none of the beings that accidentally entered the forbidden zone made it out alive either.

Legends says that all magic and fighting aura is restrained in the forbidden area. All beings can only use pure physical abilities, and they cannot leave the forbidden place. Only demigods that have surpassed the divine stage will be unaffected by the limitations of the forbidden place. Great human demigod, please take us away from here!"

Although the golden dragon hadn't said anything, his gaze towards Han Shuo was completely different from before. His gaze clearly contained a bit of pleading, and he couldn't help but dip his proud head.

"I think that you're mistaken!" Han Shuo looked helplessly at the two enormous beings, then explained with a shrug. "I'm very sorry, but I'm not some kind of demigod existence!"

# Chapter 242: Murderous Soul

“How is this possible? If you’re not a demigod existence, how are you not affected by the restraints of the forbidden place and continue to fly?” The cyclops found this hard to believe. He had an incredulous expression on his face, perhaps afraid of the hope that he’d placed on Han Shuo vanishing.

Han Shuo chanted out a most basic necromancy spell, the skeleton summoning spell that he never failed in casting. There was no effect this time. No abnormalities formed out of the dark space – the necromancy spell had failed!

This was indeed the case! Han Shuo was shocked and understood that the cyclops wasn’t lying. It seemed that no magic abilities could be used in this forbidden place.

“Wait a moment!” Han Shuo called softly towards the cyclops and the golden dragon, and flew directly up into the swirling black mist.

However, just as Han Shuo felt that he was about to leave the space of the swirling black mist, a nearly infinite wave of strange energy blocked off the sky like a trillion ton rock. Han Shuo charged furiously into it, causing his entire body to ache with pain, but no matter what he did, he couldn’t break through the cover of the black mist and leave this strange space.

There was no need to try anymore. Han Shuo understood that this area with a 2.5 kilometer radius had been completely restrained by this strange power, just like the cemetery of death. It was impossible to leave without opening the boundary.

Han Shuo landed dejectedly, rubbing his buzzing head. When he looked at the surprised cyclops and golden dragon in front of him, Han Shuo spread out his hands and apologized, “The entire forbidden place is truly enclosed within a boundary, the same going for the sky covered by black mist. I think that if there is no special way, we don’t need to bother thinking about leaving the forbidden place!”

The cyclops and golden dragon were starting to believe that Han Shuo wasn't the demigod existence they'd thought him to be. When facing the threat of death, and their hopes extinguished, the two powerful beings lost interest even in why Han Shuo was able to fly. They started sighing continuously in despair.

Seeing that the two powerful beings had not only lost interest in his ability to fly, but was also the desire to attack Gilbert, Han Shuo was able to understand the depths of their utter despair.

"Great master, what should we do? I don't want to stay in this damned place. Let's go to the colorful outside world to continue my incomplete legend!" Gilbert was very anxious as he started to fretfully wail.

No beings have left the forbidden place in five hundred years, not even super rank magical beasts with extremely long lives. Yet, after Han Shuo had entered this area, he'd only felt the coldness of death without a hint of life. This meant that those super rank magical beasts with extremely long lives must've died there.

As he looked up to the sky, Han Shuo noticed that the black mist swirling around the entire region had gradually become denser, possibly due to his forceful impact. There was an extremely dangerous, murderous aura that floated around in the damp air.

"I don't think we could die of old age here, even if we want to!" Han Shuo muttered as he felt the surroundings change. He then suddenly call out. "Careful, danger!"

Just when he'd been complaining about everything, Gilbert suddenly sensed the terrifying change in their surroundings as well, along with the cyclops and the golden dragon. This caused their survival instincts to kick in immediately as they nervously scanned their surroundings, ready to react at any time.

Swirls of inseparable black mist roiled in the sky, the occasional green flashes of light mixed in with them revealing an evil and terrible power. As it swept over and crashed down on those assembled, they found it difficult to even breathe. The colossal power seemed as weighty as a

billion ton mountain, bearing down on everyone's backs.

Even enormous beings like the cyclops and golden dragon could only scream and howl in the face of such terrifying pressure. Their figures, they had completely lost their minds! Gilbert, at only rank one, had already fallen flat on the ground like a limp snake, unable to even stand up.

The magical yuan within Han Shuo cycled furiously, creating a sparkling black protective shield that completely covered Han Shuo's body. Meanwhile, rays of black lightning swirled around inside the shield as the pure magical yuan refined the shield over and over again, raising the defensive power of the shield even further.

In the end, the protective shield around Han Shuo was as beautiful as a piece of clear ink jade, and Han Shuo seemed like a living fossil entombed within the black jade, full of a demonic charm.

The forbidden place had sealed all of the mystical powers within this world, but the magical yuan from another dimension was not something the forbidden place could simply snuff out!

Thus, as Han Shuo furiously cycled his magical yuan to protect himself, he actually managed to withstand the tremendous pressure and remain standing.

As Han Shuo's profound gaze examined at the change in the entire area, none of the traces of evil aura were able to escape his detection. His originally anxious heart was thumping violently, and his once calm breathing slowly sped up.

Han Shuo actually felt a sliver of familiarity from the strange power enclosing the forbidden place. More, it seemed as though this power was filled with a drug-like allure to him, someone in the bloodlust realm!

A miraculous feeling was suddenly transmitted from the demon infant within his body. The demon infant was like a bloodthirsty little monster that had finally caught the scent of fresh blood. It was no longer able to resist as it rampaged within Han Shuo's body and urged him onwards, as if it was trying to reach something.

Terrible green light flashed within the inky mist that covered the entire area, as swirls of the mist started to converge around Han Shuo and the others. Waves of the terrifying evil aura seeped out from the swirls of smoke. Under the continuous flashes of the green light, the mist gradually changed shape, transforming into a savage and horrifying face that bore downwards.

“No!” The cyclops let out an angry roar and waved his giant shovel towards the terrifying face. The golden dragon also let out a roar and furiously swung his huge tail towards the sky, towards the savage, demonic face.

However, their attacks had not the barest of effects on the savage phantasm. It fearlessly reformed after it was scattered, and lunged down with shocking fierceness.

Still inside his protective barrier, Han Shuo suddenly exclaimed, “Specters, they’re specters!”

Instantly, he dispelled the protective barrier that covered his entire body as rays of bloody light shot out from his body, causing a dense, murderous aura to suddenly surround his body.

At the same time, a flash of indigo light shot out from his body. The Demonslayer Edge was shining with a purplish red light as it danced around endlessly above Han Shuo’s head.

Han Shuo had a calm expression before, but now his face had twisted into a savage and frightening visage. His stark white teeth were bared in a devil’s grin, as his eyes glowed blood red. The murderous aura around his body spread out and entwined with the Demonslayer Edge above his head. A piercing bloody light exploded forth from man and the weapon in that moment.

The terrifying demonic face was screeching without any sound. All of the evil faces that was rushing down towards the cyclops and the golden dragon all panicked, and started to escape without the slightest hesitation.

But it was far too late. With Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge as the center, an enormous whirlpool had unknowingly formed above them. It

was hovering in the air, around ten meters wide, a murderous aura swirling within. Blood red light flashed inside as evil energy swirled within it.

All of the “specters” that had gathered seemed to be caught within a strong suction force generated by the enormous whirlpool. All of them frantically tried to escape, but none were able to. Under the attraction of the enormous whirlpool above Han Shuo’s head, no matter how far away the “specters” escaped, they were slowly reeled back towards the whirlpool.

The intense and overwhelming pressure instantly disappeared. Gilbert straightened his back from his limp snake position as he looked at Han Shuo, watching the huge commotion in the air. He muttered to himself, ‘Great master, what the hell are you doing?’

“Little dark dragon, what exactly is your master? What is he doing? Why is there no trace of a fighting or magical aura that a human should have?” The proud golden dragon couldn’t help but yell after hearing Gilbert’s muttering.

“No matter what, our dangerous situation just now was allayed due to his unusual actions. Otherwise, we would’ve already been killed by those evil ghost faces!” The cyclops looked meaningfully at Han Shuo with his single eye. He still couldn’t find any trace of a fighting or magical aura from the human after a while. According to his understanding of the world, he understood that Han Shuo truly might not be some sort of demigod existence. However, Han Shuo’s current actions had illogically removed the enormous pressure that had covered the entire area, causing the cyclops to not dare underestimate Han Shuo.

Since his master had shown off his might, Gilbert also took the chance to strut around with borrowed influence. He raised his neck high and loudly proclaimed, “Damn, how do I know what’s going on? However, my master is very powerful! Otherwise, as a mighty dark dragon, how could I have submitted at his feet!”

The two powerful beings were convinced of the dark dragon’s words;

Han Shuo's current actions and Gilbert's existence were proof enough of Han Shuo being an extremely powerful existence. Due to this, even though the dark dragon had been talking so disrespectfully, the golden dragon and the cyclops accepted it, as if they had already forgotten about the dark dragon's previous wicked actions, and didn't attack him.

Since Gilbert had such a powerful master who was able to dispel the tremendous pressure that covered the entire area in his own unique way, they weren't willing to attack the dark dragon at this moment and bring about unnecessary trouble for themselves. If the human stopped all his actions and that strong pressure appeared once more, only death awaited the cyclops and golden dragon.

Therefore, the two enormous beings only snorted coldly in response to Gilbert's uncourteous blathering without saying anything else. Since they saw that the dark dragon didn't know anything, the two of them didn't continue questioning him. They merely recovered their stamina on the side as they quietly watched the changes in Han Shuo.

The savage demonic face that floated in the air earlier had already become a pitiful refugee – a pitiful fugitive that could not escape! Ever the “specters” that had left this area at the beginning were pulled in by the whirlpool above Han Shuo's head, no matter how terrified any of them were.

It was as if the murderous aura around Han Shuo and the whirlpool of bloody light created by the Demonslayer Edge had some sort of restraining effect towards the weird strange specters. There was not a single one that could escape in the end. Under the powerful suction of the giant whirlpool, the savage green faces silently roared in terror as they became rays of dark green light and fused into the whirlpool.

The immense whirlpool was like a huge strange tree, the swirls within like flourishing leaves, and a thin path towards the roots. When the specters were sucked in one by one, the huge whirlpool was filled with harrowing, rampaging energy.

Lights of blood red, black, and terrifying green slowly gathered within



the Demonslayer Edge and Han Shuo through the roots, as well as a dense, baleful aura. The whirlpool churned more and more quickly as the Demonslayer Edge absorbed a large amount of specters. It began to shine brightly, slowly displaying the splendor of a peerless weapon. Violent screeches continuously rang out from the Demonslayer Edge, causing the three enormous beings to shake and tremble.

On the other hand, Han Shuo was surrounded in a mist formed from the baleful aura, sitting cross-legged in the sky. Behind him, the dense aura had faintly formed a giant gazing down towards the earth. The giant was ten-odd meters tall in the sky, and had a horrifying deathly flame. It looked exactly the same as the Han Shuo with bloodshot eyes.

This astonishing scene lasted for a day and a night before the giant whirlpool above Han Shuo's head slowly dissipated. All of the specters in the area also disappeared along with it. Even the floating image of the giant behind Han Shuo, slowly flew into his body. Only the Demonslayer Edge was left floating and shining above Han Shuo's head.

“ROAR...”

A terrifying howl suddenly tore out of Han Shuo's mouth. He'd been sitting down cross legged when he suddenly stood up with bloodshot eyes. His figure seemed to embody the soul of a peerless killer that had just awakened from his slumber underground. He stared savagely at the cyclops, the golden dragon, and even Gilbert, making them tremble from within the depths of their hearts!

# Chapter 243: Destruction

“What, what does he want to do?” The proud golden dragon couldn’t help but exclaim with a shudder of his heart when he saw Han Shuo, evil incarnate, glare sternly at him with blood red eyes.

“How do I know?! Oh my gawd, honored master, just what do you want to do? I’m your most humble servant Gilbert!” Gilbert had just drawn himself upright when he saw the violent looking Han Shuo stride over, a wave of murderous intent churning towards him like a wave of blood. Gilbert immediately started screaming in a panic.

It was a pity that Han Shuo’s expression was a frightful leer at the moment. His pupils had all turned a blood red as he threw his head back, screaming to the heavens, and charged over like a bloodthirsty beast.

The aura circling around him had solicited into a red mist, and started turning over with an incontrovertible momentum as Han Shuo leapt and flew.

“This is bad, he’s lost his reason!” The cyclops’ thunderous tones suddenly cried out as he prepared for the worst.

The golden dragon was standing the closest to Han Shuo at this time, and he’d already curled himself into a ball, becoming Han Shuo’s first target of attack. Han Shuo had already landed on the golden dragon’s head amidst the mass of aura and punched downwards with one fist.

If it’d been only Han Shuo’s fist, the golden dragon might not have minded that much. After all, Han Shuo’s body size was on a different level from the golden dragon. There was a limit to the power behind his punch and the area he could cover. He would be unable to cause too much damage to this enormous being.

However, when the punch came crashing down, the murderous aura around Han Shuo suddenly coalesced into the forms of red fists the size of small mountains. The fists completely encircled the golden dragon’s coiled up form, the pressure such that he could barely catch his breath. A destructive ferocity descended upon his head.

The proud golden dragon cried out in pain as he cussed viciously. He was forced to uncurl himself and stab out viciously with his tail that was as long as the Great Wall of China.

Rumble...

An earth shattering explosion traveled from the impact of the violent punch and the golden dragon's tail. The boulders around the golden dragon crumbled from the impact as he howled with pain. His dragon tail couldn't seem to take the pressure as it curled together with a shake. The more than ten meter long body was laid low from its previously proud position with this blow.

"Wahaha, mighty master, your humble servant is proud of you! You used your power to beat the strongest of the dragon race, the golden dragon, into the ground! I, Gilbert of the dark dragons, have witnessed this historical moment. You are the master I chose alright..."

The terrifying blow had pounded the golden dragon into the ground. Disbelief shone out of the cyclops' single eye as Gilbert continued to yell, "Eh... my mighty, handsome, amazing, and noble master, what... what do you want to do? Are you planning on hitting your cutest, most loyal, most honest, and most humble Gilbert? Um..."

However, the fist with blood red light coming out of it vanished before Gilbert's fawning had ended. When Han Shuo kicked towards Gilbert, a blood red foot appeared out of midair and aimed straight at the chattering dark dragon.

Before Gilbert had even finished yammering, this foot had already stepped down on Gilbert's head. If it continued, Gilbert would never again be able to be this noisy!

"ROAR..."

As the dark dragon roared in despair, a towering figure suddenly shot out. An enormous green hand dragged back this foot for Gilbert, and the green cyclops crashed to a sitting position on the ground after a series of rumblings and shaking. He looked in fear at the grimacing Han Shuo who was slowly descending.

“Stupid dumb dragon, he’s already lost his mind and isn’t your master anymore. Do you want to die?” The golden dragon had finally struggled up from his collapsed position on the ground. He couldn’t help but shake his head and tail and roar, wanting Gilbert to recognize reality.

Gilbert found it a bit difficult to react. In the depths of his heart, he was unwilling to believe that Han Shuo would want to kill him. He murmured to himself in a daze, “How is that possible? How would my master want to kill me?”

“Dumb dragon, although I don’t know what’s happened, your master really has lost his mind at the moment. He is now very, very strong. I and that unlucky golden dragon don’t have much energy left now. Only the three of us together will be possibly able to fight against your master!”

As the cyclops watched Han Shuo slowly descend from the sky, a boundless, thick murderous sense locking firmly onto them, he couldn’t help but cry all anxiously at Gilbert.

Gilbert shook his head dazedly. Although his heart ached, and he felt despair at Han Shuo’s vicious blow just now, he still said stubbornly, “No! Absolutely not! I can’t fight my master with you guys! Not even if I die!”

“Idiot, we wouldn’t be able to kill him with even the three of us! We just need to defend or control him! We’re saving him, you stupid, damned dark dragon! Do you understand this or not?” The golden dragon started roaring on the other side when he was faced with threat of death.

“Indeed, dumb dragon, we’re saving him, saving him! Stupid!” The cyclops immediately understood when he heard the golden dragon’s word and started yelling as well.

The dragons were a proud race, and if it wasn’t for special circumstances, it was very difficult for them to submit to humans, a race they disdained. However, once a dragon formed a contract with a human, their loyalty was unquestionable before their master died.

Gilbert had spent a bit of time with Han Shuo, and his master’s actions were right up his alley. Even though Han Shuo had lost his mind and had struck out viciously at him, he’d never had any thoughts of resistance.

This was like a dark dragon's naturally lewd nature, a innate brand on the dragons that no one was able to change!

The golden dragon understood this racial characteristic well and thus immediately changed his tune, spinning this as a way of liberating Han Shuo and dispelling the conflict that this formed against Gilbert's nature.

Indeed, it was as if cold water had been dumped over Gilbert's head. The golden dragon and the cyclops' roaring shocked Gilbert awake. Having thought through things, he muttered anxiously, "That's right, I must help you. Nothing can happen to you, your humble servant still needs your guidance!"

"ROAR..."

Han Shuo was slowly descending upon the three enormous beings when he suddenly leered and roared out again, charging forward with a frightening sound wave. Ripples of the murderous aura rolled over in the dark space. Evil was contained with the sound wave, and it seemed like clouds of fire were pouring down from the skies.

Blood started leaking out of the mouths, nose, and eyes of the three beings beneath the attack of this horrifying sound wave. Their bodies rolled violently, seemingly to be unable to hold up beneath this terrifying sound wave.

"Damn it, just what kind of attack has your master used? As opposed to him yelling, I'd rather face his enormous fists and kicks. At least we can block the tangible attacks, what can we do against this sound wave!" Streams of blood as thick as a baby's arms were leaking out of the golden dragon's lantern-like eyes as he complained whilst blood dripped out of his mouth.

"Oh my gosh, what is going on? My master shouldn't be this strong!" Gilbert had spent a long time with Han Shuo. Although he was uncertain of Han Shuo's true strength, his master had never demonstrated such frightening strength.

"Nothing for it, the three of us need to combine our strength to attack him! Otherwise, we'll be dead without a doubt. He probably won't be able

to escape the backlash of this power! The frightening power around him now is from the specters that were present earlier. This must have happened because he's trying to absorb them all!" The cyclops was the calmest out of them all. He hastily raised this suggestion when he saw that all of them were about to die from the impact.

The cyclops and the golden dragon suddenly looked at each other before Gilbert reacted and stood up together. They endured the agonizing pain of their bodies to charge towards Han Shuo, wrapped in layers of murderous aura and bloody sound waves, in mid air.

Han Shuo had been roaring furiously when he felt the movements of the two enormous creatures. He cackled oddly as his bloodshot eyes suddenly lit up. Bloody light emanated from his pupils and concentrated on the two enormous beings like it was something tangible.

The two had just struggled to their feet when they were swept by his bloody eyes. A terrifying power immediately invaded their bodies as they began to seize and spasm. Terrifying cries traveled out from their mouths.

"Damned dark dragon, you're right behind him. Make your move or we'll all die!" The golden dragon's scales were exploding one after another after Han Shuo had swept his blood gaze over them. Fresh blood was gushing forth, and the golden dragon kept trying to evade the gaze as he screamed for his life.

"Hurry up, you're saving him, damned stupid dragon!" The cyclops' skin suddenly split open after been swept by Han Shuo's gaze, and his injuries were increasing in scale. His heart was filled with an unknown fear as he too began screaming in earnest, cussing for the first time.

Gilbert murmured as the two enormous beings howled in pain, "I'm going to save you, save you..."

A resolute emotion appeared in Gilbert's eyes as he reached out suddenly with his dragon claws, slapping them forward cautiously and gingerly towards the completely unsuspecting Han Shuo in front of him.

He planned on knocking Han Shuo unconscious first and then finding a way to restore Han Shuo's reason, saving his master from this berserk

state. Gilbert's loyalty was without a doubt.

Bam!

An enormous dull thud sounded as a patch of red mist appeared over Han Shuo's head, blocking Gilbert's swipe. Wrapped in the red mist, Han Shuo hadn't been injured at all, but he'd seemed to feel Gilbert's malicious intent. He couldn't help but turn around and glare at Gilbert with bloodshot eyes, roaring furiously.

All of the murderous aura floating around Han Shuo was affected by his anger and congregated from all corners, feeding into the Demonslayer Edge floating in front of Han Shuo's chest. The enormous murderous aura seemed to be bloody waves as they quickly gathered within the Demonslayer Edge.

The savagely howling Demonslayer Edge suddenly emanated a destructive aura. When all of the aura surrounding Han Shuo had been absorbed, a beam of blood red light a hundred meters tall shone out of the weapon. It'd become a peerless weapon that could cleave the heavens and earth, and Han Shuo seemed like a demon god that could destroy all when he wielded it.

The hundred meter light slowly pivoted and locked onto Gilbert as Han Shuo's right arm adjusted its direction. During this process, anywhere the frightening light passed by directly reduced the weathered boulders into rock dust.

When faced with this boundless aura, Gilbert's enormous body seemed so small and helpless. His dragon eyes were filled with despair, fear, bitterness, and sadness. As his eyes locked dumbly onto the raging Han Shuo, he couldn't help but murmur lowly, "No, you won't, you're my master and won't really want to kill me!"

"Dumb dragon, run, run!!" The cyclops and golden dragon screamed in reminder. For some reason, their hearts were filled with bitterness as well.

However, for some reason, the usually loud and active Gilbert seemed to be stuck dumbly in place like a fool. Blood red tears slowly formed in his lantern-like eyes, but his body stayed firmly put as if it'd been rooted!

Earth shattering roars continuously emitted from the grimacing Han Shuo's mouth. The destructive Demonslayer Edge and hundred meter tall sword slowly lifted to aim at Gilbert. Both the cyclops and the golden dragon had no doubt that when this light descended, Gilbert would be carved into many little pieces of meat. He wouldn't have the slightest chance of survival and his vital signs would be utterly erased.

"No!" A howl came from Han Shuo's mouth. It was the first human sound he'd made up until now. His face contorted with pain, the black lightning surrounding him as he roared furiously started crackling and popping. The blood vessels in his neck and arm starting exploding, and fresh blood splattered him all over.

Han Shuo ignored the frightening wounds on his body. He couldn't seemed to control his limbs as he looked at his right arm with a twisted expression. He kept yelling, "No, no!!"

Suddenly, his expression hardened as his bloody left arm suddenly slammed into his weapon wielding right arm. It landed like a bolt of lightning, accompanied by a crisp breaking sound. arrows of blood shot out from his arms and sped toward the surroundings.

This self-mutilating blow had an amazing effect. It saved Gilbert's life, and a change happened in the hundred meter tall sword light!

The light had been aimed at Gilbert when it suddenly changed direction, circling past Gilbert's enormous body and carrying with it a violent, evil sword aura to shoot into the endless black mists surroundings the forbidden area.

Suddenly, the skies were filled with bloody light as the earth shook. A frightening explosion sound filled the area, seeming to rip the very sky asunder. The black mists that had covered this area for five hundreds years slowly dispersed after the blow from the blood red light.

Beams of warm sunlight finally shone on this desolate land after hundred of years of absence. Sunlight radiated on the heavily injured cyclops and golden dragon, on the panting but clear eyed Han Shuo lying in a pool of his own blood, and entered the teary, delighted eyes of



Gilbert...

# Chapter 244: Awe

The violent explosions continued for a while before the forbidden zone slowly returned to normal. The radiant sun finally shone on the forbidden area that had been confined for 500 years.

“Ah, light, this is the sun’s light!” The injury ridden golden dragon looked up at the bright sun in the sky and felt the warmth of the sun dappling over his body, sighing with great emotion.

Just as he was reflecting with some emotion, the power that he’d lost upon entering the forbidden area slowly began to fill his body once again. His body had been plastered to the ground when it slowly began to rise again. The natural ability of the dragons to fly had been restored.

“The strength that’s been confining the entire area has disappeared. We’ve been saved!” The cyclops’ single eye looked straight at the sun as he collapsed on the ground from his injuries. Although he appeared a bit lazy, his green face was filled with delight from the thought of being alive.

On the other side, Gilbert shook his enormous head, sending his tears from earlier flying through the air like the spring rain. His enormous body floated in the air and flew towards Han Shuo, murmuring, “I knew it, I knew you wouldn’t kill your most loyal servant!”

Han Shuo had broken his right arm, an arm as strong as iron, with his left hand. The meridians in his neck and arms had exploded, and he was lying in an ever-growing pool of his own blood, panting heavily.

“Idiot, if I hadn’t recovered quickly, you would’ve been dead without a doubt by now!” Han Shuo hectored Gilbert loudly from his listless position. Bloody froth spewed out of his mouth whenever he opened it, but he felt none of the associated pain. His now clear eyes had a few traces of warmth and touched emotions to it.

With the strange power that restrained the entire area vanished, Gilbert felt a familiar power in his body and slowly began to transform as he approached Han Shuo. When he once again stood in front of Han Shuo, he’d already changed into a haggard and worn person, reflecting what he’d

just gone through.

“Heh heh, recover your body first!” Gilbert stood with his back to Han Shuo and wiped the moisture from his face, walking over easily and helping Han Shuo up from collapsed position. Gilbert silently stood behind him in support.

Han Shuo chanted out an incantation and a little skeleton with sparkling white bones and a honest and silly earth elite zombie suddenly appeared in front of Han Shuo.

The two of them focused their attention on Han Shuo when they stood in front of him. When they discovered his woeful state and that he was dripping with blood, they rushed to his two sides and reached out urgently with their hands, seeming to want to take his blood and shove it back into his body through his wounds.

Panic and anxiety filled the little skeleton’s purple eye and the earth elite zombie’s yellow eyes. They waved their arms around madly as they busied themselves, seeming to express, “Alright, alright. We’re here now, he’ll be fine now!” The two of them capered around frantically to express themselves to Han Shuo. Although their actions of trying to shove his blood back into his body through his wounds were childish and comical, this warmed Han Shuo’s heart greatly.

Suddenly, the little skeleton took to the sky and sent his bone dagger and bone spurs whirling through the air. An evil, frosty, and completely inhumane killing intent emanated from his body as the seven bone spurs pierced towards the cyclops and golden dragon like seven bloody streams of light.

At the same time, the earth elite zombie next to Han Shuo sank into the ground like he stepping into water. Shaking and rumbling then traveled from the depths of where the cyclops and golden dragon were. Sharp earth mounds then began shooting out of the ground. The cyclops standing on the ground was the first to be affected, and he began to frantically evade the attacks.

When the little skeleton and earth elite zombie had appeared out of

nowhere, the cyclops and golden dragon had only flicked a glance at them, not paying too much attention to these low level dark creatures. However, when the two finally made their moves, the destruction they brought forth shocked the two creatures senseless. They were unable to believe the truth before their eyes.

The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie's actions were as fast as a strike of lightning. By the time that Han Shuo had time to react, their attacks had almost landed on the heavily injured cyclops and golden dragon.

"Hey, damned idiot dragon, are you going to just watch the show? We helped you just now!" The golden dragon was terrified as he dodged the attacks and roared loudly.

Although the cyclops and golden dragon could now use their recovered abilities, their bodies had long since lost all their strength after the previous round of events. Add to that although the little skeleton and earth elite zombie were small, the destruction they wreaked was indeed terrifying, making the two enormous beings cry out with fear.

"Eh... my honored master, these two fellows did indeed help us just now. I think they mean us no harm now!" Gilbert thought of when the three of them defended against Han Shuo just now and couldn't help but say to Han Shuo.

"I see. Come back then, the two of you!" Han Shuo nodded distantly and called out to the little skeleton and earth elite zombie.

The two brash dark creatures immediately withdrew their attacks when they heard Han Shuo's order. The seven blood red bone spurs spun in a circle and reattached to the little skeleton's spine in an exceedingly short amount of time. The various hills all sank down astonishingly, and the earth regained its smoothness again. The earth elite zombie that had disappeared from sight floated up again, slowly rising from the earth and stood on Han Shuo's left, as if he'd never moved.

When the little skeleton and earth elite zombie discovered that Han Shuo was gravely injured, they naturally ruled Gilbert out of the running

of entities that could've hurt their master. Therefore, the two enormous beings that had obviously weathered through an immense fight became the natural culprits. It was understandable that they hadn't waited for Han Shuo's orders before attacking.

To be honest, Han Shuo had a vague notion of what had happened after he'd lost his ability to reason. However, his presence had still been useful in allowing the two beings to escape the forbidden area when he'd attacked. Now that the restraints around the forbidden area had been dispelled, he didn't know if the two of them would act maliciously towards him. He'd summoned the two fellows purely as a precaution.

The little skeleton and earth elite zombie's sudden attack had been out of his expectations, but he then thought that the two fellows could awe the two enormous beings after a show of strength, thereby preventing them from making any moves against him. Therefore, he only stopped the little skeleton and the earth elite zombie after Gilbert had explained what had happened. This also served as a warning to the two enormous beings that they weren't the ruler of this place just because the restraining power in the forbidden area had been dispelled.

When he faced the little skeleton's bone spurs just now, the golden dragon had frantically tried to decrease his size in order to evade the attacks. He wiped cold sweat from his brow now and smiled at Han Shuo from afar, "Very nice to meet you, strong human! I think you've nothing to do with me now, so goodbye!"

The golden dragon had already transformed back into his human form after speaking and dashed outwards as if fleeing the scene. He landed in a patch of boulders after a few leaps and vanished completely from sight.

The cyclops also rumbled anxiously after the golden dragon had left, "Ahaha, I'm also very pleased to make your acquaintance. However, I still have some things at home and won't keep chatting with you. I hope we can meet again!"

The rumbling from his voice was still hanging in the sky as the cyclops twisted his injury laden body into motion. He stumbled as he made for the

far distance, praying to never bump into this crazy human again. He was simply too scary when he lost his mind!

In the span of an instant, the two heavily wounded enormous beings had fled with panic stricken expressions from their location. Han Shuo and Gilbert looked at each other, finding this extremely ludicrous.

Whether it was the cyclops or the golden dragon—both were incredibly frightening levels of existence when they were at their full peak of power. If they hadn't met something like the Lord of the Flames, a level four creature, they would absolutely be the lords of the Dark Forest. Something like the manticore, a level one magical creature, would dash out of the way like it'd seen a ghost if it ever met a cyclops or golden dragon.

However, such a strong level of existence had left in front of them like they were fleeing from some horror. This filled Han Shuo and Gilbert's heart with strange emotions!

Cleaning his mind of stray thoughts, Han Shuo sat down cross legged and said to Gilbert, the little skeleton, and the earth elite zombie. "I'm going to recover from my wounds now, you guys keep watch!"

The murderous aura around him formed a cocoon of black and red light, fully enclosing his body. Streaks of black and red lightning swirled around the cocoon and completely sealed Han Shuo's presence away, not allowing even a single bit of it leak out.

The specters that'd been present in the forbidden area were strange existences formed from the souls of the strong who'd died, but had been unable to disperse into the world, and had absorbed all sorts of random powers instead.

No one knew what had happened five hundred years ago, but there were quite a few souls that had been affected by the strange power of the forbidden area, and were unable to disperse for five hundred years.

All of the lifeforms that had mistakenly barged into this forbidden area had had their powers restricted by the area. They were unable to use fighting aura or magic to hurt the specters, and the specters were unaffected by physical attacks. Therefore, death was the only way out for

anything that stumbled upon this area and faced the specters.

Before these entities died, all their fear, despair, fury, unwillingness, and associated negative emotions were absorbed by the specters, making them accumulate even more energy over the years, causing the spectres to become more and more powerful.

Intruders who could only make use of their physical bodies to attack naturally couldn't handle the specters, but Han Shuo, already in the bloodlust realm, had a natural aura and the Demonslayer Edge that was the antithesis of the specters. Therefore, when he knew the beings present were specters, he immediately used the demon infant and Demonslayer Edge to form a whirlpool, constructing a crazily devouring machine. All of the specters that had existed for five hundred years were sucked into the demon infant and the Demonslayer Edge.

In this process, the image of the giant that had floated behind Han Shuo in the air was a result of the demon infant consuming too many specters. This naturally formed image was also absorbed by Han Shuo's body in the end.

However, although the specters had great strength, there were too many impure and random thoughts amongst them. All of the negative emotions mixed together, and their characteristics were all different. Han Shuo's mentality in the bloodlust realm was already unstable to begin with, which caused him to almost completely lost his mind and become a bloodthirsty demon.

He'd made use of his fight with the three enormous beings to vent the random emotions plaguing him. The purest portion of the specter's energy had been absorbed by the demon infant, and the majority of it had been too filled with negative, violent emotions and so it had been absorbed by the Demonslayer Edge inside.

The majority of the energy that he had been unable to absorb caused Han Shuo to lose reason. He'd made use of his attacks on the three enormous beings to wear away at it, and then used the final blow from the Demonslayer Edge to attack the void of black mists. The tremendous and

fatal energy had actually destroyed the restraining power around the forbidden area, enabling sunlight to stream in once again.

Han Shuo had possessed the power to fight against the three strong beings previously because the Demonslayer Edge had consumed the violent and scattered energy from the specters. This kind of energy was pure destruction and not something he could control at all. This was why he'd made it all disappear through venting like how he'd done.

Therefore, this was why Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge had displayed power that didn't belong to them earlier. When the Demonslayer Edge pierced through the restraints of the forbidden area, all of the destructive power had vanished, and Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge quickly returned to normal shortly after.

However, the two gained great benefits this time. Even though Han Shuo was still in the bloodlust realm, the pure energy within the demon infant had once again greatly increased in strength.

After absorbing some power, the Demonslayer Edge would be able to truly emit a murderous aura after a bit more refining and some fortuitous occurrences. It would really be a peerless weapon then.

Wrapped in his red and black cocoon, Han Shuo didn't emerge for eight days. His ravaged right arm had returned to normal, and the blood vessels on his neck and arms had reformed, more durable than before. His height had also increased by a few centimeters, and his naked body was even more stocky than before. His shoulders were broad, his waist narrow, and his muscles were more evenly distributed over his body like finely chiseled granite. His eyes were clear and sinister looking, brimming with the confidence of being able to control everything.

"Honored master, you've finally emerged. Your poor servant has waited for such a long time!" Gilbert had a look of dejection on his face as he stood pitifully next to Han Shuo, loudly praising his glory.

Looking at Gilbert in shock, Han Shuo asked in bafflement, "What? What happened to you?"

Gilbert looked around pitifully and cast a look in his surroundings, then



finally speaking to Han Shuo like he was tattling on someone. “Those two fellows not only bullied me, but also dug up someone’s grave. This is too evil!”

Han Shuo was shocked upon hearing these words, “What’s going on here?”

“You take a look at what they’ve done! They had me, the great dark dragon Gilbert, help them in digging up someone else’s grave, and actually threatened me with a knife when I wouldn’t do so. This is so evil, so shameless, and that little skeleton is too evil!” Gilbert was incredibly pitiful as he brought Han Shuo up into the air and had him take a look for himself.

When Han Shuo floated in the air and looked at Ayermika Cotton’s grave, he was stunned senseless by what he saw. He didn’t know whether to laugh or cry as he said, “Eh... those two are indeed a bit out of line!”

# Chapter 245: Grave digging

The formerly leveled ground stood witness to many ravines. The tombstone of Ayermika, the demigod existence of the Lancelot Empire, stood grandly at the center. Surrounding it was a ten meter circular area of messily dug trenches and holes. Dirt had been tossed every which way, as if some archaeology team had conducted an excavation searching for antiquities. The whole area had been overturned.

Taking a closer look, Han Shuo noticed a few more hills formed from mounds of brown soil. The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie were busy demolishing an enormous skeleton at the bottom of a huge trench. This skeleton was a dozen meters long, and each bone was as tall as a person. The skeleton was translucent as crystal, its surface reflecting bright light. It was obviously the corpse of some super rank creature.

The two fellows sensed Han Shuo's presence in the midst of their demolition. They excitedly waved their hands, which were holding bones even bigger than their own bodies, greeting their master.

After that, the little skeleton picked up several bones with his hand and flew, fast as lightning, to the middle of the trench, dropping the bones in a deeply excavated pit. He placed them carefully in the middle of the deep pit, as if the bones were valuable treasures.

"Eh... What have they been doing these past days?" Han Shuo stood in the air and watched raptly, asking Gilbert in surprise.

Gilbert complained loudly, his face as gloomy as one at a funeral, "Not long after you wrapped yourself up in the cocoon, these two fellows got up to these antics. First, the small zombie went underground and took out a bone. He proudly bragged about it to the little skeleton, then the little skeleton also got excited. These two together were simply the most superb grave diggers, they turned the whole place upside down. They seem to be collecting those bones, I don't know what they're doing that for!"

Han Shuo listened to Gilbert's complaining narrative, his eyes glimmering as he looked into the deep pit that held the white bones. His

body slowly moved and approached the pit. He landed straight within it, randomly picking up a bone of who knew what super rank creature and carefully examined it.

The bone was heavy in his hand, seeming to actually weigh around a hundred kilograms. The stark white bone seemed to contain a strange presence. The skin touching this bone felt a biting cold, and a sharp and chilly killing air flowed from the bone into Han Shuo's body.

The earth elite zombie silently emerged from the earth beneath Han Shuo like a ghost, his hand clutching a white bone as if it was something incomparably precious. As he handed this bone to Han Shuo, his golden earth-colored eyes danced with pride.

This surprised Han Shuo. He took the bone from the earth elite zombie and immediately felt an eternal dragon breath within. He could tell that this bone was heavier than the one earlier. This pristinely white bone caused the air around it to emit a faint whistling sound. He sensed it carefully again and felt some wind magic elements within.

Han Shuo could say with certainty at this point that this bone had come from a wind dragon. He was sure because as a necromancy mage, he had some understanding about the bones of magic creatures. Every mage coming from the necromancy department had to use bones in their experiments.

The bones of some super rank magic creatures still contained some energy from when they were still alive. They could be used to make powerful weapons. For example, the white bone staff that Belinda from the Calamity Church had refined was also forged from the bone of a super rank magic creature. This bone would also be helpful for Han Shuo to improve his necromancy magic.

While Han Shuo was deep in thought, the little skeleton also seemed to be trying to prove something. He brought several bones in front of Han Shuo, then pulled on his sleeve to gain attention.

Han Shuo was stunned when he looked at the little skeleton. He discovered two odd lights gleaming in the latter's eyes. The little skeleton's

left hand was holding a white bone when a wave of silver light suddenly started circulating within the bone. The originally translucent bone rapidly corroded, as if time had accelerated over a thousand times. In just a moment, the bone containing a strange presence had turned into ashes and scattered into the wind.

After that, the little skeleton threw back his head proudly. He took another bone and made a munching motion towards Han Shuo. The little skeleton then threw the bone back into the pile of bones.

Han Shuo could understand without needing the little skeleton to say anything else. The little skeleton and the earth elite zombie could absorb the energy from the enormous skeletons littered throughout this land. Due to the unknown force of imprisonment here, the souls of the dead creatures couldn't dissipate into the heavens and earth after death, and instead, a portion of energy still remained in the bodies. Even when the flesh rotted away, the bones still contained some magical energy. To these two fellows, this energy was a great tonic. No wonder they were so interested in roleplaying as grave robbers and had turned this place upside down.

Han Shuo smiled as he rubbed the little skeleton's smooth skull, then patted the earth elite zombie's shoulder and said gently, "Hehe, you did well! How about this, you guys collect all the usable bones here!"

After being encouraged by Han Shuo, the earth elite zombie rubbed his head in honest joy as he quickly sank into the ground again. He appeared next to the ten meter long skeleton in the blink of an eye and started to dismantle the bones. As for the little skeleton, he waved his bony hands and danced around, happily sending Han Shuo a message to express his thoughts.

After focusing his attention for a moment, Han Shuo nodded and said understandingly, "So you think there's no problem for you and the earth elite to take away these bones. Wait until you guys collect them all in a pile, I'll give you a hand!"

The little skeleton had transmitted a message saying he wanted to bring

all of these bones into the other dimension for the benefit of the necromancy creatures in his camp. Han Shuo had first been surprised for a moment after he'd understood, then expressed his assent.

As he received Han Shuo's approval, the little skeleton became extremely excited. His seven bone spurs shook, sending him whizzing through the air towards the earth elite zombie. The two continued to dismantle the huge magic creature's skeleton.

As Han Shuo observed carefully, he discovered that the two didn't take just anything from the ten meter long skeleton. Relying on their sensitivity towards energy, they only took bones with energy and promptly threw away the ordinary ones.

The useless bones thrown away by these two fellows were scattered throughout the trench filled area. They obviously hadn't sat idly by either dying the past couple of days when Han Shuo was cultivating. This ten meter long skeleton seemed to be their last prey.

While the little skeleton and earth elite zombie remained hard at work, Han Shuo's eyes were caught by the tombstone with the name Ayermika Cotton engraved onto it.

Only now did Han Shuo discover that this tombstone of the Lancelot Empire's legendary figure had originally only revealed a small part of its splendor. Thanks to the trenches that the earth elite zombie had carved, he'd yanked out that one meter tall tombstone up three meters. From the top of the tombstone down, it seemed to keep getting wider the deeper it was buried. It was shaped like a miniature hill, which puzzled Han Shuo.

Seeing Han Shuo focus his attention on the tombstone of Ayermika, Gilbert seemed to remember something and suddenly shouted out loud, "Master, this engraved stone slab is really weird. The little skeleton and earth elite zombie asked me to try moving it, but we found that it's extremely heavy. I didn't expect that even my strength couldn't move it one bit."

"Oh, this is a bit interesting!" This surprised Han Shuo greatly. As part of the dragon race, Gilbert was still immensely powerful even in human

form. Even if the stone slab had been double in size, it should've been impossible for Gilbert to not be able to move it.

Therefore, Han Shuo had flown to the tombstone as soon as he'd heard Gilbert's words. He reached out and touched this tombstone with a surprised face.

The tombstone was cold to the touch. Apart from the deeply engraved, large Ayermika letters, the entire tombstone was as smooth as a mirror. Running his hand over it again, Han Shuo didn't feel any discomfort or anything strange. This tombstone wasn't much different from an ordinary stone slab.

Taking in a deep breath, Han Shuo tried shaking it and didn't even feel a shudder from the tombstone. It was just as Gilbert said, this stone was simply not easily moved.

"Come, dig up this piece of land for me!" His thoughts raced and Han Shuo waved his hand at the distant earth elite zombie.

The little skeleton and earth elite zombie were too interested in their skeleton, this tombstone seemed to have no appeal to them. Otherwise, with the earth elite zombie's nature, it would have given this tombstone a try.

As per Han Shuo's instructions, the earth elite zombie in the distant underground immediately disappeared. Afterwards, a tremor arose under Han Shuo's feet. The soil and sand that the tombstone was buried in was roiling and churning. The soft ground shook for a while, when two cracks appeared beneath the tombstone.

The originally firmly standing tombstone crashed down on a high hill that had formed. The tombstone, seven meters in length, was now completely revealed. Even its base, as broad as a tree root, could be seen.

"Hateful zombie, it obviously has the ability, yet deliberately makes this great dark dragon do all the carrying. What a lazy brat!" Gilbert watched the earth elite zombie follow Han Shuo's order to uproot the tombstone without much effort. At that point, he could not help but recall his previous experiences and complain loudly.

It was a pity that the earth elite zombie simply didn't care for the noisy Gilbert. When he finished what Han Shuo had ordered him to do, he immediately went back to the little skeleton's side and continued dismantling that huge skeleton.

"Honored master, what do you want to do?" Gilbert looked at the completely revealed tombstone and asked, puzzled.

"Let's have a look first!" Han Shuo casually answered. Then he approached the tombstone and carefully observed it, gently tracing the tombstone with his finger as he looked a little pensive.

An ordinary tombstone wouldn't be seven meters long. In addition, the material of this tombstone were unknown. Even with Han Shuo's current knowledge of all kinds of ores, he couldn't identify the tombstone's material. Combined with its unexpected weight, the tombstone left him suspicious.

As his finger gently swiped across the tombstone, a piece of magical yuan appeared like static electricity on his fingertip. It was pressed into the tombstone with a push from Han Shuo's finger. Suddenly, a large wave of dark magic element reflected back to Han Shuo's mind through the magical yuan. This energy was astonishingly similar to the imprisonment force all over in the forbidden land.

Han Shuo paled and hastily retracted his finger. He looked at the brown tombstone in astonishment and murmured, "How strange, this force should've disappeared already, could it be... the strange imprisonment force that covered the whole forbidden land came from the deceased demigod Ayermika...?"

"What is it, master?" Little dark dragon Gilbert couldn't hear Han Shuo's mumble, but couldn't help but ask when he saw Han Shuo's surprised face.

Han Shuo backed up a few steps and instructed, "Gilbert, back away a bit, I need to blow up this tombstone and see what's inside."

Waiting until Gilbert had moved according to his orders, Han Shuo also backed up about ten meters or so. He took out the Demonslayer Edge and

infused magical yuan into it. After absorbing such a large mass of evil intent, even though the Demonslayer Edge hadn't truly become a peerless masterpiece, it already contained a formidable power.

A fierce sword light directly blasted out from the Demonslayer Edge after Han Shuo had infused his magical yuan, and headed straight for the tombstone with a terrifying force.

Rumbles resounded nonstop. The grand, seemingly indestructible tombstone was shattered into pieces under the impact of the Demonslayer Edge amidst a spray of splendid light.

Stone debris flew all around. After all had calmed down, the brown tombstone had broken into many pieces. A magic staff embedded with three amethysts wrapped in dense dark magic elements appeared on the ground. Next to the staff was an ancient, handwritten notebook.



# Chapter 246: Just you? Are you worthy?

This magic staff was made of an unknown material. It was greyish-brown in color and felt rough to the touch. The staff was about one meter long, and its upper part was diamond shaped. The three amethysts were palm-sized. They emitted a beautiful bright light and sparkled as if containing water ripples. The three amethysts looked like three miniature lakes at a glance, and were placed in a triangular formation.

Ancients script were as dense as a bunch of tadpoles in the ancient, handwritten notebook. These two things had been unexpectedly embedded within the tombstone! One could tell that they were very valuable with just a single glance. They could even be the relics of Ayermike Cotton himself.

Han Shuo held the two items in hand, taking a deep look, and then unceremoniously put them into the space ring. He flicked a glance around and saw the fragmented rocks of the tombstone sparkling with different colors. He couldn't help but feel surprised and carefully assessed each one.

"Mhm, scarletheart iron and whitelight silver ores. I hadn't thought that the tombstone was refined from these strange ores. No wonder I couldn't see through the material!" Han Shuo softly exclaimed. He picked up some of the broken stones and identified them.

The surface of the tombstone had actually been refined from several strange ores smelted together. However, after the Demonslayer Edge had broken it apart, the interior revealed ores that hadn't completely melted, many of which were still raw ores. Looking at the magic staff and notebook, one would understand that it wasn't because the refiner of this tombstone was lacking in ability. They definitely did this on purpose, for fear of ruining the items inside if they completely refined all the ores.

What happened in this forbidden land five hundred years ago? Why was Ayermike Cotton here? Why was his tombstone here? Han Shuo didn't know and didn't care. What he wanted was to collect anything of value here before leisurely leaving this area.

After placing the magic staff and ancient notebook into the space ring, Han Shuo also unceremoniously did the same with the raw ores. He then walked to the pit where little skeleton and the earth elite zombie were, closing his eyes and placed his hand on each of the bones containing the strange energy.

In a blink of an eye, roughly ten white jade-like bones were also shoved into the space ring by Han Shuo. Seeing their hard earned bones taken away by him, the little skeleton and earth elite zombie weren't at all angry. They even expressed joy, as if the more he took, the more honored they became.

When he took a look around the whole area, there were no longer any complete skeletons. In the pit, the little skeleton and earth elite zombie were excitedly picking things up here and there. Like two small porters, they held the bunch of bones under their arms, on their backs, and in their hands.

When these two fellows were almost completely hidden by the white bones, the little skeleton's purple sockets shone brightly and he looked at Han Shuo to transmit a message. Han Shuo began to chant a spell. The little skeleton, elite earth zombie, along with the bones that they had to made four trips back and forth to collect, were sent back to the other dimension.

After the two fellows left, Han Shuo stood in the sky and swept the entire area. Seeing there weren't any more abnormalities in this forbidden land, he had Gilbert transform and returned to the cemetery of death.

This time, the human and dragon didn't encounter any danger during their return trip. Han Shuo released three yin demons along the way, and had Gilbert slow down. He searched carefully for materials to refine pills and weapons. This actually took them a total of ten days before they finally returned to the cemetery of death.

Han Shuo had managed to collect a good amount of refining materials in those ten days. Upon returning to the cemetery of death, the materials would be enough for Han Shuo to refine several things that he wanted, as

well as a cauldron full of rebirth pills.

Han Shuo had actually reaped a lucrative harvest during this excursion into the Dark Forest. Although there had been some crises halfway, he resolved them by relying on the virtue of his luck and wits. The feeling that he received when he returned to the cemetery of death was quite good.

As he collected enough pill and weapon refining materials, Han Shuo carefully weighed his options. He decided to do a closed door session in the cemetery of death, ready to refine a pill cauldron in addition to some small magic treasures, before continuing to refine rebirth pills.

Determined, Han Shuo decided to research the refinement of pills and magical treasures. He stayed in the cemetery of death for three months.

When he emerged after the three months were up, the cold winter had passed and all beings had awoken from their hibernation. It was a season in which the spring flowers were blooming vibrantly. At the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, it was the time where students took an exam to test their individual power.

At the dark major's biggest testing field, the teachers and students of the necromancy major were grouped. They had to wait for the dark major students to finish before they could use the equipment in the testing field for their exams.

After the tragic experience that had happened to her family, little witch Lisa suddenly became much more sensible. Although her nature was still unruly and stubborn, she was no longer unreasonable to the point where people hated her.

"Master Fanny, has Bryan really not returned to the academy in the past six months?" Lisa looked helplessly at Fanny and asked in a sweet voice.

"Lisa, you have been asking this for two, three months already. He really hasn't come back!" Fanny replied with a gloomy face. She thought in her heart, That damnable naughty devil, where has he been for the past six months? He hasn't come back to see me in so long.

“He said he would return to the Empire shortly after leaving Valen City, but it’s been so long and he still hasn’t returned, can it be that something’s happened to him?”

“Don’t speak nonsense, how could something happen to Bryan?!”

Fanny was also worried that Bryan had disappeared for half a year. However, she didn’t dare to think any bad thoughts. That was how humans were. Just one bad thought would be enough to derail their entire train of thought, and everything would go downhill from there. One thought could cause them to fall into inextricable sadness.

“Master Fanny, your students can commence their exams.” A dark major teacher shouted from a raised platform.

“Let’s go, let’s go watch a bit!” Necromancy major teacher Gene was still indulgent to Fanny as ever. He displayed a gentle smile, urging Fanny onwards.

Nodding her head politely, Fanny maintained a distance from Gene and went with him to the raised platform. The dark major students happened to be descending. A few of them had on arrogant expressions and didn’t immediately leave. Instead, they laughed and lowered their voice to murmur about something.

The dark major students that been humiliated by Han Shuo at the last competition were made a laughingstock for the longest time. The longer Han Shuo had vanished for, the more their embarrassing experience would be forgotten. However, their hatred for him couldn’t be erased. From time to time, they would find opportunities to poke, bully, and make fun of the necromancy major students.

After Han Shuo left, the necromancy major returned to its previous state of decay. The exuberant heroic spirit was short lived for only a few days. The students continuously waxed eloquence on how good things had been when Han Shuo was still there.

“It makes no difference if the necromancy major takes the test or not! What can their students accomplish?!” Phillide, the strongest student in the dark major, sneered disdainfully at the approaching necromancy

major students.

All of the dark major students, who were standing nearby, joined in and laughed loudly, each one louder than the one before, as if they feared the necromancy students wouldn't be able to hear.

"Phillide, don't use such a loud voice within the testing field!" The dean of the dark major, archmage Deo, had a bland smile on his face, as he softly chided the clamor Phillide and the bunch of brats had created. He didn't look the least bit serious.

Be it the necromancy major students or teachers like Fanny and Gene, all could see that Deo's smile held a trace of delight and indulgence. Han Shuo had stomped on both the light major and the dark major last time at the competition. As the head of the dark major, Deo had lost a great deal of face and naturally didn't hold any bit of goodwill towards the necromancy major.

"I know, dean!" Phillide chuckled off to the side as he answered. He then ridiculed, "Looking at the necromancy department taking test, isn't that interesting?"

"True. We've nothing to do anyways. Let's stay and watch!" All of the students, who'd been stomped by Han Shuo last time, chimed in to agree with Phillide, rapt interest on their faces. They looked at the first person coming up to take the test, Athena, as if they were watching clowns walk up stage.

"I heard that it's this stupid woman's fourth attempt to take the test. If she still can't advance to novice mage, she might as well go die already. What an embarrassment!" Phillide smiled, ridiculing viciously.

"Phillide, and who the hell do you think you are?! If Bryan were here, he definitely will rip your mouth off!" Lisa couldn't listen to those words and couldn't help but snap at Phillide.

"Humph! How could that brat have run around so arrogantly! If I hadn't had a stomachache last time? Heh heh, now that my body has recovered, it's time to settle the debt, but he's disappeared for half a year. Doesn't this explain it all?" In the last competition, Han Shuo indeed participated

in Phillide's stead. The former had done so with a bang, making Phillide lose all face. He'd even been scolded by Deo. He still felt indignant about it even now, not wanting to be the least bit inferior than others.

“Oh, so you say I'm hiding from you? Just you? Are you worthy?” Han Shuo's shadow appeared like a ghost. A blue magic robe adorned his tall body, an odd smile hung on his face. He walked measuringly into the testing field, raising his voice as he said, “I've return this time to graduate ahead of schedule. Today, I will take my final test at the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.”

# Chapter 247: Graduation

With his current strength, Han Shuo wouldn't even be afraid of the dark major's dean, Deo, let alone the likes of Phillide. Han Shuo looked relaxed and unrestrained as he stepped onto the testing field. An easy smile hung on his face. However, he still exuded an awe-inspiring temperament.

"Bryan, you've finally returned?" Lisa's voice was full of joy and surprise. She couldn't help but jump in excitement as she let out a "Yeah!".

Fanny was sitting demurely on the high platform. After seeing Han Shuo, the traces of sadness that had lingered on her brows for the past few months were completely wiped away by an invisible hand. She radiated brightly in a way that dazzled the eyes. Her lips curved in an odd way that seemed both happy and angry.

Han Shuo had been through a series of life and death battles in that half year's worth of time. His power had skyrocketed and emitted a natural aura now. No one dared to look down on him now, even when he didn't deliberately show off his strength.

"Athena, focus on the test! I know you can definitely pass!" After arriving, Han Shuo spoke to Athena, who seemed nervous because of the jeers and sarcastic remarks from Phillide's group.

"Thank you, Bryan!" Han Shuo's arrival seemed to put Athena at ease, and her uneasy heart slowly returned to its original calm state.

Phillide, on the other side, had been set off by Han Shuo's earlier words. His facial expression was quite ugly as he gave Han Shuo a sinister look, "You disappeared for half a year after I recovered. What was it for if not to hide from me?"

Honestly speaking, the likes of Phillide bored Han Shuo. After fighting so many powerful beings, Phillide was no longer qualified to shout and yell in front of him. The disparity in power was too great, Han Shuo couldn't be bothered to even deal with him.

"Aha!" Han Shuo gave an odd laugh, squinting his eyes at Phillide. He

shook his head sympathetically, before shrugging and sighing softly, “You think too highly of yourself, but what can I say to this kind of fool who has a few screws loose in his head?”

As he finished saying this, Han Shuo no longer paid any more attention to Phillide, who happened to trembling in anger. He turned in the direction of Fanny on the platform and flashed a bright smile. Inhaling deeply, he gazed at Fanny and said, “I’m back!”

Fanny’s pretty face reddened for some reason. She seemed to want to hide her true feelings as she glared fiercely at Han Shuo, huffing, “You unruly brat! You still know to come back to the academy?”

Han Shuo flashed an awkward smile and wanted to explain something when the dark major dean displayed an unpleasant expression. “Wait until after the exams to catch up. You’ll have plenty of time then. Now, I think we need to quickly settle your major’s business, we’re very busy people after all!”

The other dark major teachers also loudly rushed Fanny and Gene after their dean had spoken, expressing that they had a lot of things to do and couldn’t keep waiting.

Han Shuo had been about to explain, but looked apologetically towards Fanny on the platform and flipped out his hands. He shrugged and took a few steps back without another word to where Lisa, Amy, and several other necromancy major students were standing.

“Bryan, where did you go for the past half year? Didn’t you say that you would quickly return to Ossen City? Why did you drag it out until now?” Lisa chattered nonstop after Han Shuo had arrived. Han Shuo waited for her to finish her questioning before smiling and telling her that he spent a period of time cultivating in the Dark Forest.

“What the hell? He really thinks he’s something huh!” The dark major students, who’d been stomped by Han Shuo, felt indignant and snorted when they saw his dashing manner.

“Humph, I’d like to see how he intends on graduating early. I remember he was only a novice mage half a year ago!” Phillide, who’d been



repeatedly humiliated by Han Shuo, said coldly when he saw Han Shuo in his element.

Athena was calm this time and was not as nervous as she'd been before. She skillfully casted several necromancy magic spells, smoothly answered some questions, and easily passed the novice mage test.

Afterwards, the necromancy students started their tests one by one as well. For most of the students, their power hadn't improved much. Only Lisa unexpectedly became a journeyman mage, the magical pulses from her body were obviously stronger than that of the other students.

Lisa was a lot more sensible after her harrowing experience and had also come to understand the importance of strength. She was much more hard working when it came to practicing magic now, unlike when she'd mostly played around and rarely meditated.

Waiting until all the necromancy students had finished their testing, Han Shuo leisurely stepped forward and said, "I intended to directly graduate upon my return. May I take the test now?"

At the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, one could graduate as long as they advanced to the rank of adept mage. Since Han Shuo received the memories from the soul of archmage Clarendon, he'd mastered all the high ranked necromancy magic after a short amount of practice, not to mention that he also possessed some lost necromancy spells.

The magic test was divided into three stages. The first was an oral examination about magical knowledge, the second was to release a magic spell of that corresponding rank, and the third was to be assigned to a mission. The test was over once all three stages were completed.

However, in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, the adept mage test didn't include the mission portion. Students could advance as long as they passed the first two stages.

With his current necromancy knowledge and power, the adept mage test was as simple as child's play for Han Shuo. He arrogantly skipped the journeyman mage test and set his eyes on the adept mage level test, intending to escape the shackles of the Babylon Academy of Magic and

Force as soon as possible.

“Are you sure you want to skip to the adept mage test?” Standing on the platform, Deo glowered at Han Shuo and asked for confirmation.

Nodding his head impatiently, Han Shuo confirmed, “Master Deo, didn’t I just say it very clearly? I want to skip the journeyman mage test and directly advance to adept mage.”

“Fine then, let’s start!” Deo snorted coldly, obviously a little displeased at Han Shuo’s discourtesy. He then turned to nod at Fanny and Gene, giving his agreement.

To the surprise of the other necromancy students, Han Shuo stepped onto the round platform. He leisurely dealt with Fanny and Gene’s questions, then he answered some questions about the relationship between several magical theories. Some of the dark major teachers on Deo’s side deliberately tried to embarrass Han Shuo, asking him about obscure, difficult magic knowledge.

However, Han Shuo possessed Clarendon’s memories of magic. Forget his mental strength, with his own strength alone, he could already be considered an archmage who had been thoroughly tempered. The seemingly complex problems couldn’t stump him as he fluently answered them all with merrily twinkling eyes.

At this point, the necromancy students below were starting to feel proud, especially Lisa. She chattered and laughed at Phillide, jeering at him. She was making use of Han Shuo’s performance to mock Phillide and the group of students who’d jeered at her earlier.

Even though Deo didn’t want to admit it, Han Shuo’s answers were flawless. Han Shuo smoothly and accurately answered all of the difficult questions that they presented him with. There was nothing for them to even find fault with. In the end, they had to announce with stiff faces that Han Shuo had passed the first round.

The second round about necromancy magic performance was even easier. Han Shuo cast and skillfully deployed about a dozen spells along with adequate mental strength. With the decades of experience from

Clarendon combined with his own, Han Shuo didn't have any difficulty releasing high rank necromancy magic.

As Han Shuo released one high rank necromancy spell after another, the necromancy students below began cheering nonstop, while the dark major teachers and students had ugly expressions on their faces. Evidently, they hadn't expected Han Shuo to be able to skip one rank and advance directly to the rank of adept mage in just the a short span of six months.

"Bryan, my assessment wasn't wrong! You really are a magic genius!" Fanny was watching from the platform how Han Shuo easily dealt with the test from beginning to end. The power he demonstrated wasn't at all inferior to Fanny herself. For some difficult spells, he released them even more accurately and skillfully than her, the teacher. This made Fanny marvel.

"What's wrong with the world's order? He's actually gained so much strength so quickly!" Gene muttered with a look of disbelief, but then his thinking changed. Although Han Shuo had never attended his classes, he could still be considered one of Gene's students. With such a miraculous student, Gene could still more or less take some credit, enough for him to boast from now on. Gene felt delighted when his thoughts reached this point.

"Pass!" Deo gave a cold snort. His expression was increasingly ugly.

"Hehe, many thanks, Master Deo!" Han Shuo was all smiles from beginning to end. Be it oral knowledge or practical magic deployment, he passed it all leisurely without a single bit of effort.

Deo and some dark major teachers gathered for a discussion with glowering faces. Deo then gave a cold, devious laugh as he looked at Han Shuo. "You've managed to pass the first two rounds. Your performance has impressed everyone, so I'll just tell you about the third test. You need to hunt a rank three harpy by yourself and hand us its core in a month. Your exam can only be considered passed then!"

"Oh my gosh, how is that possible?!" The necromancy students immediately started complaining.

On their last trip to the Dark Forest, Odysseus and his team of six had been carefully on their guard when dealing with a harpy. The six person team had included mages, and swordsmen, plus a journeyman swordsman, and archer Nia, but they'd still had to be careful. This showed how fearsome a harpy was.

Deo had actually demanded Han Shuo hunt a harpy as a stepping stone to advancing to adept mage. He was obviously trying to make Han Shuo's life difficult.

Phillide's cadre all shut up when they witnessed Han Shuo's performance on the second round. Even Phillide, who'd been full of confidence, was disturbed and didn't dare to say anything else after he saw Han Shuo easily release all sorts of advanced level magic. Just when the dark major students felt their spirits had been dampened, they heard Deo suddenly announce that Han Shuo had to hunt a rank three creature—a harpy. They were excited again and laughed loudly while they threw gloating looks at Han Shuo's group.

"Master Deo, aren't you going too far? I've never heard of any dark major student having to hunt a harpy for the mage advancement exams. This is simply a mission to death, I definitely won't agree!" Fanny's delicate cheeks were red with fury, and she glared fiercely at Deo as she shouted.

Snorting coldly, Deo said with a darkened face, "Master Fanny, I'm the head of the dark major, not you. Your necromancy major is part of our dark major, and I have the right to do so. You can give up if Bryan doesn't want to accept this task, but then the first two rounds will be wasted!"

By now, Deo had made it abundantly clear that he wanted to make things difficult for Han Shuo. This conversation left Fanny trembling in rage. She pointed at Deo and shouted, "You... you are actually that despicable of a person! I'm going to look for academy dean to judge this, I won't allow you blot out the sky with one hand like this!"

"Wait!" Han Shuo still had a smile on his face. He responded in a neither fast nor slow manner. When he had everyone's eyes on him, he

looked at Deo and chuckled merrily, “Master Deo, are you sure you want me to kill a harpy?”

“Heh heh, I am sure! As long as you can prove that you have this power, I will definitely let you pass without another word!” Finally feeling the thrill of victory, Deo was smiling as he looked at Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo shrugged and said smilingly, “If so, it seems I don’t have to make a trip back to the Dark Forest again. Please determine my rank now!” Han Shuo’s space ring flashed when he finished saying these words and two harpy cores appeared in his hand. His right hand also held a pair of black iron claws, obviously also belonging to the harpies.

“I hunted down these two harpies in the Dark Forest before I returned to the Academy. These claws still retain traces of my magic. I think Master Deo won’t deny these things?” Han Shuo laughed and said, throwing a mocking look at the shocked Deo.

Suddenly, the space before Han Shuo trembled. A light flashed by and the Dean of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, Emma, appeared out of thin air. A pulse of magic shot out and circled the pair of iron claws in Han Shuo’s hand. Emma then smiled benevolently, “Indeed, I have confirmed that these two harpies were definitely killed by Bryan.”

Halting, Emma gave Han Shuo an odd glance, then turned to look at Deo with a smile. She said warmly, “There shouldn’t be any problems. I think he can truly graduate now!”

# Chapter 248: The promise

Deo's face was as ugly as it can be. No matter how much he had overestimated Han Shuo's abilities, he absolutely couldn't imagine that the latter's strength had been this terrifying. Even Deo himself might not have the power to kill two harpies by himself.

Deo simply had no words to say after Dean Emma had given her confirmation. He couldn't deny it with so many people watching. Ultimately, he could only nod in anger and say to Emma, "Since master Dean has personally confirmed it, Bryan can be considered to have officially graduated."

Saying those words, Deo snorted with a scowl as he spoke. He turned to a dark major teacher next to him and left some instructions before directly leaving the testing area, seeming to be in a foul mood.

The necromancy students snapped out of their shock after Deo left. When Lisa started cheering, the rest couldn't help but join in as they shouted happily. As for Phillide and his gang, they didn't bark another word and ran off with their tails between two legs.

"How could this be? How could this be?!" Fanny murmured, looking at Han Shuo in disbelief. No matter what, she couldn't figure out how Han Shuo managed to kill two harpies by himself. Fanny felt that even she couldn't estimate Han Shuo's current strength.

Afterwards, Fanny suddenly remembered her promise with him. She once said that as long as Han Shuo advanced to adept mage, she would consider being his girlfriend. Now, just after six months, Han Shuo had suddenly returned to the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, and had done this grand deed in such a relaxed manner. With Fanny's understanding of Han Shuo's character, he'd definitely bring up the matter.

Therefore, the unprepared Fanny panicked. Her face was red with embarrassment as she snuck a fleeting glance at Han Shuo, just to discover that he was also looking at her with shining eyes. She grew even

more frantic. She hastily left Gene with an explanation and quickly fled the scene.

When Han Shuo saw Fanny leave, he knew full well as to why and proudly chuckled in a low tone. Paying no heed to the compliments from Lisa and the other students, he turned to chase after Fanny.

“Bryan, I have some things to discuss alone with you, so come with me for a bit. There’s no need to pursue the matters regarding your graduation qualifications. There shouldn’t be any more problems!” Dean Emma immediately stopped Han Shuo with a smile when she saw that he was about to leave.

Han Shuo was slightly taken aback. He wanted to decline as he didn’t know what she wanted. However, he then told himself the matter with Fanny wasn’t as urgent, so he nodded in agreement. Han Shuo spoke a word to Lisa’s group before following Emma to her office.

They reached Emma’s office after walking for a bit. Han Shuo found a seat and sat down without any reservations, then said smilingly, “Master Dean, what can I do for you?”

“Hehe, if I remember correctly, you aren’t older than eighteen years old, and yet, you’re already a necromancy adept mage and even have the power to kill harpies. You went from being a child without any magic to having such accomplishments in just a short year. This is quite incredible!” Emma spoke at a good pace as she smiled at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo frowned involuntarily upon hearing her words. Remaining silent for a bit, he smiled and opened his mouth to speak, “Indeed, even I myself find this incredible. I wonder what Master Dean means by saying such words?”

Emma shook her head and chuckled, speaking kindly, “Child, you shouldn’t misunderstand, I hold no harsh feelings towards you. You’re a student of my Babylon Academy of Magic and Force and even studied necromancy. Now that you have such great achievements, it can be considered as a credit to our Academy.”

“Heh heh, you’ve gone from being a clueless child to having the power to

kill two Harpies in two years. I must say that this is quite the miracle. I'm sure you have encountered many strange things in these past two years, otherwise you wouldn't have progressed this fast."

"You also haven't reported to the Dark Mantle for quite some time. Candide told me to pay attention that if you returned to the Academy, that I must have you visit to the Dark Mantle as soon as possible. He seems to have a mission for you. In addition, I hope you will properly handle your relationship with Fanny. While there are things that I can't say, I just want to remind you that Fanny's father isn't someone that you will easily get along with, so you need to pay special attention!"

Han Shuo heaved a sigh of relief after Emma finished speaking. He hadn't expected Emma to be similar to Candide. Like husband like wife, they didn't seem interested in plumbing his secrets, and even sounded rather protective of him.

Nodding, Han Shuo said with a smile, "Rest assured Dean Emma, I'll definitely heed your advice. I'll also report to the Dark Mantle as soon as possible."

"That's all well and good, so I'll say no more. Your diploma and identity certificates should be ready by tomorrow if there's no problem. Deo won't dare to try any more monkey business under my watch. Hehe, Deo isn't a bad person in fact. It's just that you humiliated him last time, which is why he targeted you like this. I hope that you won't take it to heart."

"Mhm, I know!"

Han Shuo didn't say anything else and left Emma's office. He actually didn't mind the matter with Deo. Han Shuo wouldn't have many chances to come back after graduation if there were no further accidents. He naturally wouldn't have any contact with Deo in the future. Of course, if Deo himself wanted to seek death, Han Shuo didn't mind sending him on his way with the strength that he held.

Han Shuo went straight to Fanny's lab after leaving Emma's office. His mind was churning nonstop when he thought about how he would be seeing her soon. He was a little excited and couldn't quite control himself.



He was nervous like a young boy about to confess his love.

Han Shuo inhaled deeply at Fanny's door and gradually calmed his nerves. He knocked on the door with a smile, "Master Fanny, can I come in?"

"No you cannot!" Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Fanny neatly rejected him as soon as she heard his voice. This had never happened before.

Dumbfounded, Han Shuo smiled wryly, "Why?"

"Humph! I know you are up to no good this time, so just stand outside the door, or you can just disappear for half a year like last time." Fanny's voice inside the lab contained obvious resentment that anyone could tell from her tone. She was still complaining about the last time that Han Shuo had departed without a farewell.

"Master Fanny, please let me explain. I really didn't do it on purpose. I was delayed in Valen City this time. I really had no choice but to stay there. I didn't deliberately try to deceive you!" With his current breadth of experience, how could Han Shuo not understand the underlying meaning of Fanny's words? He could only stand outside the door with a wry smile and explain slowly.

"Little lecher, I'll allow you to come in, but don't try anything funny." Fanny hesitated for a bit. She understood that leaving Han Shuo standing at the door was somewhat inappropriate.

Hastily nodding his head, Han Shuo compromised to assure her, "Of course, of course. There might be bad rumors if someone sees me standing outside. That'd be even more improper."

Fanny seemed to think that Han Shuo's words made sense. The lab door made a creaking sound as she cautiously stuck out her head out and looked around. Her hand grabbed at the silent Han Shuo and yanked him inside, shutting the door. She returned to sit at the table in the middle of the room, and said in a serious manner, "Alright, what do you want?"

Laughing devilishly, Han Shuo walked to sit right in front of Fanny

without any reservations, saying, “Master Fanny, could it be that you want to deny your promise?”

Stilling her expression, Fanny pretended to be calm and flicked a glance Han Shuo, asking suspiciously, “Deny what?”

“You once said that you’d be my girlfriend when I advanced to adept mage. Now that I’ve passed the adept mage test, I can be regarded to have officially graduated from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. There is no longer a barrier between us, and so, you’ll honor your promise, won’t you?” Han Shuo didn’t beat around the bush. He asked with a smile, his eyes shining as he looked at Fanny.

Fanny couldn’t pretend to be serious anymore after hearing Han Shuo’s words. Her cheeks flared as red as the sun. She fiercely rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, then giggled in a charming manner and said the words she prepared beforehand, “I didn’t say I’d agree for sure, just that I’d give it some thought and consider it. Hehe, I’m done thinking, so what are you so anxious about?”

Fanny’s expression was delicate and charming at this time. The two crimson patches on her cheeks adorned her shy beauty even more. Having known her for so long, Han Shuo had long since been aware that she wasn’t without affection for him. Her half-hearted attitude right now only made Han Shuo unable to suppress a heart that was itching with naughty thoughts.

With a wicked laugh, Han Shuo instantly forgot the compromise earlier. He abruptly moved behind Fanny, his large hands hugging her shoulders from behind. He puckered his mouth to steal a kiss from her red cheek, then said with a grin, “Can it be that you really want to go back on your words? That isn’t the morals of a good teacher, no?”

Fanny only saw a blur when Han Shuo disappeared right before her eyes. He appeared like a ghost behind her without giving her time to react. His arms embraced her, firmly holding her to the chair as he took the chance to attack her with a kiss.

“You brazen daredevil of a little lecher, what did you promise me when

you came in?” Fanny was extremely embarrassed. Her resentment from the past half year still hadn’t dissipated yet, so she couldn’t help but struggle and yell loudly.

When dealing with a woman, one couldn’t follow her pace, but had to take the initiative, using body and soul as a double-layered attack to destroy the defenses of her heart. Han Shuo had learned many things from Emily’s body. He had long stopped being a greenhorn. Moreover, with the memory and experience from Clarendon, plus his own feelings, he was no longer passive when coming into contact with women.

While Fanny was struggling and yelling, Han Shuo held her firmly with his hands and leaned down, his hot tongue gently caressing her white, slender neck. He tenderly whispered into her ear, “I’ve thought of you, everyday and everynight for this past half year. I’ve wanted to see you at every moment. I think you already know this, don’t you? Honestly, the past days were bland when I wasn’t by your side. Only your promise encouraged me to work hard and practice. The thought of being with together with you was like a spell, haunting me to train day and night without a single moment to relax. I could advance to an adept mage today, everything was because I wanted to be with you. Could it be you wish to heartlessly hurt me?...”

The unbroken string of whispers was full of sincerity and deep affection. The tender voice was like a gentle rain that moistened Fanny’s dry soul. The hot tip of Han Shuo’s tongue wantonly probed about, like a catalyst that started to destroy her soul’s defense. Fanny, whose very heart was still struggling, slowly fell into the net of love woven by Han Shuo.

“Oh... Bryan...” Fanny softly moaned, tears had unknowingly filled her eyes. Her struggling body suddenly melted and her mouth curved into a sweet smile as she listened to Han Shuo’s whisperings of passionate love.

“Do you know? I truly can’t do without you!” Han Shuo finally pulled Fanny up from the chair and embraced her tightly. His look was fiery and directed right at her as he tenderly professed his affection.

The line of defense in her soul completely collapsed. Fanny softly

whimpered and threw herself into Han Shuo's chest. Her hands clutched his strong back, and she stood on the tips of her toes as her fragrant lips reached for Han Shuo's.

A beautiful woman was offering her cherry lips, so Han Shuo naturally wouldn't be politely aloof. He immediately held her and gave a blazing hot kiss.

Beautiful Fanny was the one that Han Shuo truly loved. From the moment he'd stepped into this world, perhaps it was the lingering emotions from Bryan's thoughts, or her kindness that'd moved Han Shuo's heart. He was deeply infatuated with her, a fact that had never changed.

Even after all the earth-shattering changes, even after Han Shuo's power soared nonstop, even with Emily and Phoebe, who were no less beautiful than Fanny, his initial and most sincere affection for Fanny had never been affected.

Han Shuo was now accustomed to the ways of this world. He understood that as long as he had enough strength, it wouldn't be difficult to obtain whatever he wanted. Money, power, and beauty were his trifecta of favorite things, and were precisely the three things that he didn't have in his past life.

Why would one mind the petty things in life if one could simply have everything they wanted? Why mind how others look at you? Han Shuo had decided to indulge himself, and no longer concealed his desires!

## Chapter 249: Rebirth pill

Han Shuo and Fanny embraced each other affectionately. However, Han Shuo wasn't anxious to take her. He only continued to use tender words to declare the feelings that he felt deep in his heart.

When Han Shuo realized that Fanny had completely let down her guard, he took out a pill from his space ring and smiled, "Eat it!"

"What is this?" Fanny smiled happily, her eyes sparkling. She looked curiously at Han Shuo and asked.

The rebirth pill was round and crystal clear, like a beautiful bright green jewel, and emitted a refreshing fragrance. Han Shuo had refined it back when he had been in the cemetery of death. It had the effect of completely transforming an ordinary person's body. A batch had only seven pills. Han Shuo had already eaten one. He had confirmed its effects and intended to use the rebirth pill to reform her body, giving her a surprise.

"A great pill!" Han Shuo smilingly said.

"Being all mysterious again, you bad thing!" Fanny rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, as she casually picked up the rebirth pill. She popped it into her mouth without another word.

Seeing her swallow it so quickly, Han Shuo was shocked for a moment before hastily urging, "Quick, sit down and don't think of anything else."

Han Shuo couldn't explain in time, so he used his hands to press her back into her seat. He then placed both of his hands on the middle of her back and began to transmit magical yuan into her body.

"Mm, what on earth did you give me to eat? It feels like a fire is burning in my stomach!" Fanny felt like a fire had been lit in her body after swallowing the rebirth pill. Her body temperature rose quickly, making her yell out in panicked voice.

She then seemed to misunderstand as she couldn't help but struggle and roar in fury, "Damnable brat! You gave me that kind of medicine didn't you!? How could you be so despicable?"

Fanny had misunderstood and her heart was in a mess. She was both disappointed and furious at Han Shuo, wanting to escape his grip as her body madly struggled.

Han Shuo panicked, his face paled. He immediately used his left hand to firmly press down on Fanny's shoulder and hastily shouted, "This isn't an aphrodisiac. I swear. You trust me so little?"

Fanny became a little calmer upon hearing his words. She could feel that although there was a fire in her body, it wasn't a lustful flame. Therefore she stopped struggling and said quickly, "Eh, you're always up to nothing good, so I just misunderstood your intentions. I won't move anymore now!"

Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry upon hearing her words. When he thought about it, his relationship with Fanny was indeed a little out of order. It was understandable for her to assume his intentions were bad.

"Alright, don't speak. Just calm your soul and empty your mind, like you're meditating!" Han Shuo released Fanny's shoulder and moved his hand to the middle of her back. He quickly poured magical yuan into her body and helped her diffuse the medicinal energy.

Dense mists wrapped around the two, black electric sparks shot out from Han Shuo's palm into Fanny's body. Fanny sat still and proper, her whole body relaxed as she allowed Han Shuo to act as he wished, completely trusting him.

Han Shuo released his hand with a smile roughly an hour later, heaving a long sigh before he leaned in and asked, "How are you feeling?"

"Eh, I need to go to the toilet!" Fanny was somewhat embarrassed. She whispered with a reddened face.

Han Shuo let loose with a loud string of laughter and said, "That sounds about right. You'll want to go to the toilet over the next three days. The waste and filth in your body will be excreted during this time, after which your body will be reformed in ways beyond your imagination. I'll come back to see you again then."

A series of pitter-patter sounds burst out from Fanny's body. Fanny couldn't hold it in anymore. She sprang up with a flushed face, huffing and yelling, "How is this different from a laxative? You hateful brat!"

Fanny leapt to open the door and ran out before Han Shuo could respond, not daring to stay for a moment. She obviously couldn't hold it back anymore.

Han Shuo gave a long, devious, odd laugh after Fanny left. He then promptly left as well. He followed a narrow, twisting trail to the back mountain to avoid bumping into the other necromancy students and exited the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

Han Shuo's actions would definitely have caused a sensation upon return. He would stop being associated with the Academy after procedures were wrapped up in three days. Thus, it was more appropriate to leave through the back door to avoid the chatter of Lisa and the other students.

Han Shuo didn't immediately go and report to the Dark Mantle after walking out of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. He hadn't been back for a long time, so it wouldn't matter if he visited a day or two later.

It currently seemed quite lively in front of the Boozt Merchant Guild as many carriages stood there. Han Shuo went straight inside after arriving.

"Eh, if this isn't Mr. Bryan? What brings you here?" The two guards at the door both recognized Han Shuo. They greeted him with surprise as he hadn't come to visit in a long time.

"Mhm, it has indeed been a long time since I last came by. Has the lady of the house returned?" Han Shuo nodded with a smile and asked in a friendly manner.

"The lady came back a long time ago. If Mr. Bryan has come to discuss business with the lady this time, why don't you drop by a little later?" This guard had a difficult expression, he hesitated momentarily before opening his mouth to speak.

"Oh, why is that? Can it be that your lady isn't home?" Han Shuo inquired with confusion, then laughed lightly, "No problem, I can just

meet with Fabian. If Fabian is absent, I can still chat with Jack!"

Suddenly, Phoebe's angry shout echoed from inside. Han Shuo was stunned before his face turned grave. He curiously asked, "What's going on here?"

The guard smiled wryly as he looked at Han Shuo, saying in all honesty, "There's some chaos going on inside at the moment. Some big businessman called Cameron seems to want Miss Phoebe to assent to something, but she didn't. Things aren't look very good."

"Many thanks for the reminder. You don't seem to know much about my relationship with your merchant guild." Han Shuo replied before rushing in to see what was happening.

That Cameron fellow had wanted Phoebe to join his alliance last time at Lawrence's residence, but she'd turned him down. Apparently he still hadn't given up on the idea after so long. Judging from Phoebe's furious shout, the scene inside was likely not very amiable.

No matter how he looked at it, Phoebe could already be considered Han Shuo's woman. He naturally wouldn't stand for it if someone bullied her. Therefore, he dashed forward at an extremely fast speed and appeared at the source of Phoebe's angry shouts in the span of just a few breaths.

A group of ten surrounded Phoebe in a pavilion at the crack of the artificial mountain that Han Shuo and Phoebe had once hid themselves in. The familiar place was now full of tension, with some strange faces readying their weapons for a fight.

Apart from Cameron, who Han Shuo had met at the residence of Finance Minister Eevee, everyone else was unfamiliar. These people were either flowery dressed merchants, or highly skilled mages or swordsmen. The gang looked at Phoebe and Fabian's group with ugly faces, as if just one more unwanted word would cause them to spring into action.

Several guards of the Boozt Merchant Guild stood in the surroundings with rage burning in their bellies, their weapons already unsheathed as if they just needed one order from Phoebe for them to engage in a pitched battle.



“Bryan, when did you return?” Her pretty eyes suddenly brightened with delight at Han Shuo’s sudden appearance. Phoebe was ecstatic as she exclaimed in surprise.

“Humph! Just a little boy toy, what can he do?” A sturdy man, whose logo on his chest clearly indicated him as a senior swordsman, cast a disdainful glance at Han Shuo. He seemed to know about Han Shuo and Phoebe’s relationship.

“Oh, is that so?” Han Shuo gave an odd laugh before jeering, “Then try taking a blow from this little boy toy, shall we?”

When his words fell, the already annoyed Han Shuo punched out. There wasn’t any energy pulse nor powerful momentum to it, even the speed of it was neither fast nor slow. The punch seemed soft and without strength.

Accordingly, the senior swordsman still retained his mocking expression and said coldly, “Just a little boy toy indeed, even his punch is weak with no bite.”

The swordsman then raised his hand. Smiling viciously, he aimed a blow right at Han Shuo’s incoming punch. Obviously, he intended to seriously injure Han Shuo with this blow and intimidate the Boozt Merchant Guild’s guards.

The merchants with Cameron all had leisurely smiles on their faces. They looked at Han Shuo like he was a fool, sure that he would be severely injured.

On the other hand, Fabian, who stood by Phoebe’s side, showed an excited expression. Having seen Han Shuo in action, he believed that the punch was more than met the eyes. As for Phoebe, her face was cold as ice and her lips curved with a touch of cruelty.

Cracking sounds rang out. The yet savagely smiling senior swordsman suddenly emitted shrill, mad screams like the howling of wolves and weeping of ghosts after his blow collided with Han Shuo’s.

The sturdy body was blasted backwards by an astounding force, making heavy bouncing sounds. When his butt finally touched the ground, the

swordsman uncontrollably sprayed out one mouthful of blood after another. Even his shrill screams were muffled by the blood. He looked at Han Shuo, horrified, as his mouth wouldn't stop whimpering tragically.

# Chapter 250: Poison of Fire and Ice

Han Shuo's punch had contained magical yuan, along with the punch's own astounding destructive ability. The senior swordsman, who'd been jeering earlier, not only had the blood vessels and meridians of his right arm completely shattered, but his bones broken as well. This arm would be useless from now on.

Han Shuo curved his lips and grinned nonstop as he said coldly, "If you still dare to be boorish, then leave your life here today!"

The senior swordsman bled uncontrollably from his mouth. He looked at Han Shuo, horrified. He couldn't even finish uttering a whimper and had been completely owned by the latter.

A space archmage with a vicious appearance was standing next to Cameron. He wore a brown magic robe, his face riddled with pockmarks. His eyes flashed as he looked at Cameron. Backed up by this man, Cameron nodded slightly, as if agreeing to some idea proposed by him.

The space archmage with the pockmarked face was the most powerful person in Cameron's gang. When he saw Cameron nod his head, the archmage slightly moved his lips and quickly chanted out a magic spell.

It was as if waves of water had suddenly risen up in the surrounding areas. Magical elements violently permeated through the air, bringing with them a wondrous binding force. The whole space seemed to be restrained, and no one could move their hands or feet.

The vicious looking space archmage once again chanted another magic spell. The still space seemed to be sliced by a glass-like blade with Cameron at its center. The space slices also included Cameron's people. The invaders escaped the space imprisonment after a few sparkling white lights.

"Refusing a toast only to be forced to drink to a forfeit. It is you who seek your own death!" The archmage looked sinisterly at Han Shuo's group and screeched in a voice that sounded like a tool scratching against the glass, making one's scalp tingle.

“Mr. Aubrey, your skills are really quite amazing!” Cameron laughed loudly. Due to the space around Cameron being cut, his group could resume their movement.

“No need to be polite, I’m only following Duke Ashburn’s orders.” The space archmage replied to Cameron’s flattering with an arrogant, strict face.

“This brat is called Bryan. He made the acquaintance of Hahn of the Betteridge family at the banquet hosted by the Empire’s Finance Minister. Wouldn’t it be bad if we also detain him?” Cameron hesitantly asked Aubrey, pointing at Han Shuo.

Aubrey coldly smiled and threw back his head. He threw a disdainful glance at Han Shuo and said, “What can this brat do? You think our Duke Ashburn is afraid of that old dude Hahn?”

Putting on a smiling face, Cameron flattered, “Of course not, of course not. Since that’s the case, let’s capture them all. We can release them after I’ve taken over the Boozt Merchant Guild.”

“Mhm, this must be done quickly. The duke has already become a bit impatient. You must hold all of the Empire’s major merchant guilds in your hand in a short amount of time. As for the small ones without foundations, kill them all if there dare to disobey. We don’t want to wait any longer.” Aubrey turned his nose up in the sky with a cold face, as if he found it annoying to have to deal with this merchant.

“Understood. How would I dare not put forth my all for His Grace the Duke!” Cameron’s face was painted with an expression of loyalty as he vowed solemnly.

Nodding, Aubrey said, “Good. No more nonsense. I’ll tie up these people, making it easy for you to bring them out of the Boozt Merchant Guild. Just lock up this woman called Phoebe. Don’t get any other ideas. You’ll bring bad luck upon your own heads if you anger her master!”

Cameron didn’t dare to disagree. He repeatedly nodded his head in understanding while looking at Phoebe with a hint of shock. He appeared unable to comprehend the origin of Phoebe’s master, who even Duke

Ashburn would unexpectedly have scruples about.

Aubrey took a deep breath and shook the left hand hidden in his sleeve. His space ring emitted a faint light and a blue jade magic staff appeared in his hand. He opened his mouth, about to chant another magic incantation.

Exactly at that moment, the space suddenly shattered with Han Shuo as the epicenter . A faint, cold light shot out like lightning and swam around like lightning, releasing Phoebe and the others from their rigid states.

The faint, cold light circled around once and returned back to Han Shuo's palm. Then a cold, savage killing intent emitted from his body. He calmly looked at the shocked space archmage Aubrey and asked Phoebe, "Phoebe, how should we deal with these people?"

"How could it be? Who are you? How are you able to break out of my space binding?" Aubrey looked horrified. He couldn't believe his eyes and shouted loudly. His left hand clutched the magic staff, about to release his next spell.

Cameron and his group were also shocked, shouting at the guards to protect them. They looked at Han Shuo with some fear as they retreated into the middle of the guards. Han Shuo, who had the power to destroy the binding space of a space archmage, wasn't someone their guards could deal with. The merchant bunch understood this clearly so they nervously prepared to defend against his attack.

Phoebe had a somewhat ugly look on her face. Looking at Cameron's group with resentment for a while, she sighed in resignation and said, "Let them go!"

Han Shuo was appalled. They enemies had knocking on their door, yet Phoebe actually swallowed and endured it. It didn't seem like her personality. Then Han Shuo thought about the name of Duke Ashburn and seemed to understood something. His heart was overflowing with anger, as he coldly shouted, "Isn't that too easy for them?"

"Let them go!" Phoebe sighed and said somewhat helplessly.

"Haha, what can you people do? In the Empire, Duke Ashburn's power is

as high as the sky. With just your little merchant band, how can you go against His Grace?!" Aubrey was very proud. He wildly laughed and headed straight for the door.

To be able to destroy a space archmage's space binding, Han Shuo's power was definitely not lower than the caster's. With Han Shuo, who was on par or even a level higher than him, and Phoebe as well, Aubrey knew he couldn't complete the task. Naturally he wouldn't want to stay here any longer.

Seeing Aubrey flee, Cameron and his men obviously didn't dare to stay. Glancing with fear at the murderous Han Shuo, Cameron nervously followed Aubrey.

"Halt!" Han Shuo suddenly roared. Han Shuo's body was shrouded with murderous intent, a frosty, violent air bursting out like a river destroying the dam.

This air was vicious to the extreme. It was like a substance heading straight towards the throng of people who were attempting to leave. Under that terrifying pressure, even Aubrey broke out into a cold sweat. He couldn't move as his body was rigidly stuck in place.

As for the merchants, their bodies were trembling like mad, backs overflowing with sweat. Han Shuo was like a furious beast that would go berserk at any time, staring at them with a bloodthirsty red glow in his eyes. They felt as though they would be torn to pieces if they made even the slightest careless move.

"Bryan, this is the Boozt Merchant Guild, I'm begging you!" Phoebe was shocked, Han Shuo's strength had skyrocketed in just four months. She was both happy and frightened that he was emitting such a terrifying aura.

She was happy because, with Han Shuo's rapid progress, their safety would be guaranteed from now on. She was frightened because she couldn't see through his temper. He now had the power to severely injure these merchants. If he recklessly used all of his power on them, it would likely bring disaster upon the guild, so she begged with mixed feelings.

Han Shuo took in a deep breath. He'd understood when he heard Phoebe deliberately stressed on the three words "Boozt Merchant Guild". Whatever the situation was, he couldn't take action and brought her trouble. This was also the capital of the Empire. Many things couldn't be resolved by just blindly killing people.

His body flashing, Han Shuo appeared behind Aubrey. He patted the latter's shoulder, coldly stressing each word, "Aubrey is it? I've memorized your face, and you should also remember mine. Remember, those who dare to harm my people will pay the price sooner or later."

While Han Shuo spoke, the hand on Aubrey's shoulder flicked out two faint lights of red and purple between the index and middle finger. The lights were covered by his palm as they fell into Aubrey's body.

At this point, Aubrey had just about lost his wits. When he heard Han Shuo shout "halt", he'd been prepared to fight at anytime. However, Han Shuo's speed was devilish and had completely destroyed his defenses. He didn't even had time to react when he saw Han Shuo appear out of thin air and felt a large hand clamp down on his shoulder.

Even as an archmage, he had no chance of winning when he was in such close quarters with this horrifyingly powerful fellow. Aubrey's aura died down as he stood still and docile without another sound, listening to Han Shuo's threats. He could obviously feel the murderous intent when Han Shuo patted his shoulder.

Due to this nervous, tense state, he wasn't calm enough to sense any abnormalities. He also didn't notice the two hot and cold entities entering his body.

"Good. You bloody bunch of bastards can get the hell out of here!" Seeing that the poison of ice and fire was planted in Aubrey's body, Han Shuo walked back towards Phoebe with a cold face. Passing by the terrified Cameron, he randomly patted Cameron's body, and a red purple light fleetingly flashed. Han Shuo smiled blandly, "You also be careful."

After he arrived at Phoebe's side, the murderous intent was withdrawn. Aubrey and the others didn't dare to utter nonsense and hurriedly fled.

One trip to hell was enough for these people to fear Han Shuo from the depths of their hearts.

“I’m sorry. These people are under the command of Duke Ashburn. If something happened to them within the guild, it will be very difficult to handle!” After those people left, Phoebe looked apologetically at Han Shuo and said somewhat timidly.

Smiling as he nodded his head, Han Shuo no longer emitted the murderous aura. He was back to his calm and indifferent self as he said, “Don’t worry, nothing will happen to them at Boozt Merchant Guild. However, I guarantee they won’t be safe for long.”

Taken aback, Phoebe exclaimed, “You want to assassinate them? After what happened today, if you assassinate them not long after their return, everyone will know it’s us. This is not a good idea!”

Smiling mysteriously, Han Shuo assured, “Don’t worry, am I someone who doesn’t know how to look at the big picture?”

“All of you leave first. I have something to discuss privately with Bryan.” Phoebe looked at the guards, plus Fabian and several trusted confidantes of the guild, frowning somewhat worriedly as she ordered.

After this incident, the guards and trusted confidants of the guild once again were aware of their relationship. As Phoebe ordered, they silently dismissed themselves, and all disappeared from the pavilion after a while.

“Just what’s going on?” Han Shuo gently asked after those people left.

Seeing no one else around, Phoebe threw herself into Han Shuo’s embrace. She used some strength and hugged him tightly then softly murmured, “It feels really good to have you beside me again.”

The two embraced each other tightly. Phoebe told Han Shuo about what happened to her after they separated at the Valley of Sunshine. From her words, Han Shuo roughly understood that because he and Phoebe had stayed in the Valley of Sunshine for a while, Boozt had no one at the helm. Cameron had taken advantage of this and led a bunch of merchants to occupy the guild.



“Okay, I understood!” Han Shuo patted Phoebe’s shoulder to sooth her, then took out a rebirth pill and said softly, “Eat it.”

Han Shuo told her about the side effects of the pill first to prevent Phoebe from misunderstanding that it was an aphrodisiac or laxative like Fanny had last time.

Phoebe rolled her eyes at Han Shuo then swallowed the rebirth pill. Han Shuo helped her diffuse the pill. When Phoebe quickly ran for the toilet, he left to report to the Dark Mantle.

# Chapter 251: Becoming a famous person

Mt. Ordas was at an altitude high above sea level and was covered in clouds all year round. The Dark Mantle headquarters were situated right in the middle of the mountain's belly, guarded by all sorts of experts. The security here was even more strict than the Empire's palace.

Han Shuo passed through the entrance using the magical transportation matrix. Identity badge in hand, he moved without impediment deep into the mountain belly. After a few turns, he arrived at the transportation matrix leading to Candide's place.

"Wait a bit, Lord Candide is currently not in the headquarters. I'll go to notify him, the Lord should come back in a short while." Only at this point did the Dark Star guide, who'd led Han Shuo to Candide's place from the transportation matrix, explained at a neither fast nor slow pace.

"Is that so? Alright." Han Shuo nodded in understanding.

"Mhm, then I'll take you to the waiting area and notify you immediately when Lord Candide returns!" The Dark Star envoy also nodded, then spun on the transportation matrix.

A white light flashed and Han Shuo appeared in a wide, square stone chamber that was as big as four basketball courts combined. There were many soft chairs and tables set up, with dazzling displays of various fruit desserts, plus some books on the table. Many people of different appearances surrounded these places, patiently either eating or flipping through the books on the tables, seemingly also waiting.

Except for the transportation matrix where Han Shuo was standing, soft carpet covered the surrounding ground. A dozen or so glass lanterns hung above, lighting up the entire stone chamber.

"Hey! Hello there, you look unfamiliar! Is this your first time here?" A short haired, young and pretty girl stood in front of Han Shuo, cheerfully greeting him.

"Mm, it's my first time here. How do you do?" Han Shuo walked towards

this lively young girl with a smile on his face, intent on learning about news within the Dark Mantle headquarters.

“I’m Chrissie, a fire journeyman mage. Currently, I’m a rank three Dark Star, nice to meet you.” This girl named Chrissie was quite talkative. She smiled at Han Shuo and warmly greeted him in a familiar manner.

“Hehe, I’m Bryan, also a rank three Dark Star like you. I’m a necromancer.” Han Shuo smiled as he walked towards Chrissie and introduced himself.

However, last time he’d left Valen City for the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo had already known from Emily that his rank was already Dark Moon.

However, since Candide was in charge of Han Shuo, only he could upgrade Han Shuo’s badge to officially confirm his rank as a Dark Moon. Han Shuo hadn’t reported for a half year already, so although he’d advanced to the rank of Dark Moon, it had yet to be made official.

“Hah! So you’re also a rank three Dark Star! Which Lord are you following?” Chrissie giggled, and pulled up a chair for Han Shuo.

“Chrissie, you’re on the bench with no missions. Why must you keep chatting up random people? Are you trying to harm them?” A robust journeyman swordsman next to Chrissie rolled his eyes.

“Allis, what nonsense are you spouting? Who wants to harm people?” Chrissie abruptly turned around, huffing and glaring at that journeyman swordsman.

“Yet you still deny it! You fire mages make a mess of everything. On our last mission, you burned half the village, throwing my mission down the drain. The boss furiously lectured me. I’m already miserable thanks to you, so don’t go around harming others.” Allis wryly smiled, shaking his head. He turned to Han Shuo and winked, as if telling him to be careful.

Han Shuo lifted his head and grinned with goodwill, then wrinkled his brow to read the book in his hand. As it turned out, the books on the tables were actually the latest secret intelligence reports circulating internally in the Dark Mantle. They included everything in the most recent

period, such as news on every aspect of the Empire. The topics ranged from large ones, such as frontier battles, to the small petty gossip about some aristocrat's odd quirks.

With Han Shuo's current brain capacity, he only needed to flip through a book once to memorize its contents. He didn't care about the small petty gossip, but those regarding Valen City and the Valley of Sunshine caught his attention.

One highlight was the Gryphon Legion's chief, Bob Ascher, betraying the Empire. According to the intelligence network of the Dark Mantle, Bob Ascher had long since colluded with the Kasi Empire. After betraying the Empire, Bob Ascher had led a group of trusted confidants to join the Kasi Empire and became one of its senior military officers.

Han Shuo's name once again appeared in the Dark Mantle's intelligence network. According to the books, it was due to Han Shuo and Emily's efforts that Bob Ascher's misdeeds were exposed. After receiving the two's report, the Dark Mantle arrived at Valen City at the fastest speed possible. They took advantage of Bob not yet erupting in rebellion to put the situation back under control.

Otherwise, if Bob Ascher had been allowed to abuse his power and creates holes in the defenses of Valen City for the Kasi Empire, who was eyeing the city like a hungry tiger, to invade, the city would have fallen quickly. Unknowingly, Han Shuo as a rank three Dark Star had become a rising star within the Dark Mantle. Han Shuo's description was attached within, and it even included his first mission where he'd uncovered the plot of wind archmage Duke from the Kasi Empire.

In addition, this intel also included news regarding the chaos in the Valley of Sunshine. The four strongest forces endlessly fighting covertly and openly, leading to daily bloodshed. This time even the Butcher and Janet's strong forces seemed to have entered the fray, joining the struggle for power in the Valley of Sunshine.

Amongst them, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band founded by Han Shuo and Trunks was gradually emerging from the fray. Under Trunks'

charisma, along with plentiful resources, they had taken advantage of the disarray to attract experts to join their mercenary band. Since the Soul Destroyer mercenary band was appearing in the internal intelligence of the Dark Mantle, it showed the band already had some standing.

As Han Shuo concentrated on the book in his hands, Chrissie stood in front of him and asked again, “Right, Bryan, which Lord do you follow?”

“Hehe, I follow Lord Candide.” Han Shuo put the book down and lifted his head smilingly to answer Chrissie.

“Lord Candide, but you’re only a rank three Dark Star, how could you possibly be following Lord Candide? Mm, your name is Bryan... can it be that you’re that Bryan? Oh my gosh!” Chrissie shook her head in confusion at first, then suddenly remembered something. She looked at Han Shuo and shouted with surprise.

When the patiently waiting members around them heard Chrissie’s shout, they all put down their fruits or books and looked at Han Shuo in astonishment.

“He’s Bryan? So young!”

“What a lucky young fellow for Lord Candide to fancy him. It would be hard for him not to be promoted quickly even if he doesn’t want to be!”

“Hee hee, his looks really don’t disappoint. If I can go on a mission with him, it would be such a sweet thing!”

Chatter erupted from the surrounding members who happened to be idle at the moment. All sorts of astonishment, admiration, and odd looks were projected at Han Shuo.

“Oh my gosh, my luck is really not bad. Bryan, if you have any mission that requires more people, can you please take me? Don’t listen to that brat Allis’ nonsense, I’m a fine fire journeyman mage! I promise I won’t be a burden to you!” Chrissie immediately recovered after exclaiming in surprise. She grabbed at the corner of Han Shuo’s clothes and begged pitifully.

“Bryan, Lord Candide has returned. Please go to the transportation

matrix!” A transportation member next to the matrix suddenly announced in a loud voice.

“If I need more people, I will consider you. See you!” The clothes that Chrissie had grabbed onto slipped out of her fingers like oil as Han Shuo twisted his body. After flashing her a friendly smile, he stood in the transportation matrix in front of the crowd’s surprised looks.

A white light flashed and Han Shuo appeared in Candide’s personal room. The old man had a gloomy expression on his face as always. Looking at Han Shuo without showing any particular expression, he only said in a low voice, “I remember telling you long ago, that even if you don’t have a mission, you still have to report back in the Dark Mantle headquarters once a month. You brat disappeared for a half year, no discipline at all!”

“I was honestly delayed by some things. I came into the possession of something in the past half year that I think Lord Candide will be very interested in!” Han Shuo’s expression didn’t change. He smiled faintly and responded.

Whether it was Han Shuo’s strength or experience, both were greatly different from the past. After half a year, the growth of his strength and experience had all greatly accelerated, and all aspects were significantly developed. Han Shuo didn’t feel any fear even in front of such a powerful figure like Candide and instead spoke to him as if speaking to a friend of the same status.

“You really are different compared to before!” Old fox Candide apparently saw through his changes. He gave Han Shuo a stunned look for a while then flashed a weird smile, “What things? Will I be interested?”

Han Shuo took out the handwritten notebook he had obtained from the forbidden land. It didn’t have any substantial knowledge on magic, only some experiences along with some obscure understanding of dark magic from Ayermike Cotton. Han Shuo had already copied a portion of the magic texts written in it. He had intended to give it to Emily along with the magic staff, since she practiced dark magic.

After careful consideration, Han Shuo had decided it would be best to hand over the notebook to dark grand magus Candide. Since Han Shuo couldn't fully understand the magic texts, the reflections on dark magic from Ayermike's notebook were useless to him.

In addition, from his multiple points of contact with Candide, Han Shuo felt that this old, suspiciously crafty looking fellow was actually truly protective of him. Giving this notebook to Candide would definitely bring about great benefits and a good future in the Dark Mantle.

"You take a look." Han Shuo smiled mysteriously, before handing the ancient handwritten notebook to dark grand magus Candide in a ceremonious manner.

"What is this? It does seem to have some history!" Candide took the handwritten notebook and said with uncertainty. After his eyes caught a small row of letters, he was immediately dumbfounded. His eyes and mouth were wide opened as if he were struck by lightning.

That small row of letters read, Ayermike Cotton!

Candide was one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle and had the power of a grand magus, but his two hands couldn't stop trembling when he held the notebook. His eyes almost popped out of their sockets, his face revealed an extremely shocked expression.

This state lasted for a few seconds, until Candide suddenly turned his eyes to stare at Han Shuo and asked with a trembling voice, "Is, is this?"

Han Shuo nodded his head and confirmed, "That's right! This is the notebook of the legendary dark mage of the Lancelot Empire, the demigod Ayermike Cotton!"

Candide was ecstatic upon hearing these words. He wouldn't stop trembling like crazy. His mouth muttered something that Han Shuo couldn't make sense of. As for Candide's two eyes, they wouldn't leave the notebook. His trembling hands flipped the pages one by one, his whole body falling into a sluggish state.

This continued for a long time until Candide sighed out, "Too

unfathomable, too wondrous! The value of this notebook is simply immeasurable!”

After he uttered these words, Candide took a few more deep breaths. Waiting until he calmed down from his excitement, he looked at Han Shuo with shining eyes and asked with some hesitation, “What do you mean in bringing this notebook to me?”

Shrugging, Han Shuo chuckled, “I’m giving it to you, obviously!”

“Bribery! Damn brat, this is despicable bribery!” Candide exclaimed, but then he suddenly shook his head and then quickly nodded, “Forget it, I want to accept this even if it’s bribery.”

Using some force to smooth down his hair, Candide spoke somewhat blankly, “Alright, I’ll take it, what’s your condition?”

Han Shuo shook his head and said smilingly, “No conditions. This thing originally belonged to the Empire. You are my boss, and me handing it over to you can’t be considered bribery, you shouldn’t worry about it!”

“Haha, right, this is the notebook of Ayermike Cotton, so of course it belongs to the Empire. I, Candide, am one of the few dark grand magi of the Empire. As long as I explain a bit of this to His Majesty the King, he will definitely allow me to read it, so how can this be bribery!”

Candide muttered to himself and laughed loudly, then he swiftly flew in front of Han Shuo and clapped the latter’s shoulder with appreciation, “Good going brat, really not bad. You did a meritorious deed again! I remember that you’re already a one star Dark Moon? Give me your badge, I’ll immediately promote you to a four star Dark Moon. To have found the relics of Ayermike Cotton, no one would dare to say anything against you jumping up two ranks. Lucky little brat, you are becoming legendary at climbing ranks in the Dark Mantle!”



# Chapter 252: A high rank

Han Shuo was overjoyed upon hearing that his rank had jumped up by two ranks. He quickly handed his iron identity badge over to Candide.

The Dark Mantle organization existed on an enormous scale, holding various resources of the Empire. Candide and the other two heavyweights held power that placed them under one person and above ten thousands. No one could afford to overlook them. As one was promoted here, they could enjoy even greater benefits, and could use their power to acquire the latest information that was not yet been known to others.

Holding Han Shuo's badge, Candide couldn't conceal his excitement as he went back to his seat. He changed the rank indicated on the badge before handing it back to Han Shuo. The stars on the back of the iron badge had disappeared, replaced by four crescent moons.

"Many thanks Lord Candide!" Han Shuo glanced at the badge and placed it back into his space ring. He smiled and thanked Candide.

Candide spread his hands, the odd smile still hanging on his face. His mood was great as he laughed joyfully, "No need to thank me. This is the reward you deserved. You brat, are very good. It hasn't even been a year since you joined and you're already a rank four Dark Moon. What a miracle."

"This was just thanks to my good luck and also master's promotion!" Han Shuo wasn't arrogant or cocky as he replied humbly.

"Alright, alright, you little bootlicker of a brat!" Candide laughed loudly as he hectored a bit. Then he raised his brows and looked raptly, "I want to know all the details of how you came across this handwritten notebook."

Han Shuo knew early on that Candide would carefully question this matter, so he'd already prepared a story. He briefly described the situation at the forbidden land, hiding what needed to be hidden and said what he could say. Han Shuo gave the credit of lifting the confining force completely to the Cyclops and Gold Dragon, saying only that he was extremely lucky. He said only after the two big creatures left did he enter

the forbidden land and obtain the handwritten notebook.

Candide was amazed after Han Shuo had finished. He murmured, "I didn't expect the legendary forbidden land to be so strange that no one would be able to leave. Now that it's lost that power of imprisonment, it's still simply unbelievable. Could it be that demigod Ayermike died there? There is something weird about this."

"I carefully swept over that area once. After the two super rank creatures left, there was nothing left except for the tombstone. Even if you have someone go to investigate, I'm afraid there is nothing left to discover." When leaving the forbidden land, Han Shuo had erased all traces that had been left behind in it. Even if Candide really sent someone there, they wouldn't find anything.

"Is that so?" Candide said softly and continued, "However I should still send someone to investigate. This is related to the deity Ayermike, so it shouldn't be dealt with carelessly. I think his Majesty would do the same."

"Up to you! I'm not going to go back there. I've just returned from that place and didn't find anything after searching every nook and cranny!" Han Shuo appeared uninterested in this mission, as he shrugged his arms in seeming laziness.

"Up to you, if you don't want to, then I'll just find someone else!" Candide glanced at Han Shuo and didn't nag him. He gave Han Shuo a puzzled look then said, "Right, if you don't have anything there, why keep running into that Dark Forest? That area isn't for ordinary folk to enter!"

"Heh heh, not answering this question is also my right, isn't it?" Han Shuo laughed shamelessly because he knew that the Dark Mantle couldn't pry into the members' private matters.

Glaring at Han Shuo, Candide helplessly waved his hand and said, "Forget it forget it. You already brought back this item, so I don't care for your private matters. In giving me this handwritten notebook, you've already done a deed of great merit publicly speaking, and so I owe you a big favor privately speaking."

"That's great!" Han Shuo laughed joyfully then inquired, "Mhm, good.

I've already reported in, so if there is nothing else, then I'll be leaving first, I still have some other things to deal with!"

"Wait wait!" Candide stopped him, then murmured, "I've actually prepared a mission for you, but you brat could even come back alive from the depths of the Dark Forest, and you're a necromancy adept mage now. This simple mission seems unsuitable for you now."

"Well, I have three that are a little more difficult. The first is to go to Balthazar City and assassinate a traitor called Angel. This traitor has an official role in Balthazar City, so all of his acts appear to be legitimate, so we can only assassinate him in order to avoid troubles."

The second is to go to the Bimson City in the north of the Empire. It's said that someone stored a large amount of weapons within the barren hills around the city. We need to send someone to investigate this. The third mission is to guard someone you know, Prince Lawrence.

Eh, even though his identity hasn't officially been recognized, I think you already know of it. This third mission was personally issued by His Majesty the King. Although he's already arranged some of his own men, the King is still worried that it's not enough. You can participate if you're interested."

Assessing the matter a bit, Han Shuo believed that there was still some danger on Phoebe's side. He'd just returned to the Empire and still had a lot of things that he needed to handle, so he couldn't leave immediately. Han Shuo said, "Alright, I choose the third mission. I'm already familiar with Lawrence anyway, so protecting him is killing two birds with one stone!"

"Then it's up to you. However, Lawrence's identity is special, so you have to tread carefully to avoid bringing trouble upon yourself!" Candide had long reminded Han Shuo to deal with Lawrence properly. He once again advised this when Han Shuo accepted the mission, explaining that it would even be more intense once the princes began their fight for power.

"Rest assured, I understand!" Han Shuo nodded in understanding. Then he hesitated for a moment and asked, "Master Candide, what kind of

person is this Duke Ashburn?”

Candide was surprised for a moment and stared at Han Shuo, suspiciously. “Why? Does he want to recruit you?”

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said in a low voice, “That’s not it. I think I may have offended him, so I reckon that he won’t let me off easily.”

Shocked, Candide said with a darkened expression, “Politically speaking, Grand Duke Ashburn is the Empire’s minister of operations. His younger sister is the Queen, so he is the uncle of the eldest son, Prince Charles. This person is vile and always seeks revenge for his grievances. He reigns over a large amount of death sworn warriors, relying on his position and the covert support of the Queen to murder many of his political enemies. You must be careful after offending him.”

“Are you afraid of him?” Han Shuo was silent for a while before he suddenly asked.

Rolling his eyes at Han Shuo, Candide said, “It’s not that I’m afraid of him, but more that I don’t wish to recklessly provoke him either. You already know that our Dark Mantle is the King’s hand in the shadows. Everything we do represents the king. Particularly us three rank five Dark Suns are directly under his charge.”

When the King is still healthy, no one can do anything to us. Even Ashburn has to tread carefully, preventing us from grasping his weak points. However, once his Majesty the King abdicates and the power shifts, if the new king nullifies our authority, Ashburn won’t have any more scruples about moving against us, do you understand?”

Nodding, Han Shuo said in a low voice, “I understand. Alright, I’m going to find Lawrence then!”

Han Shuo immediately set off after speaking. Candide suddenly spoke up just when he was about to leave, “You are one of mine, and as you are now a rank four Dark Moon, even if Ashburn wants to deal with you, he’ll have to be cautious. Heh heh, since I’ve received the handwritten notebook of Ayermike this time, I’ll help you in moment of need!”

“Thank you!” Han Shuo turned his head and sincerely thanked Candide, then left the room.

Leaving Mt. Ordas through transportation matrices, Han Shuo headed for the house of Finance Minister Eevee. He intended to ask about how Lawrence was getting along and how things were on his side.

“I’m Bryan. I’ve come to call upon Lawrence. Please notify those within for me.” Han Shuo smiled at the guard after arriving at Lawrence’s house.

Han Shuo had long been aware that the clothes made the man. He was adorned in a perfectly tailored blue warrior outfit, the collar trimmed with several precious stone fragments. While Han Shuo looked capable and alert, the confident smile on his face made him appear even more uncommon.

The guard, who normally looked down on folks, realized that this was an exceptional person. He didn’t dare to make things difficult for Han Shuo and respectfully said, “Please wait a moment” and quickly went inside.

Lawrence personally came out not long afterwards. He already started laughing heartily before reaching Han Shuo, “You’ve finally returned! I came to look for you at the necromancy department several times already.”

Several unfamiliar faces walked behind Lawrence. Each possessed extraordinarily calm bearings. They were evidently experts with great skills. What Candide had said wasn’t wrong indeed. Lawrence was exceedingly cautious about his safety.

“Alright, nothing should happen in broad daylight. You guys can stop following me.” Lawrence turned his head to say this after walking out. He then strode quickly towards Han Shuo and gave the latter a warm hug, saying, “Why have you suddenly remembered to come looking for me?”

“Eh, I actually didn’t remember to look for you, just that I was tasked with a mission and so that’s why I came!” Han Shuo explained honestly as he smiled wryly at Lawrence.

Lawrence was stunned and then laughed out loud, “So that’s why! It

doesn't matter, it's good that you've come."

"Come come come, come with me. We can find a comfortable place to chat." Lawrence dragged Han Shuo along, making straight for the carriage at the entrance.

Seeing that Lawrence was coming, the normally lazy coachman immediately became extremely spirited. He hastily ran to the side and lifted the curtains for Lawrence to enter. The unfamiliar experts spread out, either blatantly or covertly following behind, carefully ensuring the prince's safety.

"Go to the Rose Garden at the north workshop!" Lawrence ordered the coachman as soon as they had settled down.

"What's that?" Han Shuo was practically dragged into the carriage by Lawrence. He couldn't help but ask after the carriage started to move.

"Heh heh, you'll know when we get there. Don't concern yourself so much. Tell me, where did you go to mess around after we parted ways?" Lawrence smiled mysteriously, asking Han Shuo.

"Nothing much, I just stayed idle in the Valley of Sunshine for a while, then went to the Dark Forest to kill some magical beasts." Han Shuo smiled slightly. He responded effortlessly and concealed everything.

"It can't be that simple. I heard from junior sister Phoebe that you did some stunning things in the Valley of Sunshine! Heh heh, you guys made such a mess at the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. Did you really think I'm that ignorant?" Lawrence made a you-don't-consider-me-your-brother face. He squinted his eyes and curled his lip at Han Shuo.

"Hehe, it was really nothing. Speaking of your junior sister Phoebe, you're her senior brother and yet you don't know anything. Her merchant guild was insulted and bullied, and you actually didn't help her?" Han Shuo wrinkled his brows, reflecting the blame back onto Lawrence.

Lawrence paused and was surprised by these these words. He then furrowed his brow and asked with puzzlement, "What happened?"

Han Shuo looked carefully at Lawrence and hesitated. He asked in

surprise, “You don’t know?”

“This junior sister of mine doesn’t like owing anyone favors. Whenever something happens, she never wants to bother others. I know her temper, so I just didn’t know what exactly happened.” Lawrence replied frankly.

“It’s like this, Cameron’s merchant alliance wanted to acquire the Boozt Merchant Guild. Cameron seems to be backed by Duke Ashburn and almost captured Phoebe in the guild.” Han Shuo’s face was cold and grave as he responded.

Suddenly furious, Lawrence slammed his hand on the carriage. He coldly snorted, “Ashburn seems to spare no effort for Charles huh? Such despicable means.”

Stopping for a moment, Lawrence heaved a long sigh, “Oh Phoebe, really. I could’ve helped her with this, but she still won’t confide in me. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t have even known known had she been taken over by Cameron’s merchant alliance.”

Thanks to the Dark Mantle’s intelligence network, Han Shuo had a general understanding of Lawrence’s abilities. He also knew that Lawrence’s men in the Gryphon Legion had taken complete control of Valen City and had now become the new chief of the Gryphon Legion.

Moreover, if Lawrence won the favor of the king, then his identity as the prince could be officially recognized. As such, he would have hopes in becoming king.

“Bryan, you offended Ashburn this time. It looks like even if we didn’t want to be good friends, it’d be hard not to.” Lawrence looked deeply at Han Shuo and said, “I currently have a good position for you. If you wish, I can help you quickly obtain a high rank in the army. This also wouldn’t conflict with your identity in the Dark Mantle. What do you think?”

# Chapter 253: Paving the way

This was a very tempting suggestion, so Han Shuo was immediately interested. However, he didn't instantly agree either. Instead, he said, "As you know, I'm a member of the Dark Mantle. Furthermore, I have a lot of things that I, myself, need to do as well, so I don't have that much time that I can spend on the military."

"I think that won't be a problem. You're a mage, so you naturally should have plenty of your own time. As long as you gain the title of duke and your own land, then you are free to do with your time as you see fit, as long as there are no issues within the territory you rule," Lawrence immediately responded as if he had been prepared for his answer.

"Then, what do you want me to do?" Han Shuo was momentarily confused, then asked as he looked towards Lawrence in confusion.

"I'll help you gain a place in the military first. As long as you've made enough contributions, I can use my relationships to help you gain the identity of a noble. Once you receive the title of a duke, then I'll help you lay your hands on some territory. Everything will be good as long as your territory develops well," Lawrence seemed to be very familiar with this sort of thing as he started explaining everything to Han Shuo with a smile.

When he'd left Valen City, Han Shuo knew that his fortunes would be tied with Lawrence sooner or later. With his current strength and the existence of the cemetery of death, Han Shuo believed that he would be able to leave unscathed, even if Lawrence lost the struggle for power.

If he wanted to climb higher, he would have to depend on a person that could help him. Lawrence was definitely a suitable candidate. He was someone who'd gained the king's affection and also held some power. Additionally, with the aid of Candide, Han Shuo believed that it wouldn't be too long before he gained power.

"It looks like we truly are going to be tied together," Han Shuo smiled and said to Lawrence.

Lawrence laughed happily, then said with pride, "We were on the same



side since ages ago. Ever since I went back to the Empire, I started helping you pave your path. Now that you've graduated from the necromancy department, and so swiftly at that, things have become even more convenient for me."

Han Shuo couldn't help but be shocked after hearing him say that. He hadn't thought that even Lawrence would receive news so quickly that he'd graduated, apart from Candide. It seemed like the two really did pay a lot of attention to him.

"Alright, I'll let you in on some of the details, then we'll go over the plan. With your strength and intelligence, I think that you reaching new heights in the Empire won't be a difficult thing as long as we cooperate with each other," Lawrence was clearly very happy as he said excitedly to Han Shuo.

Afterwards, Han Shuo and Lawrence discussed within the carriage for a long time, forming a bright path for the two of them between their schemes.

The carriage stopped after a long while. The carriage driver said with a low voice, "Young Master Lawrence, we've arrived at the Rose Garden in the northern workshops!"

"Alright, I need to welcome you properly upon your rare return. Come, let's go in and enjoy ourselves!" Lawrence said to Han Shuo after lifting the curtains and jumping down the carriage.

Han Shuo raised his head and looked around when he alighted. He saw a grand building in front of him with roses engraved on the walls made from white marble. At the same time, he also saw numerous beautiful carriages parked all around.

Meanwhile, the experts, that had been following Lawrence, walked over from a corner of the streets and stood behind him like guards.

"You guys stay out here. There won't be any problems inside the Rose Garden, so don't worry," Lawrence turned his head back to look at the people, then ordered faintly.

"Sorry, young master Lawrence, we're just following orders. We have to

protect you wherever you go,” A rather loyal knight, wearing heavy armor, responded with a muffled voice.

Han Shuo was able to feel an intense killing aura from this knight. The symbol on his chestplate showed that he was an earth rider. From the calluses on his large hands, it was clear that he was someone who shouldn't be messed with.

“Jino, we're only going in to relax. Nothing usually happens in the Rose Garden normally. How can we go in together since you're all wearing armor. Why don't you stay outside?” Lawrence continued to smile without getting angry at the earth rider for being determined.

“No, orders are orders. We cannot defy our orders!” The earth rider named Jino was a stubborn person, and once again rejected Lawrence with a stern face.

“Hehe, then alright. I have no issues with it if you guys can go in!” Lawrence chuckled lightly, then pulled Han Shuo inside. When he reached the entrance, he cast a look at the guard with his eyes, then rushed in while tugging on Han Shuo.

Jino and the others followed, but they were forcefully stopped when they reached the entrance. The guards refused to let them in no matter how much they tried to explain.

Han Shuo knew through the yin demon's surveillance that the protectors out in the open had been left outside by Lawrence. However, the hidden guards being led by Lucky were trying their best to sneak into the Rose Garden through various other methods.

However, the defenses of this Rose Garden were astonishingly good. It was protected by experts openly and covertly. These included powerful swordsmen and mages specializing in different elements. These people were rather powerful, and protected the surroundings with great responsibility. Aside from the old assassin, Lucky, who'd managed to sneak in, all of the other experts had been stopped outside.

Han Shuo noticed that this Rose Garden occupied a great deal of land through usage of his yin demon's surveillance. There were numerous

artificial mountains, flowing water, hot springs with pavilions with in, and every single room was decorated in an extremely opulent manner. There was a beautiful woman in revealing clothing who was stripping as she twisted her hips and danced a mesmerizing dance within one of the large halls.

Suppressed moans rang out from several slightly smaller rooms as many noble lords and young masters spent enormous amounts of money here to enjoy all sorts of services.

Lawrence seemed to be extremely familiar with this sort of place as he walked straight in familiarly. All of the openly stationed and hidden guards recognized Lawrence. Not only did no one stop him, they often greeted him.

“Ugh, I know what this place is now!” Since the three yin demons had swiftly circled the extremely large Rose Garden, Han Shuo couldn’t help but blurt out after he understood what sort of place this was.

“Haha, all men should know what kind of place this is. All of the expenditures here today are on me, so just treat it as me welcoming you back.” Lawrence laughed frankly as he walked straight in and arrived within a wide hall. There were young and beautiful women dancing at the center of the hall, with some people that were either rich or noble watching from the sidelines. When they saw Lawrence come in, they also greeted him with smiles.

There were many soft animal-skinned chairs around the hall alongside fresh vegetables, exquisite snacks, and glasses of expensive alcohol costing a gold coin each. A large circular chandelier, with a five meter diameter, shone down upon the scene with ambiguous light, causing the women dancing to the light hearted music underneath it to appear extremely sexy.

“Hey, Lawrence, you haven’t come in a long time,” A guy, who was clearly a fop of a rich family, greeted Lawrence as the former led in a thinly covered woman exuding sexiness.

“Bruno, why do I see you every time I come here?” Lawrence casually picked up a wine glass filled with amber wine from a table laden with

numerous other drinks. He responded to this weakling dandy after taking a sip of wine.

“Life is just that boring. There are only some places in the northern workshops that spark my interest. That’s why I come over here. Isn’t it the same for you?” Bruno winked towards Lawrence and said meaningfully.

“Alright, I came here purely to entertain my friend. I won’t chat too much with you this time, so let’s have a good discussion next time,” Lawrence apologized, then dragged Han Shuo across the hall into another quiet place.

Lawrence had brought Han Shuo through a corridor, around a few corners, and into another quiet hall after a few moments. There wasn’t anyone in this hall, but there was a magic barrier around it.

Lawrence took out a magic scroll and chanted a spell. The magic scroll emitted out a hazy azure light, and the surrounding walls cracked open under the light. Lawrence turned around and indicated for Han Shuo to enter with him.

Han Shuo was shocked as he looked at the pathway under the light. He asked since he was clearly befuddled, “It’s very normal for a place like this to have a secret passageway, but why do you know about it?”

“Of course I would know about it, because I am the true owner of the Rose Garden. Bryan, since we are being honest with each other, I won’t hide this secret from you!” Lawrence laughed, then pulled Han Shuo inside. There were quite a few magical seals along the corridor that extended towards the very bottom.

There were a lot of things that made Han Shuo surprised about this hidden place. However, what shocked Han Shuo the most was that the true owner of this gold mine was Lawrence. No wonder Candide had said that Lawrence wasn’t simple during their first meeting. It seemed that he did know quite a lot of things about Lawrence.

“Come, I’ll take you to meet Phoebe and my master. I think that he must be very interested in you!” Lawrence was very satisfied with Han Shuo’s surprise as he laughed and pulled Han Shuo inside.

# Chapter 254: The use of killing aura

When he heard that Phoebe's master was here, Han Shuo was even more shocked. Phoebe had already reached the realm of a swordmaster at such a young age. In addition, when Aubrey had thought that he'd captured Phoebe at the Boozt Merchant Guild, he'd still said that he needed to treat Phoebe well in order to prevent her master from getting angry.

As Duke Ashbern's subordinate, what Aubrey did represented Duke Ashbern. It wasn't hard to figure out that Phoebe's master wasn't a simple person, since even Duke Ashbern, who held tremendous power in his hands, was so wary of him.

When Han Shuo walked beside Lawrence, he had sent his three yin demons through the path in front of them, hoping that he could obtain a picture of the place underneath.

However, as the yin demons wandered about, Han Shuo noticed that there were numerous boundaries everywhere. Some invisible boundaries even stopped the yin demons' surveillance; it seemed like the defense of the place underneath the path was extraordinarily tight.

"Hehe, the space underneath the Rose Garden is more than twice as large as it appears on the surface. I'll take you on a detailed tour later, we'll meet my master first for now!" Lawrence looked at Han Shuo proudly as he revealed his prowess little by little, like he was trying to show Han Shuo that cooperating with him was the correct decision.

Han Shuo felt that they were already ten-odd meters underground after traversing a narrow path. The dim area suddenly lit up and revealed four intersecting paths that came together where Han Shuo and Lawrence stood. There were also bright lights that were placed on the side that illuminated the four paths as clear as day.

"Follow me!" Lawrence walked to the left and he led the way for Han Shuo. When they arrived in front of a white jade door, Lawrence used the scroll once again to open the boundary that was sealing the door. The door automatically opened after a flash of white light, and Lawrence led Han

Shuo in.

“Young master Lawrence,” All of a sudden, an extremely ugly old man with a face full of scars appeared and bowed towards Lawrence.

The old man was covered in a bloody aura. No one knew how many people he had killed, but he was able to sense Han Shuo and Lawrence the moment they appeared. Furthermore, the closer that they approached the old man, the thicker the stomach-wrenching smell that was emanating from him became.

Lawrence was clearly uncomfortable, since the smile from his face disappeared. He said dryly, “Grandpa Bollands, is my master inside?”

The weird old man called Bollands stood straight with a hunchback, then raised his head to gaze at Lawrence with his grey eyes, and said remotely, “He’s inside, but master is cultivating.”

“Then I’ll wait outside for a bit!” Lawrence had already pushed past Bollands with his response and he quickly walked forwards, like he was unwilling to be too close to the old man.

The stone room in front of them was as large as a basketball court, with a lot of indentations where a lot of daily necessities were placed. However, the majority of them held numerous fine alcohols, as if the room was a storage room for exquisite wine.

Han Shuo first surveyed his surroundings after entering the room, then moved his attention onto the old man Bollands. The old man’s face was covered in scars, like if each one had been scratched on by something sharp. He looked as terrifying as a ghost from hell. Alongside the thick bloody aura that surrounded him, it was enough to give people an extremely powerful shock just by standing there.

Not only was there blood on this person’s hands, his strength was top tier. He was mostly likely an expert who was stronger than Phoebe by one rank; his aura wouldn’t have been so powerful otherwise. A person who was at the great swordmaster realm was not going to be a nobody no matter which country he lived in. The fact that he stayed in this secret room that doesn’t see daylight, in order to serve Lawrence’s master, really

did surprise Han Shuo somewhat.

“Bryan, let’s wait here for a bit!” Lawrence had already scooted far away from Bollands and he was calling out to Han Shuo while sitting on a stone chair.

“You’re not afraid of me?” Just as Han Shuo was about to leave, the old man named Bollands suddenly looked at Han Shuo and asked.

Han Shuo nodded and replied with a smile, “Of course, what is there to be afraid of?!”

“An interesting lad,” Bollands smirked as he carefully examined Han Shuo. Then he frowned as if he sensed something, which caused him to nod, “No wonder, you have a malicious aura around you that can only be felt if you carefully feel for it. From the looks of it, you shouldn’t be even twenty-five, yet your hands are dyed thick with blood at such a young age. You truly are a character!”

Even before Han Shuo had broken into the bloodlust realm, the murderous aura had always accompanied him. He hadn’t killed a lot of people before, it was just that his body absorbed a lot of specters at the forbidden place, so they continued to surround Han Shuo, making it seem like his hands were also dyed in blood.

Han Shuo smiled, but he didn’t say much. He merely nodded at Bollands and walked past him, moving towards Lawrence.

“Young man, did you know that after killing a lot of people, the killing aura can be used to increase your strength?” Bollands was silent for a slight moment after Han Shuo had left, then he suddenly shot a weird look at Han Shuo.

When he spoke, an intense wave of killing aura exploded out like a river that had been just undammed. All of a sudden, the stomach-churning smell of blood spread out and it approached Han Shuo with cold intent, like it was something physical.

“Oh god!” Lawrence wailed, then he backed off in terror until his back was against the wall. Even then, his forehead was still covered with cold

sweat as he looked at Bolland with a pale expression.

However, Han Shuo, who was closer to Bolland, was not afraid. He casually cycled the magical yuan in his body quickly, causing the evil aura hidden in his body to rush out furiously, clashing with the physical killing aura from Bolland. When the auras collided, sounds of collision could actually be heard in the air.

Even some of the table and chairs in the room continuously trembled. What was more terrifying was that after the evil aura rushed out of Han Shuo's body, it formed itself into spirals that were difficult to see with the eye, and actually started to consume Bolland's killing aura.

"When you said using killing aura, does it mean like this?" Han Shuo had a smile on his face when he plainly said this. While he spoke, he also stopped his magical yuan and the room returned to normal.

Right now, Han Shuo had already undergone three months of closed door cultivation in the cemetery of death. Adding onto the fact that he had absorbed the specters from the forbidden place, he had a much deeper understanding of the demonic arts than what Chu Canglan had left behind. His manipulation of the evil aura in the bloodlust realm had also reached a level where he could do as he wished. If Han Shuo wanted, he could absorb the killing aura in Bolland's body like he had absorbed the specters from the forbidden place.

Bolland had had an indifferent expression until this point when he looked at Han Shuo with a piercing gaze, then he said with a trembling voice, "How is this possible? How could you use it even more familiarly than me? You also know how to use this sort of power?"

Han Shuo only understood it the moment Bolland spoke. All swordsmen and knights cultivated fighting aura, but none of them could use evil aura and killing intent. However Han Shuo, who cultivated the demonic arts, was very well versed with using this type of strange power. That's why Bolland had been surprised when Han Shuo had showed off his abilities.

"No, you didn't use fighting aura at all. How is that possible?" Shock,



loss, and confusion instantly filled Bolland's heart. He stepped in front of Han Shuo and glared at him with scorching eyes, like he was fighting for Han Shuo to give an answer.

Han Shuo knew that this was a bad situation to be caught in by now. He took a deep breath and explained with a smile, "I cultivate a special type of martial technique, it's different to the cultivating of fighting aura that most people do."

"Okay, Bolland, stay outside for now. Lawrence, you two can come in now!" A benevolent voice seemed to ring out from the walls at that moment.

Lawrence immediately pulled Han Shuo towards him, then apologized to Bolland, "Grandpa Bolland, my master has told us to go in. Let's chat later."

The wall behind Han Shuo split open at that moment, and Lawrence pulled Han Shuo in. After the two of them entered, the crack in the wall healed miraculously.

There was an extremely wide training field past the wall. Apart from a few strangely shaped boulders, there were no other decorations. An old man sat on top of one of the boulders at the center of the field, and even though he had white hair and beard, he still looked very energized.

The old man had a square face, and seemed rather benevolent. He sat ramrod straight in a pure white warrior uniform. Even though he was sitting down, he looked extraordinary and seemed like he would be rather tall if he stood up.

"Teacher!" Lawrence bowed and greeted the old man respectfully the moment he entered.

The old man nodded, then he looked at Lawrence and said softly, "Rise."

Lawrence straightened himself, then he pulled Han Shuo to sit down on a piece of boulder. After the two of them took their places, Lawrence began, "This is Bryan, Phoebe's boyfriend. I mentioned him to you before!"

The old man's gaze immediately fell onto Han Shuo after he heard

Lawrence's words, and he carefully examined Han Shuo carefully without speaking. After quite a while, he finally nodded and said, "Although Phoebe is my youngest disciple, she has the most talent. Her future is unmeasurable. I hope she will inherit my martial techniques. You won't hold her back, right?"

"Of course not!" Han Shuo replied with a smile that was neither reserved nor fearful. Instead, he appeared rather laid back.

## Chapter 255: A powerful figure

“How is little Phoebe recently? I heard she stayed with you at the Valley of Sunshine for a while and did some interesting things?” The old man squinted, asking slowly and softly.

“Eh, she returned safely to the Empire from the Valley of Sunshine, but her current situation doesn’t seem very good.” From the way the old man said it, he must’ve been unclear about Phoebe’s situation so Han Shuo couldn’t help but explain.

“What happened?” The old man frowned, worried.

“Master, it’s like this.” Lawrence quickly opened his mouth to describe what happened, then smiled wryly, “You already know little senior sister doesn’t like to trouble others. She didn’t even tell me about something like this.”

“This old fellow Ashburn is getting more and more unbridled. He knows Phoebe is my disciple, yet he dared to act so presumptuously. It seems he and I are due for a conversation.” The old man coldly snorted, his face angry.

Seeing the old man become angry, Lawrence wasn’t the least bit anxious and instead revealed a slight chuckle as he said hastily, “Master, you know already how my father’s health is getting worse. Right now, my brothers are all prepared. The Duke spares no effort for Charles, and he dared to not give you face by doing such things.”

Han Shuo kept silent, his eyes carefully examining the two’s faces. When he suddenly understood something, he drew in his presence.

The old man chuckled and gazed thoughtfully at Lawrence, nodding, “I have my own plans. Alright, let’s temporarily not talk about these things today. Since you came to visit me, did you bring any good wine?”

“Of course, I couldn’t let you down no matter what!” Lawrence laughed heartily as he took out a crystal, jade-like bottle that contained blood red wine. He respectfully handed it over and said, “This is a specialty from a

small town in the Kasi Empire, named Redbud Blood. Master, please try it.”

Having seen many kinds of wine while waiting in the hall, Han Shuo understood that Lawrence’s master must be a wine lover. Now it looked indeed so.

When his thoughts reached that point, Han Shuo suddenly remembered the good wine produced by the dwarves in the Dark Forest. He thought for a bit and took out a bottle of wine from his space ring, respectfully giving it to the old man as he spoke with a smile, “This bottle of wine was brewed by the dwarves of the Dark Forest. Perhaps it isn’t that precious, but it’s much stronger than some of the good wines in the Empire.”

When Han Shuo said so, the old man looked at him with interest before taking the wine bottle. He tried shaking it, listened to the sound, then laughed happily, “What a thoughtful child. The dwarves brew naturally good wine that isn’t any inferior. I’ve had a taste before.”

Waving his hand, the old man took the two bottles of good wine from Han Shuo and Lawrence and said, “Alright, I’ve remembered Lawrence’s matter. You all leave, I’ll drink first.”

Han Shuo was surprised, not knowing what was happening. However Lawrence winked at him, indicating that Han Shuo shouldn’t ask so much and just leave with him.

Afterwards, Lawrence took Han Shuo out to the hall where Bollands stood. When Bollands saw Han Shuo appear, his eyes gleamed as he stared at the latter, saying, “Can you tell me how you understood to use murderous aura?”

“It’s a part of the martial arts I cultivate, I have no way of explaining it to you, sorry!” Han Shuo honestly replied, of course he couldn’t speak of his demonic magic method.

“Grandpa Bollands, we’re leaving first, I’ll trouble grandpa to take care of the Rose Garden.” Lawrence’s steps suddenly became much quicker as he passed by Bollands. He evidently couldn’t adapt to the pungent smell of blood on the latter’s body.

“Alright, you are Bryan?” Bollands suddenly asked while Han Shuo and Lawrence headed back the way they came.

Pausing, Han Shuo turned his head and glanced at Bollands as he politely answered, “That’s right!”

Bollands nodded his head and curved his lips, saying, “We’ll meet again. I like the smell on your body. Heh heh, that evil killing intent!”

Han Shuo was stunned. He was about to say something when Lawrence dragged him away. They quickly left that area with a few steps.

Under Lawrence’s guidance, the two followed the same way back to the quiet hall above. Letting out a breath, Lawrence explained, “My master is Karel Ascot. He has the strength of a sacred swordmaster. His outstanding contributions have given him a high reputation in the Empire. Master can go in and out of the palace directly, and my father has great trust in him. Even though I’m his disciple, he doesn’t clearly support me, which puzzles me greatly.”

“Eh, but I know he really dotes on my junior sister Phoebe. Even this Rose Garden used to belong to the Boozt Merchant Guild. Master shares a past with Phoebe’s father. For some reason, after Phoebe’s father passed away, my master managed this Rose Garden, then handed it over to me.”

Grandpa Bollands used to be a very famous killer, and old Lucky is actually his direct disciple. I don’t know why he follows my master. The smell of blood on him is so heavy, you can imagine how many people he’d killed. I can’t control the urge to vomit every time I get near him, so I always try to stay away. Otherwise if I really vomit, I think he’d be very displeased.”

Even though Lawrence was Karel’s disciple, he hadn’t focused on learning martial arts, but instead concentrated various strategies and military abilities, possibly due to his identity as the prince. Therefore his strength wasn’t very powerful, it was normal for him to feel discomfort in front of people like Bollands.

Although he had known early on that Lawrence’s master must be extraordinary, Han Shuo was extremely shocked after Lawrence confirmed

his identity. As a member of the Dark Mantle, plus his own deliberate research, Han Shuo had a decent understanding of the dark side of the Empire. Naturally, he had heard of the thunderous name Karel Ascot.

Karel Ascot was born a commoner but was a heaven-defying genius. He'd set a record with his graduation speed from the Babylon Academy of Swordsmanship. He had roamed the mainland with the strength of a senior swordsman and fought hundreds of fights in various countries, increasing his fame quickly. He'd already had the strength of a great swordmaster by the time he'd returned to the Lancelot Empire.

After accepting the invitation of the king, he'd taught at the Babylon Academy of Swordsmanship as the dean. When war broke out in the Lancelot Empire, not only did Karel cultivate numerous talents for the Empire, he'd also personally defeated several provocative figures from enemy countries. At that point, where his heroic fame was like the sun at its peak, he retired from being the dean of the Academy of Swordsmanship and went to train in the deepest part of the Dark Forest for a decade. When the Empire faced the threat of invasion and was on the brink of defeat facing the Kasi Empire, Karel appeared with the strength of a divine swordmaster and killed three great swordmasters of the Kasi Empire. This inspired the morale of the Lancelot Empire and helped it win the battle.

Many years later, all of the citizens and even the king regarded Karel Ascot as the Protector of the Empire. Even though he didn't have an official position, he could influence the king's decisions. Several of his direct disciples held great power in the government or the military.

"So it's him, no wonder!" Han Shuo exclaimed after going over this information in his head.

"I took you to see him this time so he'd know of you. As long as you leave a good impression, he'll speak a few words in front of my father. You aren't far from a prosperous future then." Lawrence spoke sincerely, in a prudent manner.

"I understand what you mean." Han Shuo smiled, nodding.

“Let’s go, the main thing is done. Now I’ll take you to play to your heart’s content.” Once Lawrence saw that Han Shuo had understood, he no longer said anything else. He dragged the latter out of this quiet deserted place to the most crowded and lively area of the Rose Garden.

“Young master Lawrence, do you need a separate room?” A man dressed in a butler’s attire, who looked to be the middle aged steward of the Rose Garden, asked smilingly after he saw Lawrence.

“Of course, I’ll use the room I usually take. You help me arrange the best service for my good friend to enjoy.” Lawrence instructed in a straightforward manner.

Suddenly Lawrence paled, he looked back behind Han Shuo as murderous intent flashed in his previously smiling face.

“Hey Lawrence, what a pleasant surprise.” A seemingly cheerful sound of greeting resounded from behind Han Shuo.

Turning around, Han Shuo saw a luxuriously dressed youth of roughly twenty-five or twenty-six years old. He came over with several flower seekers, who was obviously noble at a single glance. This young man was a little taller than Lawrence and had a handsome and tough look. As he walked, he exuded the awe-inspiring momentum of someone in a high position.

He was obviously the leader of this flower seeking group. Those flower seekers looked at him with flattering smiles and even lowered their postures, which set off his noble position even more.

“Hmph, I certainly don’t want to see you.” Lawrence’s complexion didn’t look too good as he coldly looked at this man.

“Heh heh, Lawrence, you are getting more and more impolite nowadays. According to the Empire’s rules, mustn’t you at least offer your greetings when you see me?” The tall healthy man looked mockingly at Lawrence, with a smile that wasn’t a smile.

His face twitching, Lawrence glared resentfully at this person, then grimaced helplessly, “Greetings to his Royal Highness the first Prince.”

# Chapter 256: The female bandit

This was the first prince Charles!

As Han Shuo squinted at him, he suddenly had an odd thought, "Lawrence is the owner of the Rose Garden, so the mage guards around should be under the order of that murderous Bolland. For the first prince Charles to come here to seek pleasure, he's basically unknowingly gone deep into the tiger's den. If Lawrence receives the support of Karel, wouldn't he be able to soundlessly kill that Charles?"

"Haha, good, good." Charles first laughed loudly with satisfaction, then he curved his mouth and coldly provoked, "You should dispel any thoughts as soon as you can, or you may even die without knowing how."

Finishing this sentence, Charles conveniently dropped a vicious line in a low voice, "Little bastard mutt!"

"Let's go. Shall we have some fun?" Charles turned his body with a loud laugh and left with the bootlickers following closely behind him. He paid no more attention to Lawrence.

Lawrence's face twisted with anger. His two hands clenched tightly into fists, blue veins popping out from their backs. Lawrence couldn't suppress the light trembling of his entire body. His furious eyes emitted thick murderous intent as he viciously stared at the departing back of Charles. Even his breathing had become much heavier.

Looking at Lawrence's posture, that might blow at any moment, Han Shuo was truly afraid the guy wouldn't be able to control himself, and would throw everything to the wind to risk his life for a fight with Charles.

To an illegitimate child, the most humiliating thing was to be cursed as a "bastard". When this vicious curse came from the person they hated the most, it increased the humiliation by tens of times. No wonder even an introvert like Lawrence almost raged out of control.

Patting Lawrence's shoulder, Han Shuo consoled, "Let it go. We will soon return this hatred. Don't be so hasty."



“I want to kill him with my own hands. I’ll definitely kill him with my own hands...” Lawrence gnashed his teeth as he whispered, his face ferocious.

“Oh, if it isn’t Mister Aubrey? And Mister Cameron too!” The Rose Garden was a lively place for spending gold indeed. First prince Charles had just left, and Han Shuo had already bumped into the incoming fellows whom he’d previously met at Boozt Merchant Guild – Cameron and Aubrey plus several other merchants.

“Damn it, what the hell did you, petty, despicable villain do to our bodies?” As soon as he saw Han Shuo, Aubrey couldn’t help but fume and immediately curse.

It was spring time with flowers blooming everywhere. The weather was great. However Aubrey and Cameron looked somewhat weird. Aubrey’s whole body was wrapped from head to toe in a thick fur coat. He stood there and shivered, his face frozen purple.

On the other hand, Cameron was the exact opposite. In this gentle, comfortable weather, he looked like he was at a sauna. His thin clothes were damp with sweat, his mouth breathed out hot air currents whenever he opened it to speak. His face flushed beet red. Evidently he was unbearably hot.

Perhaps to balance out each other, these two weirdly dressed fellows walked hand in hand. As two great manly men, for them to appear in such a place like the Rose Garden while holding hands, it was even weirder.

These two had been injected with the poison of ice and fire. Fire and ice poisons were taking turns to attack their bodies right now, making them extremely cold for a moment and then extremely hot the next. This pain would repeatedly torture them until the poison injected by Han Shuo waned.

Throwing the two a contemptuous glance, Han Shuo viciously said, “Two great masters walking hand in hand in broad daylight. This is really sickening.”

“Damnable! What poison did you actually give us? You lowly despicable

villain!” Aubrey’s two rows of teeth made clacking sounds as they chattered. He trembled as he shouted.

Lawrence was originally furious, seeing these two appear here, but now he felt a little better. He laughed heartily and shook his head in ridicule, “With this special hobby, you should have been more surreptitious. Boldly coming here like this, your morality has really degraded!”

“Bryan, I won’t let you off easily.” Aubrey furiously glared at Han Shuo and threatened with a wide mouth.

As soon as he finished those words, the poison of ice and fire swapped. His ice cold body suddenly spiked up in temperature. He hastily threw off his fur coat in a practiced manner and started cursing nonstop.

“That’s enough for today, let us leave this place.” Han Shuo persuaded. He understood that meeting Aubrey here meant that he would constantly be entangled by the latter. Since he knew the misery caused by the poison of ice and fire was unbearable indeed. Furthermore, Lawrence had certainly lost interest in having fun after the vicious remarks he had received from Charles earlier.

Lawrence seemed to have lost his mood as he nodded, “Alright. I brought you here this time mainly for the matter earlier. We’ll have plenty of time for fun later. These hated charactered really disgust me. Let’s leave. Don’t allow them to latch onto us.”

“Don’t leave. Give me the antidote first, or I won’t leave you alone.” Aubrey breathed heavily and stared at Han Shuo, shouting nonstop.

After knowing Han Shuo’s strength, the big businessman Cameron appeared to be afraid that Han Shuo would abruptly kill him. He didn’t dare to speak and just followed behind Aubrey.

Han Shuo quickly left with Lawrence without stopping. After they exited the Rose Garden, the earth rider Jino gave a loud shout. Several guards of Lawrence swiftly surrounded him.

Aubrey had yet to come close when Jino crudely pushed him aside. Lawrence and Han Shuo stepped into the carriage just like that and left

the Rose Garden.

“Alright, I’m going first. Wait for me to come look for you after I pick up my graduation diploma.” Leaving the Rose Garden for a little while, Han Shuo spoke a farewell to Lawrence. He then jumped off the carriage and left by himself.

The number of people guarding Lawrence in both the light and dark weren’t few, so Han Shuo wasn’t concerned much for his safety. He didn’t need to stay and protect the latter, so he jumped out of the carriage to go handle his own personal matters.

After separating from Lawrence, Han Shuo went straight to the graveyard in the mountain back of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, entering the place hiding the transportation matrix.

Fanny and Phoebe needed at least three days to adapt after taking the rebirth pill. In these three days, they wouldn’t stop having stomachaches until their bodies expelled all the impurities inside. Han Shuo believed they definitely wouldn’t want to see him during this time period. For beautiful women to have to squat on the toilet nonstop, no matter how elegant their bearings were, it’d still be greatly reduced.

Lawrence had paved the way for Han Shuo’s future, but Han Shuo needed to prove himself to be an adept necromancer. He intended to obtain the diploma of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force when he came to see Fanny, so he had at least three more days of free time.

Many things could be done in three days’ time. Han Shuo intended to go check the Valley of Sunshine first. He appeared in the cemetery of death through the transportation matrix, then used the art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to fly towards the Valley of Sunshine.

Under Han Shuo’s instructions, Gilbert left the cemetery of death and brought the weapons from the dwarves to Trunks. They must’ve met already.

Han Shuo used all his strength and flew at the speed of a shooting star. There was only a faint light flashing through, heading towards the direction of the Valley of Sunshine.

The Valley of Sunshine wasn't too far from the Dark Forest. Han Shuo only took about half a day to arrive at the Valley of Sunshine with his current speed.

There were many forces here, so when Han Shuo reached the area, he didn't keep flying and instead walked on the ground to avoid raising attention. He moved forward, following the address that Trunks had given him.

Whoosh!

Suddenly, several arrows pierced the air and nailed the tree in front of Han Shuo.

As sounds of disturbance rang out, nearly a hundred bandits stepped out from the bushes. They were obviously well trained, and most of them held a good weapon. A small portion of them even wore a complete set of armor, the quality of which looked even better than that of the Lancelot Empire's official army.

Nearly a hundred bandits, eyes cold and momentum awe-inspiring, suddenly surrounded Han Shuo. Bows, crossbows, and spears locked onto him one after another.

There was a long red haired, unruly looking girl amongst them. She has bright eyes and white teeth, wearing a set of leather clothes. She looked quite arrogant as she walked forward with large strides and said haughtily, "We've watched you for quite a while now. You dare to fly around in our land. If you're so good, then fly here for me to see?"

Han Shuo had been flying in the air just now, so he hadn't released the yin demons to scout around. Moreover he didn't pay too much attention of the going abouts in the forest below, and naturally didn't expect to be surrounded by layers of bandits.

"You must be lady Janet. Hehe, I'm just an ordinary mage, I didn't know this area was your turf, sorry." Han Shuo gave an once over glance at the group, especially paying attention to that unruly girl, then he said with a laugh.

“It seems that you have some knowledge. Who are you? What the hell do you plan to do by infiltrating our territory?” The female bandit Janet glared at Han Shuo, interrogating.

“I just happen to pass by, I don’t have any bad intentions. Well then, I still have things to do, will you allow me leave?” Han Shuo had heard a bit about this female bandit Janet’s deeds from Trunks. He knew this girl followed the bandit job as inheritance to her ancestry. Even though her character was a little unruly and stubborn, she wasn’t a bad person. She could be considered a merciful bandit with a strict set of principles among the bandit forces around the Valley of Sunshine, so Han Shuo didn’t want to butt heads with her.

“You look so shifty. You mustn’t be any good person. The Valley of Sunshine has been chaotic recently, so who knows if you aren’t a spy sent by our enemies? Men, come and capture this fellow first, then carefully interrogate him.” Janet stared fixedly at Han Shuo. Seeing him exposing not even a bit of fear and grinning instead, she started to feel somewhat annoyed and angrily turned around to order the gang.

# Chapter 257: Robbing the robbers

Several rough, bulky bandits abruptly sprang out from behind Janet. They grinned and shot towards Han Shuo.

These fellows all seemed to have cultivated fighting aura. Each bandit was about two meters tall, and emitted a pressure as fierce as a bear. Their momentum alone was enough to shock people.

“Eh, sorry, I still have something to do, so I can’t stay here long.” Of course Han Shuo wasn’t scared. When he saw these big guys closing in, he quickly shot up and slipped out of the besiegement of the surrounding men like an eel.

His speed suddenly accelerated like that of a leopard. Han Shuo leapt onto a huge tree with just a tap of his foot, then leapt backwards more than ten meters. It seemed like he’d soon be able to escape the encirclement of bandits.

“Damn it! Capture him alive for me! There must be something up with this brat!” Janet was furious. She suddenly and fiercely shot towards Han Shuo, and was actually able to move elegantly among the shrubs, her eyes fixed on Han Shuo without letting go.

Several bandits had already fired a series of arrows and spears at Han Shuo as per Janet’s order. However, they’d all heard her say “alive”, so they didn’t dare to aim these attacks at him, but instead, shot at the path that he was aiming for.

Han Shuo grinned. His body flashed left and right, up and down in an odd fashion. He only stuck to the middle of the forest and changed directions with an extremely quick speed. Not only did he avoid all of the attacks, he even leisurely explained, “Hey, miss bandit, you shouldn’t chase me like this, I’m really no spy.”

“You say you’re not a spy, but why are you running as if you are a spy?” Janet was still in hot pursuit as she furiously roared, “Brothers, who cares if he’s a spy or not? Get him!”

This bandit group wasn't weak. The big guys that were chasing Han Shuo under Janet's order all had the strength of senior swordsmen. There were several shabbily dressed mages, whose power were also similar. Han Shuo would be in big trouble if they all worked together to stop him.

However, Han Shuo's current strength was unfathomable. The three yin demons he had released could cover the entire terrain, as well as monitor the surrounding situation. Several obstacles were discovered ahead of time by the three yin demons, and so the distance between Han Shuo and the bandits gradually widened. His high speed, coupled with the extensive observation of the three yin demons, simply rendered the encirclement of Janet's gang useless.

This group of bandit seemed to have a good reputation. In addition, Han Shuo also had some plans for them, but not in the same way that he'd ruthlessly treated the Butcher's gang. He didn't immediately leave after escaping their encirclement, but instead dragged them around to observe their quality and combat effectiveness through the surveillance of the yin demons.

Out of the more than a hundred bandits, a majority of them had trained fighting aura, while a dozen or so were mages. In the process of pursuing Han Shuo, their formations were constantly stable without any particular franticness. Without Janet having to issue many commands, they all spread out in tacit understanding. If one side heard any movement from Han Shuo, they'd immediately alert the others. After which they would all rush in, swordsmen, archers, and mages would be arranged orderly in the encirclement.

"They have some strength indeed. No wonder they could become one of the most powerful forces in the Valley of Sunshine. Compared to the Butcher's bandit group, this one is much more smoothly ordered. However, the Butcher's bandits are more cruel and bloodthirsty." Han Shuo muttered to himself. He was hiding in the thick lush foliage of a huge tree while clearly observing their movements through the three yin demons.

"Where is he? You guys lost him?!" Janet was chasing aggressively when

she realized that they had lost all traces of Han Shuo. She furiously shouted at the bandits around her.

Be it her speech or actions, Janet didn't have the gentle and tender demeanor of a girl at all. Perhaps because she grew up in a bandit lair, her manner had been completely affected by the bandits. Her temper was ferocious and her behavior crude. Although she looked gentle and pretty, the feeling that she gave people was that of a great, prideful man.

"Young miss, this person is even faster than a leopard and more cunning than a fox. Is he really a mage?" An old mage with one crippled leg said with a wry smile as he used the levitation skills to float to Janet's side.

"Old Billy, if he were a swordsman or a knight, would he fly to this place from afar? Damn it, are you so old that even your head is old too?" Janet was still raging, her almond eyes rolling at the crippled old man as she huffed and cursed angrily.

Old Billy wasn't angry being scolded at by her like that. He only hung his head with a wry smile, "Maybe I'm really old now, or the times have changed. How could a mage run faster than a leopard? I dare say that he was running, and not using levitation skills. Heavens, is he special like you?!"

"Search this area! This guy must be a spy, or he could be from the House of Menlo." Paying no heed to old Billy, Janet shouted to some bandits nearby.

"Not here, young miss!"

"Can't find him, he's gone!"

"He may have escaped!"

All kinds of helpless messages resounded around Janet. Obviously the bandits had no way of discovering Han Shuo's existence.

It was already nighttime. Only Janet and Billy were standing under the tree where Han Shuo was hiding. As for the other seven or eight bear-like bandits, they were in the middle of an area with tall weeds that reached the waist, around ten meters away from Janet.



Han Shuo, who was hiding in the foliage above, suddenly raised his voice to let out a long laugh then flew straight down. He reached her in the blink of an eye, smashing a blow that contained magical yuan and surging evil aura at her head.

“Damn it!” Janet cursed as she pushed away the old Billy, who was about to chant a spell. She curled her hand into a fist that emitted a dark green fighting aura, aiming it at Han Shuo’s punch above.

Seeing the dark green fighting aura, Han Shuo immediately understood that she should only have the strength of a senior swordsman. He quickly reduced the magical yuan in his punch from eighty percent to thirty percent.

Bang! The dark green fighting aura and Han Shuo’s punch fiercely collided, then their fists hit each other. A force that could row the mountains and topple the sea suddenly shot out from Janet’s small fist. This force flipped the flying down Han Shuo up again in the same trajectory that he fell.

“How could this be?!” His right hand became numb. Han Shuo couldn’t help but exclaimed, his face horrified.

The green fighting aura was the signature of a senior swordsmen. From Han Shuo’s experience, Janet could, at most, withstand about thirty percent of the power from his magical yuan. However, even though Janet’s fighting aura scattered when their punches collided, her small fist still emitted a terrifying force.

If it wasn’t for Han Shuo’s unusually tough body, her punch could have crippled his right hand. To his understanding, the green fighting aura of a senior swordsman absolutely couldn’t cause such a great force.

This female bandit was a little strange!

“Keke!” Janet revealed a satisfying laugh at Han Shuo’s horrified face. Then her space ring flashed and a studded club, bigger than her body appeared. She easily held the studded club in her left hand and giggled as she leapt up towards Han Shuo using the high trees around. Han Shuo had yet to fall down when the studded club viciously aimed at his waist and

smashed downwards.

Han Shuo snorted coldly. He had just showed some goodwill and didn't expect to eat a loss in return. Seeing Janet pound her studded club right at his lower body, he became somewhat angry. His body that was hit dizzy by the strong force earlier suddenly halted mid-air, as he aimed a similar punch right at Janet's studded club.

Rumble. A huge sound rang out, followed by Janet's surprised yelp. She was using the tree trunks to leap up, but now, both her body and studded club were fiercely smashed back down. As her butt slammed on the ground, Janet looked at the proud Han Shuo standing mid-air, aghast.

"Motherfucker son of a b\*tch! Pretending to be a pig to eat a tiger!" Janet couldn't help but let out a vulgar curse. Her breathing was heavy for a while before she took hold of the studded club, wanting to fight again.

Han Shuo was shocked. He didn't expect Janet to be able to stand up so quickly. Not letting him make a move again, the big mercenaries around them rushed up together. The old crippled mage Billy was also finished chanting his spell. Chilling winds whistled as they churned into piercing sharp wind blades, whizzing forwards.

He was actually a wind archmage! Han Shuo was stunned for a moment. Now that he knew of Janet's power, he didn't continue to stay here.

He flew to hide himself in the foliage of the tree behind them, then made a few leaps and dropped down to a carriage that belonged to the bandits. As soon as he landed, he used the Demonslayer Edge to slice open the carriage's top. While everyone wasn't paying attention, he grabbed a blithely unaware young woman, suppressed her strength, and flew out.

"You rogue, let me go! Hurry and let me go, or Janet definitely won't let you off!" This young woman was utterly beautiful, arching crescent eyebrows, a pair of clear and bright eyes. Her voice was soft even though she was yelling angrily.

"Janet, I'm taking this girl away. If you want to rescue her, come to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band." Han Shuo seized the young woman without any care for her shouting. He laughed loudly and left grandly.

“Scoundrel! Let go of my wife, or else I’ll never be finished with you!” Janet was raging as she roared to the heavens, then she constantly and vulgarly cursed. She hadn’t a bit of the manner that a gentle girl should have had.

# Chapter 258: Headquarters

The dangerously steep cliff, that was tapering into a bottomless abyss, was covered in floating clouds. The crimson sunset was outstanding in the sky, shining on the towering cliff, which now looked like an enormous red branding iron.

This cliff was a long distance away from the Valley of Sunshine. This kind of cliff wasn't uncommon in the Kerlan mountain range. Rugged, oddly shaped rocks were scattered all over the bare cliff and no plants grew anywhere.

Standing atop the cliff, Han Shuo leapt straight downwards. In just a breath of time, he fell through the clouds and landed safely on a huge, protruding rock.

This big rock was situated in the middle of the cliff, and there was thick white mist above and below it. Part of this protruding cliff was flat, and although a little steep, it wasn't that dangerous as long as he was careful.

"Who are you?" A fellow with a bare upper body exclaimed. His face was messily bearded, his hand holding an axe forged by the dwarves as he stared at Han Shuo in a hostile manner.

"I'm looking for Trunks." Han Shuo answered with a smile.

The Soul Destroyer mercenary band was situated on a vast, flat plain on the protruding rock in the middle of the cliff. The rock was floating on this cloudy mist, and for some reasons unknown, this thick mist didn't spread to the center. Above and below this flat plain was a vast expanse of misty white, giving it a somewhat strange appearance.

A row of bamboo huts were spread out along the flat plain. Many mercenaries, with bare upper bodies, were practicing martial arts on a fighting platform as large as a football field. Behind it were several large caves which could also be used for housing.

This flat plain was truly miraculous. It was covered in thick mist above and below, leaving only the center, which was isolated by a simple

enchantment. This thick layer of white mist was a natural barrier, ensuring that no one would discover the flat plain within it. There was no mist in the center of the plain and the air was fresh. It was quiet and concealed, a good hiding place.

Han Shuo was holding that gentle girl in his arms. Her eyes couldn't see and her ears couldn't hear as he had already restricted her senses. The moment he landed, Han Shuo immediately felt Gilbert's presence.

"Honored master! You've finally returned!" The pitch black Gilbert was in the middle of the fighting platform. His body was naked from the waist up, showing his glossy black muscles. He threw two entangled mercenaries aside and yelled loudly as he ran towards Han Shuo.

The brawny guy holding the axe, who'd been eyeing Han Shuo with hostility, immediately curved his mouth into a smile as he heard Gilbert call Han Shuo his master. He said in a friendly manner, "Your weapon is very good. Thank you."

Since Han Shuo offended the Church of Light and the Calamity Church at the same time, he didn't tell Trunks his other identity in order to guard against these two churches. These mercenaries only knew Han Shuo as a good friend of Trunks, but they didn't know about the other matter.

"No need to stand on ceremony. Where is Trunks?" Nodding, Han Shuo asked this brawny guy.

"He's gone out for something, but he should be back by evening. Honored master, you've returned." The naked Gilbert yelled as he walked forward. Many mercenaries on the flat plain could hear his voice. A great deal of them exited their bamboo huts and rock caves, looking at Han Shuo with surprise.

Gilbert had lazed around this place for quite some time. Even in his human form, none of these mercenaries could deal with his tyrannical dark dragon body. Evidently, he had established a powerful image during that time.

This powerful being actually humbly called Han Shuo master, shocking the mercenaries who resided on this flat plain. They couldn't help but

want to take a look and see how powerful this figure was that he could make Gilbert submit.

“Many thanks to your weapons! They are really useful!”

“That’s right. This broadsword is amazing. Worthy of being a weapon forged by the dwarves!”

“Thank you, thank you. The weight of this double-edged hatchet really suits me, thank you!”

The mercenaries shouted one after another, their eyes looking at Han Shuo with gratitude and goodwill. Evidently they were extremely satisfied with the weapons that had Gilbert brought with him.

“No need to be polite. Trunks and I are the best of friends, hehe!” Han Shuo nodded and laughed in a friendly manner, his eyes shining as they assessed these mercenaries.

Han Shuo saw more than a hundred mercenaries on this flat piece of land. Each of them possessed a calm and experienced bearing. The majority were swordsmen, plus a dozen or so mages and more than thirty archers. Judging from the presence exuded from their bodies, they must be great men with extraordinary power and tough mindsets.

Compared to the bandit group led by Janet, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band also had over a hundred members. Its power was a bit stronger. Amongst them, several mercenaries were still young, yet had a cold and calm bearing. Han Shuo knew these people used to be a part of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band that he’d met at the House of Menlo. Their calm and cold manner, forged from weathering many battles, made Han Shuo look at them a few more times.

“Hey, you’re called Bryan? Hehe, you must be very powerful to be Gilbert’s master. Are you interested in exchanging blows?” A seasoned mercenary offered. He was about a meter and ninety centimeters tall, naked from the waist up, revealing his bulging muscles. He held a broadsword of one and half a meter in length as his eyes squinted at Han Shuo, measuring him with his invitation.

When he spoke, his right hand, which held the sword easily waved around as if demonstrating his strength. A dark green fighting aura suddenly flared up as a sharp blade light flickered in and out of existence.

“Alright!” Trunks wasn’t back yet anyway. In order to remove future obstacles when he revealed his identity, Han Shuo intended to leave a powerful impression and deeply engrave it into the depths of their hearts. That would be the most effective method.

Han Shuo walked towards the fighting platform, relaxed and unrestrained. As he walked, he took off his shirt, so that his body was also naked from the waist up. His body was over one meter eighty centimeters tall, each chunk of muscle was as if carved by a knife. His force was vigorous and explosive. The rows of muscles were perfectly coordinated as they were naturally formed through the tempering of his demonic magic.

As he flung off his shirts, the mercenaries around saw his body and immediately issued surprised comments. A bunch of them excitedly jumped as they yelled, “Grant, you’re in trouble!”

They were all knowledgeable people. Seeing the strong muscles and perfectly coordinated lines on Han Shuo’s body, they immediately knew that this sturdy and balanced body was most suited for fighting. Grant held a broadsword and his body was large. However, some of his muscles weren’t that visible. His muscles could achieve explosive power thanks to his fighting aura, but his speed would obviously be affected.

On the contrary, each chunk of Han Shuo’s muscles was clear and harmonious. Even in the most difficult place to grow muscles – his v-lines appeared as if they were carved. This type of body with perfect muscle coordination was the most suitable for combat.

Grant also showed a surprised expression. Seeing that Han Shuo had come empty handed, he was stunned for a moment then threw aside his broadsword, shouting defiantly, “Then we won’t use weapons, only relying on pure physical strength to compare.”

“As you wish!” Han Shuo laughed loudly. He walked towards Grant, not using magical yuan at all.

Grant was delighted. He increased his speed and charged forward without waiting for Han Shuo to close in. His body rushed violently towards Han Shuo, curving his lips and clenching his fist, aiming it straight down at the latter.

Unexpectedly, Han Shuo moved step by step without any other actions. He just watched the incoming iron fist, the corner of his mouth curving into an odd smile.

Boom!

The momentum of Grant's punch was like a rainbow as it pounded into Han Shuo's chest. A muffled drum-like sound came out of the latter's body. Han Shuo's figure stood still, even the smile on his face remained unchanged.

"Oh my god, is your body made of steel?" On the contrary, it was Grant who grimaced. His fist in pain, his face miserable.

"Heh heh!" Han Shuo made a move like lightning. He took hold of Grant's shoulder and suddenly threw it over his shoulder. The big man's one meter ninety centimeter body fluttered like a feather, flying a few meters into the air and falling just right onto a large, soft cushion.

Leisurely sweeping his eyes to glance at the nearby mercenaries, Han Shuo called out dashing, "Does any other brother want to try? Whether it's physical attacks, fighting aura, or magic, I can do them all!"

When his words fell, every single one of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band was completely silent. They dazedly looked at Han Shuo, dumbfounded. No one dared to step up.

"Wakaka, you guys are idiots! Daring to compete with my master in bodily strength. In the forbidden land of the Dark Forest, even the golden dragon, proclaimed to have the most powerful body, couldn't fight against my great master. You brats are truly crazy!" Gilbert shouted triumphantly, scaring the already stunned mercenaries into shock.

"Mighty master, you've even brought me a woman this time? You are becoming more and more considerate!" Gilbert squealed as he suddenly



discovered the restrained woman that'd been put aside by Han Shuo. He excitedly walked over.

“Stop. This woman is not to be touched. I still have great uses for her. She belongs to that female bandit Janet, and so I need to use her to schedule an appointment with Janet!” Han Shuo glared at Gilbert as he snapped.

Gilbert immediately became honest upon hearing Han Shuo's shout. At this time, the sound of rustling wind echoed down the steep cliff. In just a while, Trunks, along with Odysseus and a bunch of others, landed down from above.

“Eh, you've come!” Trunks immediately said with a smile when he saw Han Shuo. As he walked to the latter, his eyes unintentionally glanced around. He was suddenly stunned as he looked at the girl that Han Shuo had brought, his expression extremely odd.

After a while, Trunks loudly cried out “Annie” then furiously rushed over to her side. The people next to him were originally from the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. They were first ecstatic before looking at her with some suspicion as they muttered, “Something's not right!”

# Chapter 259: Assembly

Trunks' expression was exceedingly off as he dashed in front of the girl like lightning. He reached out a hand to touch the necklace of crystal shards on her neck. He said with a choked up voice, "Annie, it's definitely you!"

The original Rainbow Sickle mercenary band members all clustered around Trunks and looked on with confused stares. Grant, who'd been tossed into the air by Han Shuo, couldn't help but say, "Chief, Miss Annie doesn't look like that!"

"It's definitely Annie. I gifted her that crystal necklace, and the black mole behind her left ear are all proof that she's Annie!" Trunks' voice was thick with tears as he held onto the girl and sobbed with joy.

The mercenaries, who'd been doubtful before, all cheered when they heard that Trunks had confirmed her identity. They used their mallets to bash each other's chest as they seemed to want to use pain to express how excited and happy they were.

"Annie, Annie, what's wrong? Why can't you speak?" Trunks asked frantically when he realized the girl in his grasp wasn't moving, and was as quiet as a puppet.

"Allow me!" Han Shuo dashed in front of Trunks and placed his right hand on Annie's back. A beam of black light entered her body and cleaned away the restraints placed on her.

The girl, with her head lolling to the side, suddenly had color suffuse her cheeks again. She seemed to feel Trunks' shaking as her long eyelashes fluttered, suddenly snapping open into bright eyes as she looked at Trunks, perplexed.

That lasted for only a moment. A shrill scream immediately broke from the girl's mouth. She struggled fiercely and threw punches and kicks at Trunks. She resisted ferociously and cursed loudly, "Damn it, who are you? If Janet knew, she'd kill you for sure. Let go of me, let go of me!"

However, the girl didn't seem to have practiced martial techniques. Her punches and kicks didn't cause Trunks much damage when they landed on him. Trunks let go of the girl in bafflement, "Annie, do you not remember me?"

"Who's Annie? I'm Betty. You must have the wrong person. You're crazy!" The girl dodged Trunks and looked huffily at Han Shuo. "You evil robber, what do you want with me here?"

Han Shuo didn't respond as he looked at Annie with deeply furrowed brows. Linley looked at the deeply emotional and dejected Trunks, "Trunks you're not recognizing the wrong person, are you?"

Shaking his head firmly, Trunks said, "I gave her that crystal necklace, and the black mole on her ear is still there. This is definitely Annie, but I don't know why her looks have changed and why she doesn't remember me."

"Then there's nothing wrong about it. These marks mean that it must be her. Memories are sometimes forgotten after enormous stimulus, and some magical potions can be used to change one's appearance." Han Shuo said calmly.

"That's right. That must be the case. Where did you find her?" Trunks immediately agreed when he heard Han Shuo respond.

"You jerks, what do you want to do with me? Hurry up and let me go or Janet will never let you off the hook!" The originally gentle girl became a bit frantic because of her dangerous circumstances, and she kicked up quite a fuss.

"I grabbed her from Janet's hands. It looks like we'll understand what's going on only after we find Janet. I have things to discuss with her anyways."

"Annie, where did you get this crystal necklace?" Trunks asked in a shaky voice as he walked towards the girl and pointed at the necklace on her neck.

"How would I know? It's mine. You must have the wrong person. Please,

let me go. I can have Janet let you guys go too.” The young girl seemed to feel Trunks’ affection for her and begged pitifully.

“Do you remember your childhood, the matters of your youth?” Trunks’ eyes glimmered with light as he looked closely at the girl, asking anxiously.

Shaking her head like a rattle-drum, the girl bawled, “I don’t remember, I don’t remember anything and I don’t want to. Let me go!”

By now, even the original Rainbow Sickle mercenary band members could see that she had indeed lost her memory, and was sure that this had to be Annie, who’d been missing for three years.

“I’m going to find Janet and get to the bottom of this. Uncle Grant, take two small teams and make the trip with me.” Trunks had a resolute expression on his face and gave an order to Grant, then spoke softly to Annie, “Annie, stay here for now. They’ll take care of you like before.”

“I’m not Annie, let me go!” Annie wanted to cry when she saw that Trunks was about to leave.

“Come, let’s do it all tonight.” Swiping with his eyes, Trunks couldn’t bear to look at the sobbing Annie and cast a glance at Han Shuo, walking down with large strides.

There were 20 people on each small team, as well as Odysseus’ crew, Han Shuo and Gilbert walking along the flat ground. They climbed up the previously shaped stone stairs and climbed up out of the cliff.

“Why did you leave in such a hurry last time?” Odysseus asked Han Shuo with a smile as Gordon and Aphrodite also chattered away.

“It couldn’t be helped. I had a ton of stuff to do last time, plus that Ferguson was hot on my tail, so I had to leave.” Han Shuo smiled apologetically at Odysseus and explained. He looked to the right and left and saw that no one was paying any attention to him. Odysseus couldn’t help but ask a question in a low tone at this point.

Nodding, Han Shuo said softly, “Yes.”

Gordon was delighted and chuckled, "You're amazing to have created such a large mercenary band. We were only willing to join after Trunks said that the boss in the shadows was you."

Clapping Gordon's shoulder, Han Shuo smiled faintly and nodded, not saying much. The friendship of life and death that Han Shuo had formed with them in the Dark Forest was indeed becoming of use.

"A merchant happened to discover a silver mine in the mountain valley. It's said that there's even mithril inside. All of the powers in the Valley of Sunshine have fought several times for possession of this silver mine. I've received news that Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band will be going over tonight as well. The Cairo mercenary band has occupied all high ground in the valley, and it'll be difficult for the other powers to fight against him."

"Laureton has left the valley this time for mithril. The other power won't let him off the hook either, so there's certainly going to be a vicious battle tonight at the silver mine. I've come back to take some men and watch the show, and see if there are any benefits to be had." Trunks explained as he arrived aboveground from the misty flat grounds.

Startled, Han Shuo said, "Silver mines are rare enough to begin with. Mithril is the ultimate material used in forging weapons and armor. No wonder everyone's gone crazy over it. If such a mine were discovered, its value is truly unsurpassable. Therefore, all of the factions in the valley will want a share of the profits. The merchant who discovered it was killed in the first moment, but sadly the news had already travelled." Trunks nodded in agreement.

"Come, let's go take a look as well. If there are no accidents, Janet will appear there as well." Han Shuo thought for a bit and suggested to Trunks.

"Mm, my thoughts precisely!" Trunks responded.

The group of thirty some people left the cliff silently, heading for their destination with Trunks' instructions.

The mercenaries that Trunks had brought along were mostly the experienced, extraordinary members of the Soul Destroyers. They kept

checking their equipment along the way and looked around alertly, carefully avoiding the other groups of people along the way.

As the sky darkened, before the crescent moon rose into the night sky, Trunks stopped in front of a boulder and pointed at a valley in the distance that was filled with ivy vegetation. “There it is, I think all the powers in the valley have arrived. The smaller forces like us who want to take advantage of the situation will also be greatly numerous. It’s going to be a bit impossible to hide without anyone discovering us.”

“The others remain here. You, me, and Gilbert will go inside first. Just follow me and be careful. No one will discover us then.” Han Shuo turned his head and calmly gave Trunks his orders.

Trunks had witnessed Han Shuo’s miracles before. He immediately turned back to the others and said, “Uncle Grant, you guys remain here and hide yourselves for now. We’ll scout ahead. I’ll use signals to notify you if anything happens.”

As experienced mercenaries, they wouldn’t have any objections about their chief’s orders once they started their operations. Grant nodded, saying lowly, “Understood.”

“Follow me!” Han Shuo called out softly and lowered his body to be level with the shrubbery. He took a step out and sent the three yin demons out around him, keeping an eye on all movement around him.

# Chapter 260: Adding fuel to the flames

“This mithril mine is within the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band’s area of influence. It now belongs to our Church of Light. All of you please leave!” The light grand magus Ferguson floated in the air. He wore a pure white magic robe that shone with splendor. His left hand held a magic staff that emitted a dazzling light. He gave off an inviolable, sacred bearing.

All of the light magical elements in the valley converged towards his magic staff from all directions. Ferguson’s presence was becoming stronger and stronger. A brilliant curtain of light burst out of the magic staff in his hand, illuminating the moonless valley.

A small river was quietly flowing in the center of this valley, a few li wide. Big rocks of strange forms surrounded the whole river. The mountain wall was covered in a green, thick carpet of ivy-like vines.

The four great powers in the Valley of Sunshine, the Cairo mercenary band, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, the House of Menlo, and the Katar orc tribe, had all gathered here. They had divided the valley into four sections in order to occupy it. In addition, a dozen or so smaller forces were scattered in groups here and there. All of them had come here driven by greed.

Han Shuo had originally wanted to hide his traces. As soon as he heard the loud rumbling, he released the three yin demons to circle and scout the valley. After obtaining a clear understanding of the situation through the yin demons, he knew that this was a key moment in the valley, since all the forces were no longer hiding in secret.

“Let’s go. No one will notice us as long as we’re a bit careful.” Han Shuo shouted lightly, leading Gilbert and Trunks. The three cautiously slipped through several forces to a remote corner in the valley before hiding behind a large boulder.

“Mr. Ferguson, the person who discovered the silver mine was a merchant from our House of Menlo. Therefore, the mine naturally belongs

to us.” Adam Menlo, head of the House of Menlo, said blandly, his face heavy as he glared at Ferguson.

Adam Menlo was a skinny old man rumored to be a sky rider. He was riding on the super rank magic creature Golden-Winged Roc, holding a golden spear in hand. He looked very heroic.

Dozens of experts from the House of Menlo were behind him. The entire group was riding on exotic, odd magic creatures, their hands grasping superior weapons or magic staffs. They all stared at Ferguson in an unfriendly manner.

“Ferguson, it’s not your Church of Light’s turn to be arrogant in this Valley of Sunshine. Our Cairo mercenary band is the true master of this place, everything here belongs to us.” The bald, robust Laureton shouted in a bell-like voice. His right hand wielded a huge battle axe in demonstration.

This battle axe showed no reflection under the light magic, as if it contained a mysterious force within. At a glance, the handle seemed rusted all over, as if it had been through many years of life.

Similarly, the elite mercenaries of the Cairo mercenary band were standing behind Laureton. He was evidently also determined to take control of this mithril mine. The chief of the Katar orc tribe stood on another side. He was roughly two and a half meters tall and carried a huge totem pole on his shoulder. The warriors of the tribe behind him were similar from their bodies to weapons.

“Looks like this battle is inevitable!” Han Shuo curved his lips into a devious smile as he said to Trunks, looking at the four great powers having their tit for tat in the central part of the valley.

“Mm, but why are Janet and the Butcher’s bandit gangs not here?” Trunk first nodded then asked somewhat suspiciously, “Logically speaking, they should have gotten the message. I didn’t expect that they wouldn’t even come for a piece of the pie.”

“They’ve actually come already. They are just hiding like us. Heh heh, these bandits didn’t dare to expose themselves, so they’ve just been



hiding.” Han Shuo pointed in the direction of the Katar orc tribe chief and said, “There’s a huge rock in the mountain valley behind them, the Butcher’s bandits are over there.”

“Over there, within the ivy bush about a li behind the House of Menlo is Janet’s gang. However we shouldn’t go hunting for her for the time being. Let’s look at the situation first before deciding.”

“Understood.” Trunks replied.

Since the valley was limited in size, the parties here had only brought a portion of their elite forces. The number of people from each faction wasn’t too large. All of the powers in the light and dark had gathered here with the intention of taking the mine. The situation was an imminent stalemate in every corner and direction of the valley. At this moment, no one dared to make a move. Even Laureton didn’t dare to act first, avoiding the inevitability of becoming a target for the other forces.

After quarreling with each other for a while, the four great powers were still stuck in a battle of glares and curses. Even the lackeys only waved their weapons around like props. They hadn’t officially started the fight. Obviously, they were still having some apprehension about each other.

“These people are so troublesome. Why can’t they just make a move? I’m already so tired from looking at them.” Gilbert observed for a while, but the bunch was still quarreling nonstop. He couldn’t help but complain.

“Where is the mine? I’ll give them some impetus.” Han Shuo thought for a bit then looked to Trunks and asked.

“There’s a hidden underground cave over there at that overgrowth. Rumor has it there is silver inside, and even a very small amount of mithril.” Trunks answered as he pointed at the place where the four great factions were standing.

His heart jumped as Han Shuo suddenly had an idea. He laughed devilishly, “I have a way. This time, I must make Florida suffer continuously!”

Han Shuo's group saw Florida upon moving forward. His injuries had been completely healed after half a year's worth of recovery. He was currently in high spirits as he stood behind his grandfather Ferguson, and whispered something to Asa.

Asa and Maxine had tried to assassinate Han Shuo during his last trip to the Valley of Sunshine. Marco's right arm had been cut off in the end, and he barely escaped with great embarrassment. He seemed to yet to recover, as his face was pale without the color of blood. Even though the severed arm had been reconnected, the spasming of his fingers indicated that some aftereffects were present. His arm might never recover its original flexibility.

The little skeleton and earth elite zombie appeared after a necromancy chant. After being refined by demonic magic, the earth elite zombie no longer had the original appearance of a zombie warrior. He didn't look much different from a human.

Upon receiving an order, the earth elite zombie slowly sank into the ground and disappeared before the incredulous eyes of Trunks. There was no change in the land where he disappeared, as if he were a drop of water absorbed by the soil.

"This, what is this? He, what thing is he?!" Trunks cried out in disbelief, he seemed to be unable to accept the scene that he had just witnessed.

Pointing at the little skeleton, Han Shuo smiled and explained, "The same as him."

Upon hearing Han Shuo mention him, the little skeleton's purple eye immediately lit up and focused on Trunks. He arrogantly waved his right hand, which grasped the bone knife, seemingly disdainful of Trunks' ignorance.

"I see, wondrous Bryan! You truly know how to shock people!" Trunks exclaimed, then smiled wryly as he said, "No wonder both Ferguson and Edwin are looking for you!"

"This is the territory of the Rainbow Sickie mercenary band. You dared to break into this place and covet the silver mine. You really think too

little of us!” Florida shouted on the other side with murderous intent as he looked coldly at Laureton.

Amongst the troops invading the valley this time, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band had brought the most amount of people. Moreover, with the presence of his grandfather Ferguson and the Church of Light, Florida felt that his side was the most powerful. His manner naturally became more overbearing.

“Florida, do you think the Valley of Sunshine is your home just because you have your grandfather backing you?” Laureton coldly snorted as he mocked Florida.

Suddenly, the earth elite zombie appeared beneath the thick bush of ivy vines. His hands held a huge silver rock and enthusiastically ran towards Florida, giving the big rock to the latter under the crowd’s watching eyes.

“Very good, damn you! Florida, your people are blatantly exploiting the mine and simply ignoring our presence!” Seeing the situation, the head of the House of Menlo, Adam Menlo, immediately cursed out loud. He rode the super rank Golden-Winged Roc and rushed straight at Florida.

The Golden-Winged Roc was a dozen meters long. Its pair of golden wings unfurled and covered the moon that had just risen in the night sky. A sharp cry resounded as the huge wings were like sharp blades that were flapping rapidly, creating enormous gusts through the valley. The frenzied winds fiercely buffeted the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries on Florida’s side, making their sleeves flutter madly. Their bodies swayed as they couldn’t stand straight.

As the golden spear was raised, it emitted a thick murderous intent. Adam Menlo was at the forefront as he charged towards the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. The men from the House of Menlo were riding all kinds of exotic magic creatures as they shouted and followed from behind.

“Your Church of Light will never have the chance to be arrogantly dominant in the Valley of Sunshine! Brothers, let him know who’s the strongest in the Valley of Sunshine!” Laureton suddenly roared to the sky, bursting out of his clothes. A terrifying aura exploded out of his body and

his bald head shone brilliantly.

As his body sank into a berserk state, Laureton became extremely violent and impulsive. He carried the huge battle axe and was the first to rush out, leading the charge. The battle axe swept out fiercely. The boulders that he passed exploded with rumbling sounds as he charged forward with terrifying momentum.

Behind him, a group of Cairo mercenaries also went berserk. They roared and howled loudly as they rushed towards the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries like a group of mad bulls.

At the same time, the chief of the Katar orc tribe howled a few sentences in the orc language, fiercely slamming his huge totem against the ground. The ground immediately shook violently before the totem pole caused a great pit.

Several orc shamans also capered madly. Colorful lights fell one by one onto the bodies of dozens of orcs behind Katar. After being blessed by the chant, their muscles turned as hard as granite. Together, they raised their shining totem poles and advanced in a strange rhythm, howling as they rushed towards Florida.

“Who are you? Do you want to kill us all?!” Florida roared furiously at the earth elite zombie, his rage reaching its peak. He quickly chanted a spell, wanting to kill the earth elite zombie first before anything else.

It was a pity that the earth elite zombie quickly sank into the ground and had already disappeared without a trace before he even complete the spell. Florida eventually gathered a light sword to deal with Laureton, who was madly charging towards him.

Once the berserkers and orcs went berserk, Florida knew too well how difficult it would be to stop them. He understood that this battle was unavoidable. On the other hand, he had the intention of killing Laureton to begin with. He'd be killed heartlessly if he didn't find a way to stop the latter.

The light sword shot forward as he laughed wildly. The attack had yet to reach Laureton before it shattered into tiny pieces of light. The bald

berserker sprinted towards Florida with awe inspiring momentum. Boulders were sent flying in many pieces wherever he passed. The battle axe in his hand emitted a presence that could disintegrate mountains and upend the seas.

“Formidable, they truly are experts! This battle is really interesting!” Han Shuo laughed loudly and said leisurely as he looked at the other three great powers attacking the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band.

“Honored master, what do we do now?” Gilbert couldn’t help but ask with excitement when he saw the chaotic scenes.

“Trunks, send out the signal and have our brothers come over. These people who want to fight, let them fight. You guys go harvest the mine, I will keep watch out here.” Han Shuo hastily told Trunks when he saw the scene of extreme chaos in the valley.

“But the mine entrance is right where they are fighting! Since they’ve blocked the place, whoever tries to go inside will meet with a bad downfall. This isn’t a good idea!” Trunks smiled wryly and didn’t immediately release the signal.

“Heh heh, the secret tunnel is prepared! With the earth elite zombie here, we won’t have to go that way.” Han Shuo laughed softly. As soon as he finished those words, a tunnel appeared underneath the rock where they were hiding. The earth elite zombie stood in the middle of that tunnel and waved his hand, beckoning with a broad smile.

# Chapter 261: Night of madness

Ordinary earth mages could use the power of the earth to form all sorts of attacks. The earth element's forbidden magic "Falling Meteor" and "Rage of the Earth" even had the terrifying power to destroy a city. Yet, despite the earth mages being able to use the earth element to conduct all sorts of attacks, they were still unable to use the earth's power as flexibly as the earth elite zombie.

As the favored child of the earth, once the earth elite zombie stepped on the ground, he could use the earth elemental energy to commit a lot of magical and wondrous things. It wasn't hard for him to use the power of the earth to form tunnels underneath the ground.

When a tunnel appeared out of nowhere, Trunks knew that it must lead towards the mine.

The four powers of the Valley of Sunshine were currently locked in intense battle in order to claim the silver mine. Yet, the appearance of such a tunnel allowed Trunks and the others to directly enter the innermost location without any trouble at all.

"Understood!" Trunks chuckled, then let out an eagle-like shriek. Due to the clamor from the heaven shaking fighting within the valley, Trunk's shriek didn't seem out of the ordinary.

Through the yin demon's surveillance, Han Shuo was able to see Grant and the others snap to attention after hearing Trunk's shriek, then immediately move vigilantly towards the inside of the valley.

"Roar!!"

The berserk Laureton howled towards the sky and hurled the battleaxe from his hands, causing a piercing, radiant light to enclose seven people from the Rainbow Sickle Mercenary Band. All of the people that were covered in his light had their body torn savagely into pieces, blood spraying all over Laureton.

"Be careful of Laureton. If I'm seeing correctly, what he's holding should

be the divine weapon of the Berserkers – Berserker's Battle Axe. Laureton is already a powerhouse who can become berserk twice over. Legends says that a berserker with the berserker's Battle Axe can use its power to enter the berserk mode once again.”

“A berserker who can become berserk three times is definitely stronger than a great swordmaster. I think he is going to be the hardest to handle in the valley, even Ferguson might not be his opponent, so you definitely have to be careful of him,” Trunks couldn't help but remind Han Shuo the moment Trunks saw the enraged, muscle-bulging Laureton release a terrifying aura.

Han Shuo actually became rather interested in trying after hearing Trunks' words and said softly, “A berserker who can become berserk three times, hehe, that's rather interesting!”

“There's also those Katar orcs, be careful not to become surrounded by them. Otherwise, when their totems hit the earth, they will form a very terrifying shockwave. Once you are swept by the impact, it would be very difficult to live,” As an old hand in the valley, Trunks was quite clear about the different faction and couldn't help but remind Han Shuo after seeing that the battle in the valley had officially started.

“Don't worry, I'll keep it in mind. Be careful when you go inside. I'll have the earth elite zombie follow you guys so that if your movement is exposed, you can leave from the tunnel immediately. With the earth elite zombie underground, your safety should be fine,” Han Shuo gazed at the group of people excitedly as bloodlust gradually rose from the depths of his heart. After saying that to Trunk, he immediately walked towards the insides of the valley in a ghostlike manner.

Seeing that Han Shuo had left, the little skeleton walked over to the earth elite zombie's side and patted his shoulders, then followed Han Shuo as usual.

In Gilbert's eyes, this wasn't anything special, since this wasn't the first time he saw the two beings communicate. However, Trunks faced with this obvious jarring of common sense, he exclaimed once again when he

saw the little skeleton's strange actions.

"Chief, what is it?" Grant couldn't help but ask after rushing over when he saw Trunk's weird expression. Trunks remained dumbly looking at the little skeleton's departing back.

"No-Nothing, all of you follow me," Trunks smiled wryly and shook his head, then he waved at Grant before walking down into the tunnel.

The earth elite zombie was very intelligent. The moment he saw Trunks jump down, he went further into the darkness and led the way in front.

"What-What is going on, why is there a tunnel?" Grant couldn't help but exclaim with a face full of shock when he came down and saw an endless tunnel.

"Don't ask so much, just hurry!" Gilbert yelled, then immediately followed Trunks into the tunnel.

All of the mercenaries who'd come down were extremely confused, but once they got over their surprise, they all filed into the tunnel. After everyone had entered, the tunnel closed miraculously without a trace.

Meanwhile, the valley was in chaos. The hundred something elites from the four significant powers of the Valley of Sunshine were crashing together. When Han Shuo neared that area in interest, he found that the situation had changed in an odd way, completely out of his predictions.

Originally, due to the earth elite zombie's actions, the other three forces had rushed towards the Rainbow Sickles. Out of them, the Cairo mercenaries with ferocious war god Laureton as ferocious as a war god and slaughtered the Rainbow Sickles, who had no corresponding expert. Even though the Rainbow Sickle Mercenary Band had the advantage in numbers, if the House of Menlo and the Katar orc tribe had also attacked together, the Rainbow Sickles would have been in dire straits.

However, the situation wasn't like that. The House of Menlo and the Katar orc tribe that had rushed forward with Laureton's mercenaries all defected once they neared the Rainbow Sickles. With an explosive roar from Adam Menlo and Katar, the experts from the two forces all started



attacking the Cairo mercenaries.

“Wahaha, Laureton, Laureton, you never would have imagined this, right?! The real target is your Cairo mercenary band in today’s fight. You finally left the Valley of Sunshine, so don’t think about going back, haha...” Florida of the Rainbow Sickles suddenly laughed maniacally. As he floated in the air, his loud voice passed to every single corner of the valley.

“Times have changed, the Cairo mercenaries has controlled the Valley of Sunshine for too long. No matter what, you have to move a little,” Adam Menlo’s, the master of the House of Menlo, sinister voice also rang out as he flew towards Laureton on a great golden-winged roc.

The circumstances had changed shockingly. It seemed like the Rainbow Sickles, Adam Melo and the orc tribe had all come to an agreement. The intense argument beforehand was only a way of covering the fact that these three forces had already set their target on Laureton’s Cairo mercenary band in secret.

Those accompanying Laureton were the most elite berserkers of the Cairo mercenary band. Out of the fifty-something people, there were twenty berserkers who had the ability to become berserk once, and four of them, including Harris, had the ability to become berserk twice. Add to that the presence of the four archmages and three swordmasters they’d recruited over the years, it meant that the majority of the strongest people from the Cairo mercenaries were all there.

Yet, when faced with the sudden defection of the House of Menlo and the orc tribe, six berserkers on the outer ring were immediately slaughtered by the experts from the two forces in the blink of an eye.

On Florida’s side, his grandfather Ferguson, had already descended from the sky and was watching the changes in the valley with a cold gaze. He didn’t join in the attack on Laureton.

“Roar!”

Laureton howled as the Berserker’s War Axe in his hand attacked without a pattern. Meanwhile, a powerful aura spread as the Berserker’s Battle Axe caused curtains of light to appear, and all those who were

swept into the light were smashed into smithereens.

“Follow me to break out!” Laureton’s yelled echoed through the entire valley. All of the people from the Cairo mercenary band suddenly changed directions and rushed towards the House of Menlo that were charging at towards them.

Adam Menlo, waved the golden spear in his hands atop his roc, making the air sound out with his sword aura. As golden-winged roc flapped its wings, tornadoes formed in the air and swept towards the people of the Cairo mercenary band.

A fire mage of the House of Menlo released three snakes of fire that were five meters long. They spread out as if they were alive, one towards Laureton, while the other two slithered to flank the Cairo Mercenary Group in a cone-like formation. The tender green plants that they’d slithered over in their path quickly melted.

“Adam, you ancient piece of crap, if you want to die, then I’ll send you on your way!” Laureton roared in anger and leapt into the air. The Berserker’s Battle Axe flared out a curtain of light, causing the five meter long fire snake to rain down from the sky in sparks before it even managed to draw near his body.

Silver light exploded from the Berserker’s Battle Axe like satin sashes. It surged out like a waterfall as it shot directly towards Adam Menlo on the great golden-winged roc.

Ding!

Adam Menlo’s golden spear connected directly with the berserker’s Battle Axe, making Laureton’s leaping figure tremble and then fall from the sky into the middle of the House of Menlo. Adam Menlo grunted, then quickly urged the roc to fly higher, as if he was afraid of the rampaging Laureton.

As Laureton howled in anger, he made his move once again. The fact that he’d landed right in the middle of the House of Menlo also made things more convenient. Before the archmage who’d casted “Dancing Fire Snakes” could react, he was split in half by a hack from the battle axe,

spilling his blood and guts onto the ground.

Laureton's savage power seemed to have found an outlet after landing in the middle of Adam Menlo's troops. He instantly caused the brutal death of several people, but the experts of the House of Menlo had managed to react by now, and they all aimed the broadswords, spears and bows at Laureton. All sorts of attacks swarmed him before Laureton was able to cause more tremendous damage.

Ding clang dong.

The Berserker's Battle Axe hand danced furiously in Laureton's as it blocked most of the attacks. However, several arrows still penetrated his defenses, and pinned his shoulders and back. A spear also appeared from a strange angle and carved a thin and long wound underneath his arm, where blood spurt forth madly.

However, the berserk Laureton did not know pain at all. Furthermore, the defenses of his body were also terrifying. Although all of the arrows and long bows had packed such power and momentum that they would pierce through a normal person's body, they only managed to scratch Laureton's skin. Regardless of arrow or spear, the missiles only entered about a nail's depth into Laureton's muscles.

"As long as we kill Laureton, I, Florida, swear to back off from the fight over the silver mine. Don't let him leave here alive!" Florida rose in the air as the exquisite staff in his hand continuously shimmered, sending out exquisite Radiant Sword Slashes and pulses towards the people from the Cairo Mercenary Band.

"Aooooo!"

The orc chieftain, Katar, howled, and led a group of orcs empowered by various shamanic spells in a charge towards the Cairo mercenaries. Although these orcs were least in number, they seemed to be immune to most of the magic attacks. Aside from causing their skin to turn redder, the water and fire spells casted by the Cairo archmages were not of any use.

A savage power impacted the ground, causing one of the archmages to

become assaulted by a huge tremor. Even his rank three magical beast, the Deepwater Venom Python, was hit as well. His steed died instantly, while the archmage bled from all of his orifices. He frantically used a levitation spell to fly into the sky.

Since this fight had included all of the true experts in the four great powers of the Valley of Sunshine, the dense murderous aura due to their hatred and bitterness were all attracted by a power when they died, causing them to gather behind a huge boulder.

Han Shuo, who had been watching excitedly behind the boulder, had bloodshot eyes at the moment as waves of blood-red evil aura wreathed around him. As more and more experts died, the terrifying aura around Han Shuo's body became denser and denser.

“Roar!!”

A crazy long howl sounded out from afar, causing an enormous boulder the size of a house to suddenly break apart, its pieces flying everywhere.

The evil aura around Han Shuo had condensed into a strange wave of blood as his crimson eyes glared savagely ahead. The terrifying aura from his body spread out quickly, and everyone's gazes became fixated on Han Shuo when all of the powerhouses in the valley felt this evil, raging aura.

Han Shuo turned swiftly into a ray of blood light and shot into the midst of the Rainbow Sickle Mercenary Band like a bloodthirsty demon. He was able to pound away at three great swordmasters of the Rainbow Sickle Mercenary Band with a single punch, while the blood that spurting out from his punch condensed into plasma.

“It's him, it's him, kill him!” Florida's hatred for Han Shuo was deeply entrenched into his bones. Even though Han Shuo's appearance was very different from usual at this moment, he was still able to recognize him with a glance, causing him to yell out furiously.

However, for an unknown reason, Florida, who should have been the first one to make a move, suddenly felt deep terror in his heart. Although he yelled loudly about killing Han Shuo, he subconsciously moved back.

It was obvious that he was afraid!

# Chapter 262: Resurrection of the dead

“Hehe, Florida, we meet again!” Han Shuo sneered with crimson eyes. He was terrifying, like someone possessed by a demon.

Normally speaking, once someone of the Bloodlust Realm went berserk, they would lose their mind and enter a mentality of endless slaughter, completely unable wake up. However, during the journey to the forbidden place last time, Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge had taken in a lot of “specters”. When the pure power had been absorbed by the demon infant, it seemed to have a miraculous effect on him.

This time, Han Shuo felt that most of the evil auras of hatred, terror, and savagery swirled around was actually absorbed by the Demonslayer Edge within his body, causing most of the things swirling around his body to only be pure evil power.

The negative emotions were the main reason why once Han Shuo would lose control over himself once he entered the bloodlust mode. Although the infinite bloodlust within Han Shuo’s heart did not decrease when those negative emotions were absorbed by the Demonslayer Edge, his firm will allowed his mind to remain clear. This differed from when he was in the forbidden area, where he’d nearly killed Gilbert since he was unable to distinguish friend from foe.

“You won’t be able to run away! You’ll die today! Kill him!” Florida fled until he was in a place that he was safe before calling out hatefully.

“You’re actually not dead!” Grand magus Ferguson of the Church of Light exclaimed as he gazed at Han Shuo.

“How could I die so quickly when you haven’t died yet, kaka!” Han Shuo laughed oddly and made as if an eagle preparing to soar into the sky. Dense bloodlust spread out with Han Shuo as the center and formed an area suffused with blood-red mist.

A terrifying and savage aura exploded out from within this area. The remaining power, that had yet to dissipate from the experts who’d just died, all coalesced with the blood mist. As Han Shuo’s aura became

stronger and stronger, the area became a burning cloud that moved to cover Ferguson.

“What— What kind of magic is this?!” Even with Ferguson’s insight, he was unable to understand Han Shuo’s methods of attack. However, he instinctively sensed danger. The magic staff in his hand shone brilliantly as he cast an “Illuminate”, quickly backing away to hide like Florida.

Once the spell “Illuminate” had been cast, it was as if another sun had appeared in the sky. A ball of piercing light, carrying pure and holy power, surged towards Han Shuo.

Unfortunately, while “Illuminate” had the power to exorcise evil, it was completely ineffective towards Han Shuo’s demonic techniques. As the people underneath him died gruesomely, the aura from Han Shuo became stronger and stronger. A mist of blood, covering a large patch of area, spread out, causing the eight Rainbow Sickles to feel as if an evil power had surged into their bodies. They cried out in anguish until their bodies bulged and exploded.

“Who— just who exactly are you? You’re more evil than the Calamity Church! I won’t allow you to get away with this!” Ferguson grew furious and roared while pointing at Han Shuo, as the Rainbow Sickles instantly exploded without any hope of resistance.

“Old fart, I reminded you last time and you didn’t listen,” Although Han Shuo still retained control over his mind in the bloodlust realm, his desire for slaughter was unable to be suppressed. Thus, he spoke coldly as he controlled the demonic cloud towards the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band.

A blood-red fan 嗜血幡 flew out from the bloody mist. The intense murderous aura around Han Shuo surged crazily into the blood fan, causing the pictures of hundreds of demons on the fan to release an intense blood mist.

The Bloodlust Fan was a demonic treasure that Han Shuo had refined during his three months of closed door cultivation. It was specifically used by those within the bloodlust realm. Han Shuo’s blood essence was in the

Bloodlust Fan, and it was able to transmute the murderous aura wreathing Han Shuo's body into a bloody mist that would cause blood to boil and bodies to explode.

Now that it'd been released by Han Shuo, it immediately showed a spectacular effect by converting the murderous aura. As the number of deceased in the surroundings increased, the terrifying aura of blood around Han Shuo also became more and more powerful. Wherever the blood fan passed, those ensconced by the mist were unable to control the blood in their bodies from boiling, and they all imploded with gruesome deaths.

"Use wind magic to blow away the bloody mist, quickly!" Seeing that the bloody mist was traveling over, Florida immediately lost his calm as he gave this quick order.

The wind mages on the side immediately cast tornado and gale wind spells as soon he had shouted. The dozen or so small tornadoes churned over and destroyed everything like a knife. The bloody mist that had been gathered by the blood fan was blown apart, no longer able to coalesce as Han Shuo wished.

No treasure was perfect. Thus, Han Shuo was neither surprised nor discouraged when the bloody mist of the Bloodlust Fan was torn apart by wind magic. As Florida yelled loudly and the remaining Rainbow Sickles attacked, Han Shuo's body flew backwards, and swiftly stopped in the air over Laureton's head.

"Laureton, I'll help you break through the encirclement, but that cursed shop belongs to me. Furthermore, the Soul Destroyers will have the right to publicly recruit mercenaries in the Valley of Sunshine. How's that sound?" Han Shuo stood straight in the air surrounded by his murderous aura and threw out these suggestions whilst looking down at the wound riddled Laureton.

It was obvious that three of the great factions in the Valley of Sunshine had plotted together against Laureton in this battle. If Laureton died here, then the Valley of Sunshine would immediately be plunged into chaos.



The Rainbow Sickles would then be most likely to take charge. This was something that Han Shuo didn't wish to see, and it was also detrimental to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's development.

Due to this, even if it wasn't for Laureton and purely for Trunks and himself, Han Shuo would've helped Laureton break free as well. Of course, it would be all the more perfect if Han Shuo could secure some benefits before helping him. Han Shuo also believed that Laureton would not refuse in this situation.

As he expected, Laureton did not hesitate. He looked up and yelled back at almost the same moment Han Shuo had finished speaking. "Agreed. If our people can leave the valley alive, I'll also give you an extra ten thousand gold!"

"Deal!" Han Shuo replied calmly.

As spell after spell was chanted and the Canopy of Necromancy was released, the sky became covered by dark green clouds that were dense and unable to be broken apart. Meanwhile, several acidic swamps suddenly formed in the middle of the Katar orc tribe and House of Menlo troops. As Han Shuo chanted out various mystic spells whilst waving his hands, rays of strange light shot out beneath the Canopy of Necromancy, landing onto the bodies of the experts who had died not too long ago.

A terrifying scene occurred. The people, that had been killed not long ago, began to struggle to their feet without a hint of humanity left in their eyes. The wounds on their bodies still bled, even the intestines of some of them could be seen. What was more horrifying was that some of them had their guts dangling from their waist, as if they hadn't properly put their belts on.

When the deceased stood up one by one, it was enormously shocking and absolutely horrifying to those who were still alive. Every single live person who noticed this scene let out terrifying screams, causing the entire valley to sink further into chaotic uproar..

Resurrection of corpses was one of the most horrifying and memorable magics of necromancy. It was something that had become an ancient

legend, having disappeared from the continent for several thousand years. There was no record of this spell in the now forlorn branch of necromancy magic.

However, on such a night and in such a place, the four great factions of the Valley of Sunshine had the fortune of witnessing this long lost evil magic. Legends were legends after all. When corpses stood up one by one and attacked their former comrades while waving their weapons, the shock completely destroyed their companions' minds.

"Oh, gods! How is this possible!" Ferguson let out an anguished wail as he looked at everything that was happening in disbelief.

"Laureton, don't say that I didn't help you. Quickly use this chance to break free!" Han Shuo grinned coldly as zombies and skeletons appeared out of nowhere and rushed towards the four shocked great factions, alongside the resurrected corpses. Under the cover of the Canopy of Necromancy, these beings of darkness became like fish in water, having their power and speed greatly increased.

After being reminded by Han Shuo, the immensely shocked Laureton quickly came back to himself and immediately yelled, "What are you guys spacing out for?! Charge!!"

The immense roar made the dumbly staring Cairo mercenaries return to themselves. As they looked at their intimate companions, who'd already passed away, stand up in terrifying form, the mercenaries were absolutely shocked senseless. If it weren't for Laureton's shout waking them from their stupor, they might have needed quite a while to return to their senses.

However, since they were Han Shuo's protective targets, they were still fine even when they were staring off into space. As for the other three forces, the dead suddenly latched onto some of their ankles, the subsequent terror from which might become engraved on their hearts for the rest of their lives. Some who reacted a bit slower were stabbed to death by their former comrades.

Han Shuo stood in the air and gazed coldly at the savage changes

underneath. The murderous aura from his body surged and flared, releasing an evil atmosphere. When coupled with his savage look and red eyes, it caused him to look the epitome of terror.

# Chapter 263: Domineering

“Grandpa, hurry and cast Radiant Glory! Expel this evil magic!” Florida shouted in a panic as he looked at the dumbfounded Ferguson.

The shocked Ferguson only reacted when he was reminded by his grandson. The magic staff in his hand burst forth again with the holy force of light as his aged voice resonated throughout the valley, “Oh noble God of Light, hear my calls. Disperse all darkness—Radiant Glory!”

A powerful light tore through the sky. Holy light elements permeated the air above the entire valley. The black-green layer of clouds created by Han Shuo’s Canopy of Necromancy immediately began to disperse under the radiance of the holy light, and disappeared without a trace in a short time.

Brilliant light scattered throughout the valley and intermixed with the numerous stars that dotted the sky to emit a soft light. As the holy force of light descended, the deathly air was quickly dispelled. The dark creatures summoned by Han Shuo started smoking under the rays of the holy light, and their speed and power were hindered.

However, the resurrected dead bodies weren’t much affected by the strong light from the Radiant Glory. Even though their skin also began emitting white smoke, they could still move freely, so they rushed straight at the troops of the three great powers.

The experts who died thanks to Han Shuo’s necromancy magic also had the presence of dark creatures on them. However, they’d only just died after all, so this dark presence was very weak. This enabled them to barely manage to resist the rays of light magic.

The Cairo mercenary band still had around twenty people left thanks to Han Shuo’s assistance earlier. They took advantage of the House of Menlo being stunned senseless to escape the encirclement of the three great powers and flee to the entrance of the valley.

Han Shuo knew the Canopy of Necromancy would certainly be dispelled wherever the Radiant Glory shone upon, and that the summoned dark

creatures similarly wouldn't be spared. However, a bit of acid from the Acid Bog had been already released earlier, so the men chasing Laureton's group were more or less affected by this acid.

The House of Menlo was the one most affected. Their magical creature mounts panicked when they stepped into the acid, their feet and legs quickly consumed by the acid. This looked similar to the effects that Radiant Glory had when hitting dark creatures.

"Be careful! I'm going to kill him this damnable evil of a necromancer!" The House of Menlo had spent years of effort to finally gather this group of high rank magical creatures. Now that six of their rank two or three creatures had died in the blink of an eye, Adam Menlo was furious. He roared loudly in anger as he glared at Han Shuo.

"Keke. Wanna kill me? Come on!" Han Shuo couldn't suppress his thirst for blood and had been worrying about where he could vent. As soon as he heard the furious Adam Menlo's furious shout, his blood red pupils immediately snapped to him.

Using the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to float in the air, Han Shuo's entire body was filled with ferocious killing intent that was horrifying. Even Florida, who had a bone deep hatred towards him, didn't dare to issue an order to attack. On one hand, it was because Han Shuo's momentum was too terrifying, and on the other, it was because it was difficult to handle him when he was so high up in the air.

"Kill Laureton first! The Cairo mercenary is finished as soon as he's dead. Leave this guy alone for now." Florida couldn't help but shout anxiously when he saw Asa and Andy floating up and raising their magic staffs to deal with Han Shuo.

Laureton was leading a group of survivors and rushing towards the entrance of the valley. Florida had gone through a great deal of effort and was even willing to let go of the mithril mine this time to kill Laureton. He wanted to take control of the Valley of Sunshine for the Rainbow Sickles, so he naturally couldn't let the former leave alive.

Upon hearing Florida's shout, more than thirty Rainbow Sickle experts

pursued Laureton together. Andy, who'd floated up and was about to deal with Han Shuo with Asa, turned and flew towards Florida after looking at Han Shuo standing arrogantly in the air.

However Asa, whose arm had been sliced off by Han Shuo by the Demonslayer Edge, didn't listen to Florida's order. He glared viciously at Han Shuo and rushed at him along with the Adam Menlo.

Ferguson released the Radiant Glory behind Asa, then softly heaved a few breaths and floated over like a fluttering willow leaf in the air.

"Shoot him!" Adam Menlo commanded from the back of the roc, his hand holding the dazzling golden spear as he lunged at Han Shuo.

The House of Menlo only had less than thirty experts left after being swept through by the berserkers and Han Shuo's necromancy magic. Under Adam Menlo's command, they each aimed their crossbow bolts and spinning axes at Han Shuo, who was standing grandly in the sky.

Three yin demons were observing the entire battlefield. Therefore, Han Shuo could clearly see any abnormal actions that occurred. When the attacks from the Menlo's troops hurtled through the air towards him, he only curved his lips into a disdainful sneer without taking any other action.

The attacks from below were just about to connect with Han Shuo when his proudly aloof body suddenly wavered, then split into four clones. These four clones looked exactly the same as the original. They flew in four different directions towards Ferguson, Adam Menlo, Asa, and the members of the House of Menlo respectively.

The bolts and spinning axes from the Menlo people below suddenly connected with empty air. They didn't even touch a corner of Han Shuo's clothes.

"This, what is this?!"

"How did he become four people? Damn it! Am I seeing things?"

Shocked exclamations poured out from the mouths of those of the House of Menlo nonstop.

Seeing one of the Han Shuos speedily closing in on them, Ferguson's side had no idea what was going on. Ferguson and Asa dodged instinctively. Only Adam Menlo on the back of the roc still met Han Shuo's attack head on with his golden spear, despite his surprise.

Successive sounds ripped through the air at this time as seven bone spurs shimmering with cold light came at Adam Menlo from all directions. The little skeleton stood proudly on a huge rock, a light dancing within his purple eye as his gaze locked onto Adam Menlo, who rode the golden-winged roc.

The seven bone spurs flew in a bizarre orbit as they attacked the golden-winged roc. The bone spurs sparkled with a brilliant jade-like light like seven eerily sharp snow blades.

The bone spurs churned into the roc's wings, causing metallic dings and sharp, low whines to emit from the roc. Blood splattered from its wounds and dyed the golden feathers. It was obviously injured.

Adam Menlo had originally rushed at Han Shuo with a ferocious momentum, he was now waving the golden spear around to block the seven bone spurs. He kept cursing nonstop, evidently angered to death.

"You old thing, you want to kill me? Keke!" The three clones suddenly vanished, revealing the original Han Shuo now standing ten meters above Adam Menlo. His pupils were deep red as he cawed madly, the killing aura around his body condensing onto his arm. As Han Shuo's hand smashed downwards, the focused killing aura rushed violently down like layers of blood.

"Damn it!" Adam Menlo cursed loudly. The spear had been defending him against the seven bone spurs was forced to change directions and head upwards instead. He pushed the fighting aura of a sky rider to its limit, forming a silver curtain of light to block the invasion of the bloody waves.

However, this force had been distilled from Han Shuo's murderous aura, a terrifying power embodied within him. A thick killing intent that could cover the heavens and earth dropped down like a cage, its force

comparable to a mountain. The curtain of light formed by the fighting aura could only resist for a span of two breaths of time before it was obliterated by the bloody waves.

Rumble! A loud explosion resounded. The bloody waves were like a river from the galaxy, surging over both Adam Menlo and the golden-winged roc. They drove the super rank magical creature straight down into the ground, creating an earthquake that shook the mountain wall.

Seeing that Han Shuo had shot down both their head of house and the golden-winged roc, the experts of the family suddenly panicked. They gave up chasing Laureton and swarmed to where their leader had fallen. As soon as they arrived, they saw both Adam Menlo and the golden-winged rock struggling to their feet. The men immediately surrounded the two.

When Han Shuo saw that the House of Menlo had already surrounded their head of house and the golden-winged roc, Han Shuo stood still in the sky and didn't continue to attack. The golden-winged roc was obscuring his vision, so he couldn't see if Adam Menlo was dead or alive. His terrifying presence and blood red eyes returned to normal after a while.

Han Shuo's current strength could easily deal with a sky rider or a great swordmaster, with the little skeleton, victory was even more assured. However, the reason why he'd been able to thoroughly trounce Adam Menlo and the super rank roc just now was mostly likely due to the abundant killing aura that had filled the valley.

His one attack earlier had released all the killing aura he'd absorbed from the valley. Han Shuo had regained his calm. He once again summoned the three yin demons to surveil every moment within the valley.



# Chapter 264: Stomping on a grand magus

“Who on earth is this person?”

“Too formidable! Even head Adam Menlo and his super rank magical creature were taken down. Too horrifying!”

“Just what kind of skill did he use? Why couldn’t I identify it at all? He definitely has the power of a sacred swordmaster, otherwise he wouldn’t be that powerful!”

The small powers in the Valley of Sunshine were all hiding in the valley’s periphery. They were trembling and cowering as they watched the chaotic battle unfold, and whispered exclamations.

“Aowuuuu...”

In the end, chief Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band remained behind by himself after escaping the encirclement. He emitted wailing battle cries as the battle axe in his hand emitted layers of silver light under the moonlight.

The muscles on Laureton’s bare upper body were now sparkling with silver light. His eyebrows and thick chest hair had changed from black to silver. Cracking sounds ringing out from his two meter tall body, his frame seemed to be stretched by some force as he grew another half meter taller.

He now clenched the battle axe with both hands instead of one. There was an enormous presence exuding from the weapon that now madly sparkled with silver light. Laureton was roaring as he ferociously chopped the battle axe down towards the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries who were pursuing him.

Piercing silver light shot straight forward and crackled as it swept the ground. The several Rainbow Sickle mercenaries simply had no way to defend against the invasion as their bodies were it sliced neatly through. The speed of the silver light was extremely fast, cutting through several mercenaries without impediment. It then continued to close in on the horrified Florida with incredible momentum. He fled frantically into the

air, his forehead now covered in cold sweat.

“A thrice berserk berserker? Oh my gawd! Laureton is crazy!”

“That must be the divine weapon of the berserker tribe, the Berserker Battle Axe. No wonder his power has become one notch stronger. What a terrifying fellow!”

“No shit. How could he hold sway in the Valley of Sunshine if he’s not strong enough!?”

The people watching the fight in the dark couldn’t help but exclaim as they saw Laureton go berserk once again and reach a legendary status that almost no one could attain.

“Shoot him!”

Arrows, axes, and spears shot straight at Laureton in accordance with Florida’s shout.

In addition, lightning bolts, as thick as an arm, cleaved violently down at him from the sky, dancing like fire snakes. A dense mass of whizzing arrows and erupting earth spikes blasted towards Laureton.

An intense series of attacks descended. A large patch was charred, the earth cracked, and every plant was disintegrated to ashes. Arrows and spears were scattered all over the ground, dust filled the air that the wind was slowly dispersing. Laureton remained in the center of it all with his battle axe in hand, proud and tall.

Laureton seemed to fear no pain after becoming thrice berserk. Even though the skin of his singed body was cracked in many places, they were all minor skin injuries. For Laureton to stand firmly after facing such an enormous number of physical and magical attacks from experts, his power was truly, extremely terrifying.

“Aowuuuu...” Laureton howled at the moon. He unexpectedly still had some spare energy left as he charged at the Katar orcs and Rainbow Sickle mercenaries.

“What a powerful man. A thrice berserk berserker is truly, exceptionally

powerful. His body was unexpectedly immune to a majority of both physical and magical attacks!” Han Shuo stood in the air, stunned. He involuntarily praised Laureton as he watched his actions.

Laureton once again threw out the battle axe that was flaring with radiance in all directions. The weapon emitted dazzling silver light as it flew in an arc. Several archers in hiding immediately had their flesh and blood rended, the gore spewing around messily.

The battle axe returned to Laureton’s hand after flying a full circle. In fact, it seemed to have a bit of the essence of the Law of Activating Magic. However the battle axe returned to Laureton only after a short flight. It wasn’t able to float in the air and follow his wishes like the Demonslayer Edge.

Han Shuo let out a sinister laugh. Taking advantage of the fact that everyone was still focused on Laureton, he suddenly released the Demonslayer Edge. A purple light blade shot out and made its way towards the thunder archmage Asa with a howling sound.

Asa resented Han Shuo the most. It was only because Han Shuo had exploded into four clones earlier that he was unable to easily kill Han Shuo. Asa’s head snapped to Laureton’s howl for only a second when he saw Han Shuo’s attack unexpectedly close. He was immediately frightened out of his wits.

“Last time I only managed to sliced off your right arm, but this time, I’ll cut off your head!” Han Shuo leered ferociously and rushed towards Asa.

At the moment, both the Rainbow Sickles and the Katar orcs were giving their all to deal with the thrice berserk Laureton. The experts from the House of Menlo were carefully protecting Adam Menlo. Only the light grand magus Ferguson was near Asa.

As Asa dodged in fright, Ferguson suddenly turned around and chanted the spell “Radiant Protection”. A translucent layer of light appeared and firmly wrapped around Asa.

Asa heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing his body wrapped in the “Radiant Protection”. As he was about to cast a lightning protection spell, he

suddenly cried out in alarm, “Mister Ferguson, be careful!”

As it turned out, the Demonslayer Edge, that was originally aiming for Asa, suddenly changed its direction as it drew closer, whizzing towards Ferguson who’d just cast “Radiant Protection”. At the same time, Han Shuo also turned around and followed closely. He didn’t even spare a glance at Asa as his eyes stared coldly at Ferguson.

Ferguson suddenly realized that Han Shuo’s attack at Asa had only been a feint. Han Shuo’s real goal had been Ferguson from the start.

When he understood this, a strong dread shrouded his heart. He hastily chanted the incantation for “Radiant Protection” to thoroughly cover his body.

Clang! Clank! Sweet metallic sounds of the Demonslayer Edge colliding with Ferguson rang out. Crack after crack appeared in the layers of “Radiant Protection”. From within, Ferguson quickly focused his mental strength to mobilize the light element and desperately repair the cracks.

“Heh heh, old fart, I had warned already you the last time you pursued me. Yet you still stubbornly took action and almost killed me in the river. You didn’t think this day would come, did you?! You just cast Radiant Glory, so your mental strength is already exhausted. Now after two Radiant Protection spells, let’s see how long you can hold on for!”

Han Shuo closed in like a ghost. He didn’t withdraw the Demonslayer Edge into his body. Instead, his magical yuan furiously circulated and coalesced itself into two attacks. Han Shuo gave an odd chuckle as he unceremoniously mobilized his fists to violently assault the surface of the “Radiant Protection”.

The sound of the violent bombardment was like a loud drum. Cracks in the “Radiant Protection” spread rapidly beneath the relentless brutal attacks. Ferguson almost had an impulse to vomit blood inside the protection. He’d never felt so lacking in light elemental energy as he did now. He was giving it his utmost efforts to exhaust his mental strength.

Extreme dread branded Ferguson’s heart with Han Shuo’s continued pummeling. Only now did he realize how unfathomable Han Shuo’s heart

was. He finally understood why the latter released the Canopy of Necromancy and so many dark creatures in his presence.

He had been Han Shuo's original target from the start! Everything had been to take revenge for the last time Ferguson and Maxine had chased him down at the small river! This time, Han Shuo expended quite a bit of effort on this plan. He'd first forced Ferguson to cast "Radiant Glory" in order to expend a large amount of his mental strength. He then pretended to attack Asa and made Ferguson exhaust his mental strength in casting "Radiant Protection", before finally closing in for close quarter combat.

Han Shuo had also expended a great deal of mental strength to cast the Canopy of Necromancy and summon the large amount of dark creatures. However, he was also a powerful melee attacker with a strange weapon, in addition to being a mage. Although both sides wasted a similar amount of mental strength, Han Shuo could still launch an offensive with his weapon.

If all of this had been within Han Shuo's calculations, then his unfathomable heart and his deep, sophisticated scheming were all beyond imagination. Now that Ferguson understood, he'd never feared anyone as much as he did now.

"Chase me now why don't you?! You motherfucking S.O.B.! Who do you think you are to decide my life and death? You old fart, you only know to protect your own. I'll make it so that you can't chase me in the future!" Han Shuo cursed loudly as he assaulted the "Radiant Protection".

Being smashed in both spirit and body, Ferguson finally couldn't help vomiting blood. An immense arrow of blood sprayed out onto the "Radiant Protection, dyeing its pure white color crimson. The cracks became increasingly wider.

"Florida, what the hell are you still chasing for? Your grandfather is going to get beaten to death!" Asa was casting lightning magic nonstop to attack Han Shuo. However, the latter was constantly changing his position to evade while each of his blows still ruthlessly smashed into the "Radiant Protection". Asa finally couldn't help but yell out upon seeing Ferguson

vomit blood.

The thrice berserk state couldn't last for too long. Laureton had already turned to escape. Florida was chasing him in high spirits when he heard Asa curse loudly. He suddenly panicked and involuntarily looked back.

“Old fart, buh bye!” As Florida looked on in deep shock, Han Shuo grinned as he dealt a blow aimed at a crack in the “Radiant Protection”. This spell had long since been overwhelmed by the brutal attacks and finally shattered, collapsing in a burst of purple light.

The body covered in blood of Ferguson suddenly emerged, then fell listlessly on the ground. He was deader than dead!

“Keke...”

Han Shuo flew higher and higher with his round of creepy cackling. He left arrogantly under the gaze shot out from Florida's eyes that ached to rip him in half.

# Chapter 265: Raw ores

Han Shuo immediately ducked behind a lush bush upon leaving the valley. He used his mental strength to contact the earth elite zombie and the little skeleton.

Whoosh! A thin white light gleamed under the moonlight, whizzing from within the valley to settle beside Han Shuo. This was obviously the little skeleton holding his bone knife.

The seven bone spurs had returned to the little skeleton's back. He held the bone knife very leisurely, like a child touring a flower garden, not caring at all about the chaotic happenings in the valley. What a veteran!

After establishing contact with his mind, Han Shuo could sense the earth elite zombie swimming towards him from the depths of the valley. Ten seconds later, the ground beneath his feet loosened and the honest earth elite zombie clambered out.

"Where are they?" Han Shuo hastily asked upon seeing the earth elite zombie return.

The earth elite zombie was taken aback. He scratched his head dumbly in a moment of thought, then sank again down to the ground, going back to the valley using the same way. However, his speed was a little slower this time. Han Shuo focused his eyes and discovered that the earth elite zombie had drilled a tunnel that one person could fit in.

It seemed that the earth elite zombie had thrown everything to the wind and returned to Han Shuo when his master had called him just now, so he'd completely forgotten Trunks and the others. Only after Han Shuo's inquiry did the earth elite zombie remember that he'd been in charge, so he used his natural talent to dig a tunnel again.

The earth elite zombie could swim freely within the earth, but Trunks and the others didn't have this miraculous talent. Thus the tunnel was essential. The earth elite zombie was using his talents to create a passage in the valley, and thus his current speed couldn't compare to his usual flying through the earth.

The three yin demons were quite a distance away. One was following the Cairo mercenary band's chief Laureton. Laureton had returned to his twice berserk state now and was escaping towards the Valley of Sunshine along with the rest of the remaining Cairo experts.

The Cairo mercenary band had taken severe damage after the intense battle in the valley. A dozen experts had been killed, incensing Laureton. However, he understood that it was simply impossible for the Cairo mercenary band to win against the three other forces outside the Valley of Sunshine. He intended to return with full effort to the Valley of Sunshine and take revenge at a later time.

Another yin demon remained in the valley. Since Han Shuo had beaten Ferguson to death, Florida had suffered a major blow. He was currently holding Ferguson's corpse and letting out earth-shattering wails. He'd simply forgotten about leading the pursuit of Laureton.

Ferguson had dearly spoiled his grandson, paving a great and easy path for his growth. It was due to Ferguson's identity, as well as support from the Church of Light, that allowed Florida to have the confidence in contesting Laureton for the position of leading power in the Valley of Sunshine. However, since the grandfather who'd nurtured him had been beaten to death by Han Shuo, it'd be hard to say if he could borrow the force of the Church of Light from now on.

To Florida, his grandfather's death was emotionally unbearable and also threw a great wrench into his practical benefits. Even the sinister leader of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band couldn't help but burst into tears under this double blow.

The House of Menlo's group wasn't very far from Florida. Adam Menlo's was covered in injuries. When taking that sky-shattering blow from Han Shuo, Adam Menlo had first circulated his fighting aura for a full body defense before wrapping himself firmly in the great roc. That was how he'd barely escaped the grasp of death.

Although he'd avoided heavy injury, his partner for decades, the golden-winged roc hadn't shared the same luck. It had almost been scraped bald



by the little skeleton's bone knife, and more than half the feathers on its golden wings had been snapped. When it'd faced Han Shuo's heaven-shattering blow, the roc had protected Adam Menlo out of instinct, using its enormous body to withstand the attack. Its injuries were extremely serious.

In this moment, even though Adam Menlo's heart was dejected, he was also extremely furious. He shakily caressed the roc's bald, bloody wings and screamed with rage, "I want to kill him! I must kill him!!"

Several small powers lurking in the valley had witnessed all of the heaven-shaking changes that had taken place thus far. Han Shuo's crazy atrocities were engraved in their minds and made the name of Soul Destroyer famous. Since Han Shuo's performance tonight demonstrated his close relationship with the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, no one would dare to look down on the group's strength again.

Han Shuo used the three yin demons to observe their surroundings. After a while, the earth elite zombie leapt out from the ground again. He pulled on Han Shuo's sleeve and pointed his finger to the underground tunnel, as if waiting for praise.

Patting the earth elite zombie's shoulder, Han Shuo said with a smile, "Not bad, you did it right this time!"

"Did what right!?" Trunks followed up as he jumped out of the tunnel with a loud laugh.

Gilbert also climbed out with a large hemp sack. Grant and the others followed behind, each also carried a large sack, their faces shining with excitement.

"How were things?" Han Shuo asked with a smile, knowing from their expressions that they must have had some generous gains.

"It was hard to advance inside. There were rocks as sharp as knives. I'm afraid it'd have been simply impossible if it wasn't for your friend's help. There were several Rainbow Sickle mercenaries, we casually killed them all and took the raw ores that they harvested. We also mined some more and brought them here." Trunks seemed especially happy as he narrated

with a carefree laugh.

“Looks like the Rainbow Sickle mercenaries used the advantage of geography to gain a head start. Florida had actually dared announce that after killing Laureton, they would give up the mithril mine. How shameless! Oh right, how big was the mine? How much did we harvest?” Han Shuo scorned at Florida’s pledge then continued questioning.

Shaking his head, Trunks said helplessly, “I’m not sure. We only came in contact with a limited area. What we brought back are a few raw ores with small amounts of mithril within. We need someone in the know to confirm what we’ve harvested today.”

If the metal elite zombie was refined, its natural talent could be used to scope out the size of the mine. With his ability to control metal and metal ores, the metal elite zombie could easily gather all of the resources in the entire silver mine within a short amount of time, leaving not even a piece of mithril behind.

Unfortunately, the place of extreme metal was the most difficult to find out of the five extreme areas. He was unable to refine the metal elite zombie before locating it. With the metal elite zombie, Han Shuo simply wouldn’t have to worry about lacking any ores. When the ability of the dwarves and the metal elite zombie’s natural talent to sense metal was combined, a steady supply of weapons would become a simple matter.

Sighing for a bit, Han Shuo suddenly noticed some movement from Janet’s bandit group. He immediately cursed, “Alright, let’s leave first. The valley is engulfed in chaos, so we shouldn’t stay here for the time being.”

“You guys put down the ores, I’ll put them into my space ring.” Han Shuo urged Gilbert and the rest.

Only Trunks wore a space ring amongst this bunch, even Grant and the mercenaries used bags tied around their waists. Space rings were famously expensive. These mercenaries naturally didn’t have enough gold coins to buy one.

However, Grant and the mercenaries didn’t act immediately upon Han Shuo’s instructions. They looked to Trunks, as if waiting for him to

express his opinions.

“Listen to him. From now on, his commands are my commands. You guys should remember this well!” Trunks had a strict face as he carefully instructed.

“Understood!” Grant’s folks were relieved of a great burden after putting their sacks down. They hastily took the large sacks off their backs and placed them in front of Han Shuo.

The weight of these large sacks loaded with large and small broken rocks were such that an ordinary person wouldn’t be able to tolerate them. Even for these mercenaries, the way back to the Soul Destroyer mercenary base would be an unlucky, painful errand.

One white light flashed after another. All of the large and small sacks disappeared into Han Shuo’s space ring. After all was done, Han Shuo waved his hand saying, “Follow me, we’ll block Janet’s escape route. This time, we shall be the bandits and capture Janet.”

“Let’s do it like that then. I must get some clear answers!” Trunks immediately remembered Annie’s matter when Han Shuo mentioned Janet. His happy mood turned sorrowful as he shouted with a darkened face.

Two of the three yin demons had returned while the last was closely following Janet’s bandit group, paying close attention to their every move. The Soul Destroyers took a shortcut to block Janet’s way under Han Shuo’s directions, suddenly discovering some suspicious behavior from these people. Unexpectedly, Janet’s gang was laying an ambush where the House of Menlo would pass.

It seemed that Janet intended on taking advantage of the House of Menlo’s heavy losses, and make out like bandits!

# Chapter 266: Captives

As Janet and her bandit gang snuck up on the House of Menlo with the intention of adding insult to injury, she didn't realize that she herself had become someone else's prey.

Adam Menlo was injured, and the roc had transformed into a blonde, middle aged man with blade wounds all over his skin. Both were under protection of the family's elites as they slowly retreated in the direction of their headquarters.

As they passed by a thick shrub surrounded by several towering trees, Janet's people immediately jumped out screaming and shouting. The old man next to Janet release several wind supporting "Acceleration" spells, enabling their people to quickly close the distance between them and the House of Menlo and begin their ambush.

Han Shuo had thought that Janet was lurking around here for the chance to pillage and loot. Contrary to his expectations however, Janet had passed down the order to kill as soon as she saw the Menlo family. Evidently, she hadn't wanted to rob them.

"Unlucky old fart Adam. Serves you right! You even dared to scheme against me. You're really tired of living aren't you!" Janet didn't make a move, only shouting loudly in high spirits. Her delicate cheeks were painted with glee.

"The House of Menlo is done for if we kill these people. See if they still dare to make trouble for us then!" The bandits screamed and shouted, furiously waving their weapons and attacking fiercely. They were hot on the heels of the heavily wounded Menlo experts, who were now escaping bedraggedly in all directions.

The major forces seemed to have come to a tacit understanding before tonight as they hadn't sent too many people on this trip to the valley. The House of Menlo had brought roughly two dozen experts total. After the berserk Laureton had killed some and more had fallen to Han Shuo's resurrected corpses, they only had a dozen members left.

Now that they faced Janet's bandit group, who was thrice their number, taking a loss was just a matter of time.

"Protect my father well. Our people are near! As long as we return to the headquarters, these damned bandits won't be able to leave alive!" A skinny, seemingly weak mage with brown hair waved his staff and shouted loudly.

Many sharp spikes suddenly shot up on the path that Janet and her bandits were using. Their momentum was quick and fierce thanks to the supporting "Acceleration" spell. They simply didn't pay attention to the changes beneath their feet. When they landed one by one, their bare feet were immediately penetrated by the spikes.

"Damn it! Shoot them dead!" Janet roared, ordering the several archers behind her.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh.

The sound of arrows piercing the air resonated as a series of shining silver arrows whizzed towards the House of Menlo, abruptly throwing them into confusion. Even the earth mage, who'd casted "Earth Spikes" earlier, was affected by the rain of arrows. He was forced to release an earth wall in defense.

Han Shuo clearly saw the happenings of the fight between Janet and the House of Menlo through the three yin demons. Currently, his group was hiding in the dark about dozens of meters away, paying rapt attention to the intense fight, awaiting Han Shuo's orders.

"Leave them to harm each other. I'll have the earth elite zombie sneak attack them in a moment and grab our person!" Han Shuo said leisurely, not the least bit anxious.

"Tonight is destined to be a sleepless night. The Valley of Sunshine will become even more chaotic starting tomorrow, and our Soul Destroyer mercenary band will take this chance to rise up!" Trunks' ambition flared as he spoke with excitement.

"You should be careful for the time being. After my brutal acts tonight, I

think the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo may just cast aside everything to deal with us first. The current strength of our mercenary band isn't enough to compete with them yet. Our base absolutely must not be compromised." Looking at the blazing ambition on Trunks' face, Han Shuo couldn't help but speak out as a reminder.

"Heh heh, that's fine too. With your madness tonight, our Soul Destroyer mercenary band is definitely going to become renowned. As long as we have fame, we won't have to worry about gaining new recruits. As long as we have both money and manpower, we will grow rapidly. When we're strong enough, that's when the traitor Florida dies!" Trunks coldly said, his face solemn.

Nodding in agreement, Han Shuo said, "Indeed, the moment of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band has come!"

"Oh?" Han Shuo softly cried out and said, "I didn't think that the experts from the House of Menlo were really waiting outside to help their own. It seems that Janet's efforts are going down the drain!"

Patting the earth elite zombie, Han Shuo ordered it to quickly sneak into the ground. Then he turned to glance at Trunks and said, "I suddenly remember that since I have him, I won't need your help. You guys return to the base first. I'll bring Janet and catch up with you later."

"You really don't need backup? Since Janet can become the leader of such a large bandit group, her strength must be strong. Plus, her men are surrounding her. Are you certain you can succeed?" Trunks asked in surprise.

"Rest assured. This definitely won't be a problem!" Han Shuo smiled confidently and turned to Gilbert and the little skeleton, ordering them both to go back. He then headed towards Janet with the earth elite zombie and silently lay in wait to ambush them.

This evening was bound to be chaotic, so when the elites from the four great powers of the Valley of Sunshine had advanced into the mountain valley, the majority of their troops were waiting outside, ready to offer support.

The small powers in the valley before, deeply resentful of being intensely suppressed by the four great powers, hadn't dared to act rashly. Now that the four great powers had been seriously injured in the struggle, in addition to the deathly temptation of the mithril mine, no one would guess if they took some crazy action.

Even though Trunks and his group were familiar with the terrain of the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo was worried they'd meet with dangers along the way. He sent Gilbert and the little skeleton along with them. At least they could help each other along the way.

Han Shuo's brain spun furiously as he schemed on how exactly he would capture Janet. Relying on the detailed observations of Janet's every move from the three yin demons, he quickly brainstormed and considered the most appropriate method.

"Hurry and chase after them. Kill them! There won't be another chance if we miss this one!" Janet grasped the huge studded club, her delicate body dashing forward lightning fast as she chased the escaping members of the House of Menlo. Several bandits were originally by her side, but gradually got further from her as they hastily pursued the Menlo experts.

Han Shuo calmly determined Janet's route through the yin demons. He moved surreptitiously to hide behind a huge tree, slowly adjusting his breathing and heartbeat. A while later, his whole being seemed to melt into the tree. No one could detect him in the shadows.

The earth elite zombie speedily travelled through the ground and followed Janet closely as per Han Shuo's orders. He only needed but a command from his master to immediately coordinate with Han Shuo from underground.

The Menlo experts rode various different magical creatures and fled past the huge tree trunk where Han Shuo was hiding. Several bandits on Janet's side waved their weapons, yelling noisily as they gave chase. Everyone was passing right by Han Shuo.

The heavily panting Janet gradually approached at the trajectory that Han Shuo had previously predicted. She wielded the huge studded club

while loudly shouting and cursing vulgarities nonstop. She didn't have the slightest bit of reservation and subtlety that a young girl should have.

Suddenly, the lurking Han Shuo jumped out like a ghost and instantly appeared in front of Janet like a dark shadow.

Janet had been swearing continuously when she suddenly saw a shadow slip out from the darkness. Startled, she raised the studded club and rushed forward. The club moved at a high speed, making a strange whistling sound. The momentum appeared quite astonishing.

Clang clang!

A metallic sound echoed as an enormous force transmitted through the studded club into Janet's body. The force was like a terrifying volcano outbreak, blasting Janet backwards.

"It's you!" Janet realized the newcomer was much stronger than her after a single blow. When Han Shuo's figure was revealed, her face immediately paled in shock as she cried out.

When she saw that her ambusher was Han Shuo, she knew her strength wasn't up to the task. She quickly retreated without a thought and yelled, "Men, capture him!"

As Janet was fiercely retreating, she was completely unaware of the earth elite zombie lying in wait. A pair of arms abruptly emerged from the ground and accurately seized her ankles, halting her escape.

Janet was scared out of her wits by this sudden turn of events. She shrilly screamed in fear, "Help! Something's latched on me!"

"Too late!" A light shout rang out. Han Shuo was already face to face with Janet. She felt her entire body stiffen up as if it wasn't her own anymore, and slowly lost strength in her limbs.

"Let her go, or you will bear the costs of our retaliation no matter the cost!" The crippled wind archmage Billy rapidly flew over as he glared furiously at Han Shuo, shouting loudly.

"I need to ask her about some matters. I will not take her life, so rest



assured!” Han Shuo said, carrying the fainted Janet as he responded to the quickly incoming Billy.

“You promise not to hurt her?” On the other side, Billy was afraid that Han Shuo would make a vicious move. He held back the raging bandits around him from rushing forward as he stared urgently at Han Shuo.

“Of course, I’m not taking her life. Otherwise she’d already be dead!” Han Shuo nodded and replied, then he brought Janet and flew away, leaving some words, “At most three days. She will definitely return safely, rest assured!”

Having finished speaking, Han Shuo ordered the earth elite zombie to retreat. Together, the man and zombie left by sky and ground. They quickly drifted in the direction of Trunks and his group.

# Chapter 267: Divine body

Han Shuo joined Trunks and the group on the way back. They didn't encounter any unexpected incidents, and went back to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band base in secret.

The group seemed somewhat worn out after experiencing a grueling night. However, Trunks had already waited for too many years, he obviously didn't want to waste even a second. Those around who'd been an original member of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band were now gazing at Han Shuo with shining eyes.

"You people, you people really captured Janet?" When the sleeping Annie was woken up, she yelled noisily. However she immediately paled and stuttered when she saw the unconscious Janet.

Patting Janet on the cheek, Han Shuo intended to pour magical yuan into her body to wake her up from the coma. But his brows suddenly raised when he was surprised.

Exclaiming "oh" in a light voice, Han Shuo placed his big hand on the back of Janet's head. Five strands of magical yuan as thin as silk swam inside her body, suddenly discovering that her body structure had some places different from an ordinary person. Her meridians were a bit more fragile, but she had a dozen more bones.

"Bastard! How dare you take advantage of Janet?!" Annie furiously cursed upon seeing Han Shuo press his big hand on Janet's back.

"How is it?" Trunks was waiting for Han Shuo to wake Janet up. However, Trunks couldn't help but inquire upon seeing Han Shuo's face turn puzzled while Janet had yet to come to.

"This Janet is very strange, her body structure has many differences from a normal person's!" Han Shuo was astonished. He was even more careful after that, letting the magical yuan run a few more rounds. He finally determined that Janet's body was indeed the same as human being, but the composition of bones and meridians was different from normal human's.

“There’s really such a strange thing as this?” Trunks was surprised. He stared fixedly at Janet a few times over then nodded, “It is indeed her. I’ve known her for several years now, this is definitely Janet. How can her body be different from normal human?”

“There’s no mistake about it. Her body is absolutely different from ours. I’m sure this Janet has some oddities!” Han Shuo said with certainty. He then suddenly recalled the last time he fought Janet. Her deep green fighting aura had already scattered, but still had the ability to make his arm tremble, this had sown some doubts in his heart.

After Han Shuo listed out the peculiarities about Janet, Trunks was stunned for a moment and then opened his mouth to say, “I actually know something about this. When Janet had yet to cultivate fighting aura, she actually already possessed a very powerful strength. I heard it showed when she was a child.”

“I see, I know what it is now. Janet must have a legendary divine body blessed by the gods. Her body structure has been different from ordinary people from birth!” Han Shuo exclaimed, suddenly remembering Fanny’s remark about his body before.

Han Shuo could have such a rapid progress was entirely due to the practice of demonic magic, but Fanny had mistakenly believed that he had a divine body. At that time Han Shuo thought the divine body talk was just gibberish. Now that he’d sussed out Janet’s body structure, he understood there were truly some magical things on this continent.

“Oh my god! This female bandit actually has a divine body. According to the legend, those with a divine body will become an extremely powerful figure. I didn’t think we could actually encounter one here.” Trunks too was quite shocked as he looked at the unconscious Janet.

“Scared already? Quickly let us go or Janet definitely won’t let you go easily!” Annie clenched her tiny hand, shaking her fist at Trunks in threat.

Shaking his head slightly, Han Shuo mocked with a smile, “So what of a divine body? She was still captured by me!”

“Wake up!” Han Shuo lifted the restriction on Janet’s body and patted

her face, smiling cutely as he spoke.

Janet didn't say a thing as soon as she woke up and instead turned to Han Shuo and cursed nonstop. Han Shuo felt really weird for such a pretty girl to spit out vulgar curses one after another.

"I'll leave her to you. She can move her mouth now!" Han Shuo stood up with a wry smile, patted Trunks' shoulder, and walked out.

When Han Shuo left the mountain cave, Odysseus and the other fellows were quite self aware and followed him out. Only Trunks and some old comrades remained inside to interrogate Janet about Annie's past.

"Bryan, it's been quite a while since we met, let's have a drink tonight!" Odysseus walked out and immediately smiled at Han Shuo as he offered. This place was still covered in thick mist in the evening, but for some reason the mist up in the sky had gradually dispersed, allowing the bright and clear moonlight to directly sprinkle down.

Almost all of the other mercenaries were sleeping as it was late into the night. The Odysseus gang were quite tired after a busy evening, so they all just sat down at the practice area.

"Good!" Han Shuo had nothing to do and picked a random seat, sitting down cross legged with Gilbert, Odysseus, and the others. He took out the wine crafted by the dwarves and handed it to Gordon's group.

Even the water adept mage Aphrodite and the female elven archer Nia didn't refuse Han Shuo's goodwill. After a few sips of good wine, they all looked up at the moon and shared the desires and aspirations in their hearts.

"I want to become a great swordmaster. Sooner or later, I'll have everybody know of the name Gordon!" Gordon, who'd advanced to senior swordsman, said proudly after a few mouthfuls of wine.

"I too need to practice my magic and become an archmage. As long as I advance to archmage, I can be bestowed a title in any country and become a superior noble!" The water adept mage Aphrodite softly expressed her desire, a smile hanging on her lips.

“Ah right, Bryan what do you desire?” Odysseus turned to glance at Han Shuo.

“More powerful strength, money, privilege, and beautiful women!” Han Shuo lazed around as he lay on the sparring stage, his hands resting behind the back of his head. He looked at the sky and responded clearly.

“Eh, Bryan, you’re really straightforward!” said Odysseus.

“Haha, don’t people live to strive for these things? Although different people have different desires, frankly speaking, don’t they all revolve around these things?” Han Shuo said with a smile as he glanced humorously at Odysseus.

“Hehe, that’s quite true!” Odysseus pondered for a moment and nodded.

After Han Shuo and the group had drunk wine and chatted freely for quite a long time, Trunks walked out alone from the mountain cave. He plopped down next to Han Shuo, picked up the wineskin on the ground near Odysseus, and threw back his head for a long gulp.

Trunks poured more than half of the good wine left into his mouth with a gurgling sound, then abruptly threw the empty wineskin to the sky. His eyes were deep red as he said in a low, choked tone, “I must kill Florida and the Butcher Gustav, and also Bradley Pillon from the Kasi Empire!!”

Bradley Pillon was the younger brother by blood to the king of the Kasi Empire, Brady Pillon, and a grand duke of the Kasi Empire. His territory encompassed only Cesar City, a location separated from Valen City by the Kerlan mountain range. He was a grand aristocrat below one person but above ten thousand in the Kasi Empire, holding enormous power in his hands.

When Gryphon Legion chief Bob Ascher had betrayed the Lancelot Empire, he’d sought refuge under someone else. That someone else had been the lord of Cesar city. It was easy to imagine how much power the younger brother of the Kasi king possessed. It was simply impossible to deal with such a an immense figure with Trunks’ current power.

Patting Trunks’ shoulders, Han Shuo consoled, “Rest assured, I’ll help

you, nothing is impossible!”

Trunks violently smashed his fist down. The blow didn't contain any fighting aura. It hit a hard rock and caused the back of his hand to crack, bleeding. Trunks roared like a caged beast, “Damnable bastards! I'll definitely make them pay the price!”

Janet suddenly walked out with a cold face, looking at Trunks with veins throbbing in his forehead as she said, “For Annie, I too shall kill them!”

“Grant, cover her eyes, take her out of here.” Trunks turned to sweep a glance at Janet and abruptly shouted.

The bulky Grant held Annie as he walked out of the mountain cave, his eyes red and swollen. Looking pitifully at the sleeping Annie, he sobbed, “Chief, what do we do about Annie?”

“Annie is a close person of mine. Believe me, I will protect her from any harm. If she stays with you guys, sooner or later she'll remember about the past, then I'm afraid she'll...”

“No need to say anymore, take her away, help me take good care of her!” Trunks abruptly cut off Janet's remaining words and said in a resolute manner.

Janet nodded without another word and willingly let Grant blindfold her. She slowly climbed up under Grant's guidance and escort.

“Good. I assure you this vengeance shall be taken!” Han Shuo once again patted Trunks' shoulders and cautiously said with a grave expression.

Even though Trunks and Janet hadn't clearly said anything, Han Shuo could generally guess from their attitudes about what happened to Annie's body.

Trunks treated Annie like his own sister, this hatred obviously had to be returned!

# Chapter 268: A pleasant surprise

Trunks drank all night, holding his face and crying loudly nonstop with bloodshot eyes. Han Shuo wanted to console him, but nothing he did worked. Trunks seemed to forget everything else as he wallowed in his inextricable agony.

That night, Han Shuo took out three of the remaining five Rebirth Pills and handed them to Odysseus, Gordon, and Aphrodite to reform their bodies. The other two pills were for Trunks and Emily.

At noon the next day, Han Shuo left the Soul Destroyer mercenary band and traveled to the Valley of Sunshine by himself.

The merchants inside the Valley of Sunshine weren't affected after last night's battle outside. They woke up early, busy as usual and simply not knowing about the happenings of last night.

When Han Shuo reached the fence, the soldiers from the Cairo mercenary band immediately recognized him and respectfully welcomed him. Looking around carefully, Han Shuo discovered that there wasn't much change to the merchants in the Valley of Sunshine. However the number of Cairo mercenary band soldiers was much higher than usual. They frequency at which they appeared on the street was very high.

Everyone from the Cairo mercenary band nodded respectfully towards Han Shuo along the way upon seeing him. Evidently, they all knew of the aid he had given them last night.

Han Shuo bought a great deal of precious herbs from the old orc's family shop last time in the Valley of Sunshine. This time, he made straight for the orc's shop.

The shop owner immediately recognized Han Shuo upon his appearance. He'd been lying down sluggishly inside when he stood up abruptly and enthusiastically welcomed Han Shuo, chattering away, "Long time no see, haha! Do you see anything good this time?"

Sweeping a few glances around, a hint of delighted surprise flashed

across Han Shuo's eyes. He hastily picked a dozen herbs and placed them in front of the orc, laughing heartily, "I want all of these. You can calculate the price."

In addition to the Dragonfly Fruit, Extreme Frost Grass, and Goldmarrow Grass that Han Shuo had seen last time, he also discovered the Ninejade Flower during this visit. This was truly a delight beyond imagination. Han Shuo had affirmed his belief that this shop could always give him a pleasant surprise.

The Ninejade Flower had nine petals that were as shiny and translucent as jade, emitting a fragrance that permeated the heart and soul. The Ninejade Flower could be used with several magic herbs to refine the Yuan Repair Pill, in which the Ninejade Flower was the main ingredient. This herb was normally very difficult to find.

"You decide the price!" Having experienced Han Shuo's generosity last time, the old orc seemed to have realized something and casually said with a smile.

Han Shuo's joy could easily be imagined after collecting so many precious herbs. He immediately took out two heavy bags of gold coins from the space ring and plopped them in front of the old orc. He asked smilingly, "A thousand gold coins. Would that suffice?"

"Haha, such a generous young man, many thanks!" The old orc quickly grabbed the two bags of gold coins and laughed loudly in a great mood. His mouth was open so widely that it seemed like he wanted to eat a person.

"You again!" An exclamation suddenly rang out from the door. Cecilia, one of the three Dark Mantle heavyweights, approached leisurely. She called out immediately when her vivid eyes caught sight of Han Shuo. She wore a blackish purple dress today, with soft long hair casually let loose down to the shoulders. Two small, middle-aged men followed behind, their eyes gazing around full of vigilance.

Seeing Cecilia as soon as he turned around, Han Shuo was a little surprised. He nodded indifferently at her, his hands starting to collect the



herbs on the table as he intended to leave the shop.

“Hey pretty lady, you’ve come again! What would you like to buy this time?” Cecilia seemed to be a regular here. The old orc also welcomed her with warm hospitality and a big smile.

“He already bought whatever I wanted. Damn it, he was one step ahead again!” Cecilia frowned at Han Shuo and lightly shouted somewhat in anguish.

“This...” The old orc didn’t know what to say. He wrung his hands, expressing that he was out of ideas.

Han Shuo was about to leave the shop when he suddenly remembered something. He stopped at the door, turned to look at Cecilia, and said, “If you tell me where Emily is, I’ll give you an herb from my purchase just now.”

The disappointed Cecilia immediately rejoiced at his words. She looked at Han Shuo and asked, “Is that so? You’ll let me choose from the herbs you just bought?!”

Nodding his head, Han Shuo took out the herbs that he’d just bought with a thousand gold coins. He laid them out and pointed at them saying, “I’ll let you choose one!”

“I want this one!” Cecilia pointed at the Ninejade Flower and said softly.

The corner of his mouth spasmed slightly. Han Shuo considered for a moment, then suddenly said coldly, “This one won’t do, transaction canceled!”

The Dark Mantle higher-ups should know of Emily’s whereabouts. If Han Shuo couldn’t get the answer from Cecilia, he could still ask Candide for help. Moreover, he needed this information just because he wanted to give Emily the Rebirth Pill and help her remake her body. This wasn’t a critical matter, so Han Shuo wasn’t in a rush at the moment.

The Ninejade Flower, however, could only be met by chance and not found, so it was a very important to Han Shuo. He could refine a cauldron of Yuan Repair Pills using this flower as the main ingredient. Han Shuo

immediately went back on his word when forced to choose between the two options.

Cecilia had been reaching out for the Ninejade Flower when halted upon Han Shuo saying “transaction canceled”. She was dumbfounded for a while, then frowned as she looked at him, “You renege on your word!”

“I didn’t promise you anything. It doesn’t count as going back on my word. I can let you take two others except for this flower if you’re still willing to tell me!” Han Shuo first placed the Ninejade Flower into the space ring and then shrugged his shoulders, speaking to Cecilia as if nothing happened.

Sparks flew out from Cecilia’s eyes as she looked at Han Shuo. She remained frozen for quite a while before nodding bitterly, saying, “Stingy brat!”

She took two blades of Extreme Frost Grass, then glared at Han Shuo and answered, “After Emily completed her mission with me, she should have return to the Empire’s Ossen City. To think that the person that Emily greatly respects is actually this petty. I really don’t understand why she values you so much!”

“This has nothing to do with you!” Han Shuo chuckled. He felt quite secure after knowing about Emily’s location and that he was going to return to Ossen City soon. Emily would take the initiative to find him once she knew. He could then use the Rebirth Pill to help her.

“You there! Don’t move, or don’t blame us for being rude!” Suddenly, ten mercenaries from the Cairo band surrounded the old orc’s shop, pointing their crossbows at the three in Cecilia’s group.

“What is this? Is this how the Cairo mercenary band treats us merchants?” Cecilia asked, her expression angry as she coldly looked at the leader.

“We always treat merchants nicely, but you people didn’t enter normally. Otherwise we would have your records. Come with us!” At this point, a mercenary stared unceremoniously at Cecilia and said coldly.

It seemed Cecilia's group of three hadn't come in through the fence, but had used another way instead. The Cairo mercenary band might not have found out if this had been normal times. However, after the fiasco last night, the Cairo mercenaries were on high alert. They were all extremely cautious, so no wonder they had discovered the abnormal happenings.

"Mister Bryan, please be careful with these people!" The leading mercenary's attitude towards Han Shuo compared to his attitude towards Cecilia, was as different as the heavens and earth. His tone was sincere, his manner respectful, and even a touch ingratiating.

"Mister Bryan, when our chief knew you'd arrived at the Valley of Sunshine, he immediately wanted to meet you. If you wait for just a moment, the chief himself will come to see you regarding last night's agreement after he handles the matters within the valley. We will fulfill the promised amount of gold, so please wait just a bit!" Another mercenary bowed respectfully to Han Shuo and said in a humble tone.

What is this? Cecilia looked at Han Shuo suspiciously. She secretly thought, Han Shuo is only a Dark Mantle envoy, while the other person is the violent lunatic Laureton. Why is he treating Han Shuo so kindly? This is truly confusing! Laureton is notoriously arrogant and hard to please, but is so unexpectedly respectful towards this fellow? Weird, really too weird!

"Hey, we're together, you must've been mistaken!" Cecilia suddenly came up with an idea. She abruptly walked up to Han Shuo with a charming smile, patting his shoulder as if their relationship was very intimate!

Han Shuo was dumbfounded. He glanced at her with a cold face and was about to open his mouth to say something when he heard Cecilia whisper, "We are carrying out a mission. As a fellow member of the Dark Mantle, if you have the guts to not help me, I'll definitely report to that old fellow Candide when I return!"

"Hehe, we are together indeed!" Cecilia and Han Shuo stood side by side as he suddenly relaxed.

"Mhm, they are my friends, so I guarantee that they won't do anything

detrimental to your mercenary band's interest. I'll wait for your people to meet me at the shop. If your chief comes, I'll let him know about this!" Han Shuo smiled and nodded at the mercenaries, then put his arm around Cecilia's waist with naughty intentions. His actions screamed of an ambiguous relationship due to this act.

Cecilia's small waist was plump and firm. The thin dress couldn't hide its amazing elasticity. Han Shuo couldn't help but secretly praise as he held it. This young woman didn't only have a beautiful face, even her body was truly tempting.

"So it's like that!" The mercenaries suddenly realized and spoke apologetically to Cecilia, "Our apologies, we didn't know of your relationship with Mister Bryan, we've been rude!"

"Let's go, there is no problem in this area. Let's go inspect the other areas. Do not let any suspicious characters slip through our fingers!" After bowing respectfully to Han Shuo, the leader loudly shouted a command and led the group of mercenaries to leave in a blink of an eye.

# Chapter 269: The arrogant Dark Moon envoy

Cecilia turned, her eyes huge as she glared furiously at Han Shuo, yelling with her voice as cold as ice, "Let go already!"

With an awkward, dry laugh, Han Shuo withdrew his hand and pretended as if nothing happened. He spoke casually, "I only meant well. Heh heh, the Valley of Sunshine has been chaotic recently, so you'd best be a little careful!"

"Don't you worry, you despicable brat!" Cecilia bluntly replied in rage. She secretly wondered why Laureton would value such a despicable character. How very odd!

Paying no heed to Cecilia, Han Shuo strode away towards the shop with the extreme place of water. He arrived in about ten minutes.

Except for the dust covered rooms, the shop wasn't much different since the last time he'd left. The formation outside hadn't changed either. The elements of the place of extreme water was still as rich as before. It seemed like no one had lived here after they'd left. The materials for refining the water elite zombie were still a bit lacking. That was being taken care of by Phoebe, so Han Shuo knew not to be anxious for now. He made a few circles around the yard before randomly sitting down in a chair in the middle of the courtyard, waiting for Laureton to arrive.

In the afternoon, Han Shuo was studying a book on magic when he suddenly put it away and stood up. He squinted, looking towards the front door. The brawny, rough, bald Laureton entered by himself a bit later with heavy footsteps. His face didn't look very good. He was a bit pale, both eyes bloodshot and swollen. He must've had a sleepless night.

"Many thanks for your assistance last night!" Laureton drew upon his energy reserves after seeing Han Shuo and spoke with a forced smile.

Last night, the Cairo mercenary band had suffered heavy losses, even severely injuring vice chief Harris. To prevent the other three great powers

from taking advantage of these chaotic times, Laureton had been hard at work all night making arrangements. He'd mobilized all of the Cairo mercenary band experts in the Valley of Sunshine. This could only be described as cautious to the extreme.

"Hehe, we could be considered friends. The Church of Light and Florida also had a grudge with me, so of course I wouldn't mind lending you a helping hand!" Han Shuo lazed around in his chair and smiled leisurely. He didn't mention that last time he'd left without saying farewell.

Laureton didn't ask either. He took out a deed and a crystal card from within his space ring, placing them on the stone table before Han Shuo, saying with a proper expression, "This is the deed for this shop, along with a ten thousand gold coin crystal card with no owner. In addition, I will personally allow the Soul Destroyer mercenary band to openly recruit in the parts of the Valley of Sunshine that are overseen by the Cairo mercenary band."

These were the three conditions agreed to by Laureton that Han Shuo had proposed last night in exchange for his help. During the brutal battle last night, Laureton's group would've been hard pressed to escape the mountain valley if it weren't for Han Shuo's sudden interference. Laureton was a straightforward person, so he handed over the promised items as soon as he'd arrived.

Han Shuo nodded with a smile. He placed the deed and crystal card into his space ring, then looked at Laureton and said, "Last night, I killed Ferguson and heavily injured Adam Menlo. My grudge with them cannot be resolved now. Since we now have a common enemy, we'll have many chances to cooperate in the future."

"Of course. I admit that I underestimated you. Someone who could kill Ferguson and heavily injure Adam Menlo is a person worthy of my true cooperation. In the current power struggle in the Valley of Sunshine, as long as the Soul Destroyer mercenary band cooperates with me, I guarantee it will develop greatly." Laureton's eyes twinkled as he looked at Han Shuo, seemingly aware of the latter's relationship with the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

“Trunks will discuss with you later. I’m only his friend, so I have no right to decide the future of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band!” Han Shuo was stunned for a moment, but still responded indifferently.

“Heh heh, from what I know, your relationship with the Soul Destroyer isn’t that simple!” Laureton grinned and continued, “How about this? I’ll offer some gold coins and hire the Soul Destroyers to help me deal with the other forces. What do you think?”

“For this matter, you’d have to go find Trunks and talk to him about it. Hehe!” Han Shuo laughed lazily, then exhaled softly and said, “Right, I have a friend who might have not entered the Valley of Sunshine through the main entrance. I hope you can give me some face and not trouble her.”

“No problem!” Laureton agreed without saying anything extra. He then thought for a bit and stared mysteriously at Han Shuo, saying in a low voice, “You killed Ferguson and even used the terrifying Corpse Reanimation spell of necromancy. No matter how magnanimous the Church of Light is, they won’t let you off. You’d best take good care of yourself.”

“I’m not afraid of their revenge since I dared to kill him. You shouldn’t worry about such trivial things. Also, we will have a chance to cooperate in dealing with Florida. I’m afraid we’ll have to add the House of Menlo to the list of enemies as well. When I want to take action, I may come looking for you.”

“Then you’d best be quick, or I’m afraid you will miss your chance to do so!”

Laureton’s eyes were bloodshot and overflowed with murderous intent. It seemed that he intended on exacting revenge for the grievances that he’d suffered last night. With the power of the Cairo mercenary band, it would be an extremely brutal scene if Laureton started a bloody vengeance despite all consequences.

“Then I wish you good luck!” Han Shuo said no more after this sentence. He closed his eyes, seemingly bathing in the sun with leisure.

Laureton knew Han Shuo had no interest in further conversation upon

seeing this posture. He nodded in understanding, "Alright. I still have other things to attend to, goodbye!"

"Sure, I won't send you off now!" Han Shuo answered with his eyes closed.

Not long after Laureton left, Han Shuo suddenly rolled his eyes towards the roof and said with a tone of indifference, "Since you've come, why not come down and join me?"

There were no other sign of life around. It was as if Han Shuo was just speaking to himself.

Han Shuo's expression sank as he said with displeasure, "Master Cecilia, do you need me to personally invite you to come down?"

A reaction finally appeared in the area where he was looking when he finished speaking. Cecilia abruptly appeared on the empty, sunlit roof. She looked at Han Shuo in surprise and said lightly, "Even Laureton couldn't discover me, so how did you do that?"

"Alright, tell me what you came here for. Could it be that your current mission is related to Laureton?" Han Shuo didn't answer Cecilia's question and cut straight to the chase. Since he'd stopped talking to Laureton as soon as he'd noticed her arrival, Cecilia simply didn't know what they'd been talking about.

"Tell me, how did you realize I was up there?" Cecilia looked down at Han Shuo from above, asking with the tone of a superior talking to their subordinate.

"Sorry, you have no right to know. Even Master Candide has no right to ask about my secrets, let alone you, someone who is not in charge of me. Moreover, my place doesn't welcome you, so please leave!" This kind of attitude from Cecilia displeased Han Shuo. He immediately and bluntly drove her away upon seeing her arrogant manner.

"You, you actually dare to talk to me like that?" Cecilia pointed at Han Shuo, appalled. Her body trembled slightly. She was angry as nobody seemed to have ever treated her so rudely like that. She looked extremely



furious and stomped her feet violently as she huffed, "I'm not leaving, I'll see what you can do to me!"

Precisely at this moment, a distant call from the Dark Forest echoed in Han Shuo's mind. This call, that came from the depths of the soul, was like a joyous call from the most intimate of family.

Han Shuo was stunned for a split second, then overjoyed. He understood that the wood elite zombie in the forest trolls' holy land had formed. He was making the call based on the virtue of the blood essence in his body.

"If you won't leave, then I'll leave!" Han Shuo was too lazy to pay attention to Cecilia anymore. He immediately stood up, hurriedly left the shop and promptly shut the front door. He rushed straight out of the Valley of Sunshine.

"You look down on people too much, really look down on people too much! That lowly Dark Moon envoy actually dares to be so arrogant?!" Seeing Han Shuo unhesitatingly leave as if avoiding a plague, Cecilia abruptly shouted in rage. It seemed she'd taken a major blow.

None of the guards at the entrance to the Valley of Sunshine blocked Han Shuo from exiting. Everyone from the Cairo mercenary band nodded at him in a friendly manner, showing their deep respect.

Being able to kill a light grand magus and heavily injure the chief of the Menlo family at the same time, while lending his aid to the Cairo mercenary band, this character had immediately gained their goodwill. They all expressed their respect and extreme gratitude towards Han Shuo.

Upon leaving the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo flew rapidly forward by fully leveraging the art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens. He only took fifteen minutes to reach the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

Trunks had yet to wake up after getting drunk the night before. Yesterday, when nothing was on his plate, Han Shuo had intended to wait for a while before helping Trunks reform his body. Now that the wood elite zombie had awakened, things had to happen now.

Not caring about the sleeptalking Trunks, Han Shuo rushed directly into

his cave. He promptly picked up a wineskin on the ground, mixed the Rebirth Pill into it and forced it into Trunks' belly.

Firmly pressing down on Trunks in order to ensure he couldn't struggle, Han Shuo used his magical cultivation to force Trunks to refine the Rebirth Pill in his stomach. Afterwards, he left and said to Grant, "Take him to the toilet. He will be like Odysseus and the others. You guys look after him well."

"Understood!" Grant didn't understand this at all, but he knew Han Shuo wouldn't harm Trunks, so he immediately nodded in agreement.

"Gilbert, you stay inside the mountain valley to help Trunks for the time being. I'll look for you when I need you. Absolutely do not create any trouble for him!" Han Shuo left only one command for the dark dragon. He couldn't wait to leave the mountain valley as he rushed towards the Dark Forest.

# Chapter 270: The religion of the Evil God

In the Dark Forest, the sacred place of the forest trolls.

Under the blazing sun, a rainbow spectrum cut through the sky. Like an arrow going against the flow of time, the light swiftly landed in the center of the Dark Forest without a sound.

After four months, the lush and thick plants in the place of extreme wood had once again gone through an earth-shattering change. All of the towering old trees had withered, the weeds on the ground were without a trace of their original lively green. The originally lush place of extreme wood didn't have a single green leaf now.

Plants no longer grew, and the dry, cracked, and hard ground was revealed. At a glance, the entire scene was that of desertification. Due to the existence of the formation, the wood elements, that had originally filled the place, were now gathered in the body of the wood elite zombie in the center of the formation. This had caused all the plants to wilt as they lost the wood elemental energy they'd originally possessed.

Han Shuo relied on the yin demons' reconnaissance upon landing. He discovered from afar that several forest trolls were stationed here, evidently protecting the holy land.

Intimate calls resounded one after another from roots of the oldest, largest dried tree. The wood elite zombie had Han Shuo's blood essence flowing in his veins. He had sensed the latter's arrival based on their connection.

"Come out!" A series of black lights converged towards the place where the wood elite zombie was concealed as Han Shuo used the secret arts.

Rumble...

Tremors spread out on the ground as the old, dried tree suddenly exploded. Pieces of bark and wood flew in all directions as a dark cave was revealed at the base. Deep underground old roots were buried there.

Whoosh! A green shadow jumped out from the dark cave.

A green armor covered the wood elite zombie. This armor looked as if it were made from tree trunks as it shimmered with a green light. The wood elite zombie was tall and thin. He really did look like a tree branch at a glance. His shiny green eyes were full of joy at this moment, rolling around as they stared at Han Shuo.

A dense mist of wood elemental energy drifted out along with the emergence of the wood elite zombie. The wood elements, that had been tightly bound and absorbed by the wood elite zombie, now gradually escaped bit by bit, blowing a fresh breath of air into this almost desertified land.

Han Shuo understood that this area would gradually return to normal after the wood elite zombie left. The dead plants would burst forth with vitality again, and the entire place should be able to restore itself to its original lush state in less than eighteen months.

The little skeleton and earth elite zombie appeared together after an incantation. The little skeleton arrogantly walked over immediately upon seeing the wood elite zombie. He jumped and patted the wood elite zombie's shoulders like a general inspecting one of his soldiers.

This wood elite zombie seemed surprisingly afraid of the little skeleton. His sparkling green eyes shone brightly as he took the initiative to lower his shoulders in order to allow the little skeleton's patting.

The earth elite zombie lumbered over to the side of the wood elite zombie and dumbly touched the latter's shoulder, seeming to want to welcome the latter like the little skeleton. However, the green eyes glared at him. The earth elite zombie was dumbfounded, withdrawing his right hand that'd been about to pat the wood elite zombie's shoulder. In the end, he patted his own shoulder, his posture quite comical.

"Let's go, let me see what you have mastered." Han Shuo glanced at the wood elite zombie and started walking out.

They left the place of extreme wood and arrived at a river bank in the forest after walking for a while. As soon as they arrived, the green eyes of the wood elite zombie shone brightly without stopping, and the trees

around them started dancing in the wind. The towering old trees, that needed several people to fully embrace them, twisted their soft, ribbon-like tree branches like snakes, moving in accordance with the green light emitted from the eyes of the wood elite zombie.

The plants around Han Shuo all seemed to be affected. They were all either whipping around or growing rapidly. The wood elite zombie was showing off, and his figure disappeared out of sight when he leaned on a nearby tree.

Han Shuo knew early on that the wood elite zombie could manipulate plants. His thoughts spun as he recalled the strange ability of the druid Caspian. Feeling that there were some similarities between the two, his heart couldn't help but feel somewhat peculiar.

With the wood elite zombie, Han Shuo's strength would once again be increased when he entered the Dark Forest again. The Dark Forest was dense and brimming with life, while the wood elite zombie was like a ghost that could control the plants in it accordance to his will. He could randomly merge with a big tree, or mount a surprise attack. No one would be able to catch him when he retreated.

"Not bad, not bad, very good. You three brats can all go back!" Han Shuo watched for a bit before nodding his head. As usual, he left a Dark Seal in the wood elite zombie, then sent the three fellows back to the other dimension.

It's been three months. I wonder why the fire elite zombie hasn't been completed yet. Forget it, let's leave this place for the time being. He will call me when he's ready. Han Shuo thought for a bit then returned to the cemetery of death. He didn't intend on going to the place of extreme fire to inspect the situation. Who knew if the Lord of the Flames would go nuts again? Best not to go if he didn't have extreme confidence.

Han Shuo wasn't in a hurry to leave after returning to the cemetery of death. He went to the depths of the building inside instead.

He'd been halted at the first level before due to lack of sufficient mental strength. Now that his strength had progressed greatly, Han Shuo

intended to try again.

He passed through the first passage easily. In the second level, Han Shuo rammed straight into the invisible forcefield. A strange force suddenly pierced through his brain and a heart wrenching pain abruptly spread through his mind. It was as if Han Shuo was being torn apart by a tornado of sharp blades—twisted, stabbed, and dragged into an endless abyss.

Fortunately Han Shuo's current state of mind was durable to the utmost now. Despite the extreme pain of a thousand cuts being inflicted on his body, he grit his teeth and coalesced his mental strength, pushing the magical yuan through. A crisp cracking sound echoed as he fell downwards.

Suddenly, the Eye of Darkness in Han Shuo's hand sent out a dazzling green light. Under that shining light, he found himself in the center of an oval altar. The whole altar was suddenly cloaked in a green halo as the green light touched it. An enormous, strange force converged on Han Shuo from the corners of the altar.

These ribbons of green light all poured into the Eye of Darkness in Han Shuo's hand. A mysterious force abruptly entered through his palm and flooded his brain like water released from a dam.

"My child, you've proved to at least have the mental strength of an archmage by being able to enter the second layer. Now, let go of everything and accept this mental strength. It will help you reach the power of a grand magus!" The shadowy figure from the first layer slowly formed and spoke calmly.

Han Shuo was ecstatic. He immediately sat down and relaxed his soul to welcome the mysterious force in. As soon as this force entered, it merged directly with his mental strength in a mysterious manner, giving Han Shuo a very comfortable, wonderful feeling. The extreme pain from before had long since vanished without a trace. Right now, Han Shuo seemed to be bathed in sun dappled, warm water. He enjoyed it with complete leisure and comfort.

The green layers of light shrouded the entire altar and slowly united with

the Eye of Darkness at the epicenter. The enormous, pure force integrated with Han Shuo's mental strength. His brain, that had been reinforced by the demonic magic, rapidly underwent changes.

This process lasted for an unknown period of time. Han Shuo forgot everything and indulged himself in the wondrous feeling of having full control over his mental strength. He even forgot his own existence.

"Child, necromancy magic is the most powerful, most marvelous magic on earth, yet some people don't allow it to exist. You, as the legitimate heir to the ancient necromancy magic, hold the responsibility of promoting its profound meaning and the glory it used to have to the world."

"To have the Canopy of Necromancy cover the earth, to enable necromancy magic to cause tremors in every corner of the world, to shower every place in the evil light of necromancy magic—this is your responsibility to bear. You cannot escape, nor can you refuse..."

The voice of that shadowy figure slowly, yet alluringly infiltrated Han Shuo's mind with the strange force. As Han Shuo's mental strength was continuously reinforced, another current of force suddenly erupted. This force attempted to invade his soul, forever drowning him in evil.

This force had the ability to change the soul. When it finished merging with the soul, it would turn Han Shuo into a most loyal follower, forever subjected to the dominion of some evil god.

"Aowuuuu..."

Han Shuo threw back his head and released a long howl to the heavens, circulating his magical yuan like mad. Another intense force surged out from the demon infant, reaching the brain in just a second. It latched onto the force trying to invade his soul.

"No, no!" Han Shuo roared, his eyes a deep red as he panted. His firm strength of mind kicked into gear as he utilized the magical yuan to its utmost, forming layer after layer of obstruction in his brain to fight against the magical brand of the evil god.

There was as if a violent torrential outbreak in Han Shuo's mind. It

desperately resisted the force invading his soul with the demon infant as the main power. During this process, Han Shuo experienced excruciating agony, rolling and screaming about on the altar. However, the green light around the Eye of Darkness became more and more brilliant.



# Chapter 271: The tricolored bone staff

“Aowuuuu...”

Han Shuo was roaring in extreme agony on the oval altar in the second layer of the cemetery of death. Thick green light wreathed his body. His head in particular was showing a jasper-like luster. The ethereal light seemed to be the most lustrous green jade.

Han Shuo's mental strength still grew at a crazy rate during this process. However, the brand from the evil god from an unknown source actually wanted to penetrate deep into his soul, ordering him to become a loyal follower of the religion of the evil god until death. This was a kind of soul brand similar to the one that Han Shuo imprinted on the little skeleton and earth elite zombie. Once his soul was stamped by this brand, he would never be himself again.

This was absolutely something that Han Shuo didn't want!!

Although his brain felt like it was being cut by ten thousand blades, Han Shuo still held on, his eyes bulging in agony. He roared madly in rage, trying to alleviate the pain in some way.

However, the power of the soul brand was becoming ever greater as the growing green halo above the altar grew brighter. In his panic, an enormous, pitch black figure appeared in Han Shuo's consciousness. The massive body seemed to blot out the sky. Its green pupils were like two huge full moons. The eyes glanced over all beings as if looking down upon weak, tiny ants.

The enormous pressure filled the heavens and earth, making it difficult for Han Shuo to even breathe. This kind of endless presence tasted of immortality, like a star existing for billions of years in the galaxy.

“Submit. There will be no pain, only eternal life!”

A spirit imprint suddenly broke into Han Shuo's mind, repeatedly tempting him. It seemed that if he just relaxed and accepted this brand, the suffering would be gone in the next moment, and his life would be

endless.

“No!!”

Han Shuo screamed tragically, his hands clutching his head as he rolled around on the ground. The Demonslayer Edge stored in his body abruptly shot out terrifying amounts of killing intent. The negative feelings of fear, resentment, and thirst for destruction coalesced into a force that instantly flowed into the demon infant to form a resistance.

The Demonslayer Edge shrank into a beam of light, bringing every fiber of power within Han Shuo to bombard the shadowy figure that'd been born from the panic within his mind.

Crack...

A crisp sound like the breaking of fragile glass resounded clearly in Han Shuo's mind. The colossal figure shattered into spots of starlight. The lights suddenly gathered into the Demonslayer Edge.

In a blink an eye, the agony that had ripped apart his heart and pierced his lungs retreated like the tides. Within his consciousness, the frenzied rate of growth of his mental strength suddenly stopped. The green light curtain above the altar also disappeared without a trace.

The Eye of Darkness in Han Shuo's hand vanished, replaced with a green bone staff. The upper part of the staff was formed by three skulls.

The bone staff was one meter and thirty centimeters in length, and was made out of a green, jade-like material. The three skulls weren't human, and were respectively yellow, blue, and purple. The yellow skull had three big eye sockets, the blue one had a horn, while the purple one was riddled with finger-sized holes.

Although their shapes were strange, the skulls were as small as a fist, each one looking more sinister than the one before. These three skulls integrated perfectly with the staff, with the three skulls looking in different directions crowning the top.

Han Shuo slowly calmed his breathing. In the end, he fainted and fell listlessly to the ground in a comatose state.

However, whilst unconscious, the bone staff in his hand emitted yellow, blue, and purple rays of light from the three differently shaped skulls. The three lights were like silk ribbons that glided into his nose and mouth at the same time.

Blood was still flowing from Han Shuo's mouth and nostrils due to the piercing agony he had just experienced. Each plume of hot blood slowly drifted into the three skulls under the guidance of the tricolored lights. The three skulls gleamed with increasing light.

The three skulls finished absorbing the fresh blood from Han Shuo's mouth and nostrils. The staff shone with brilliant light that slowly dispersed. The bone staff then returned to normal.

After who knew how long, Han Shuo gradually came to. His whole body ached to the extreme, as if his meridians and bones had shattered. There wasn't a place that didn't scream out with pain.

On the other hand, after experiencing explosive agony, his mind was now clear and comfortable. When Han Shuo looked down at the bone staff, he was startled. His eyes were full of confusion as he simply didn't know where this bone staff had come from.

"Ah, where is the Eye of Darkness?!" Han Shuo was greatly shocked in the next moment as he discovered that the Eye of Darkness, that had been in his hand during the whole ordeal, had vanished.

The Eye of Darkness was the key in and out of the cemetery of death. Once it disappeared, he could only use the transportation matrix to leave the cemetery of death, which would be a tremendous setback.

Suddenly, Han Shuo looked closely at the bone staff and noticed that its jade-green color was the same as the color of the Eye of Darkness. The staff felt extremely familiar in his hand.

A thought struck him. Han Shuo tried to use the bone staff in the same way he'd used the Eye of Darkness. When the bone staff immediately shot out a familiar green halo, Han Shuo understood what had happened.

Staring fixedly at the bone staff for a while, Han Shuo became more and

more surprised. However, when he recalled the matter of the evil god invading his soul, he fearfully put the staff into his space ring. He didn't dare to try out its power when his magical yuan was exhausted and body extremely fragile.

Closing his eyes to recall the events that occurred before he fell unconscious, Han Shuo couldn't help but feel fortunate. He secretly thought that this cemetery of death was really not that simple. When that evil god infiltrated his mind, the horrifying pressure from that shadowy figure on him had been truly unthinkable for Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was certain that the colossal figure was definitely the true appearance of the evil god. Han Shuo completely understood what the evil god's brand wanted to do to him. This made him even more grateful to have escaped, and he became more cautious of the cemetery of death.

In the next moment, Han Shuo remembered what the shadowy figure said, "Let go of everything and accept this spirit force. It will help you reach the power of a grand magus!"

Ecstatic, Han Shuo chanted a spell to summon one ordinary skeleton. Eight skeletal warriors immediately appeared on the altar. Feeling the smooth circulation of his vast mental strength, Han Shuo was overjoyed upon discovering that his mental strength had made a shocking advancement.

The same necromancy spell meant that the results would be different based on the strength of one's mental strength. Generally speaking, a magic spell could be divided into five levels based on one's mental strength.

Take summoning a skeletal warrior for example. A novice magic apprentice with weak mental strength could only summon one skeletal warrior. However, for journeyman mages, they could release the second level of the spell due to their stronger spirit force, allowing them to call upon two skeletal warriors.

Han Shuo summoning eight skeletal warriors meant that he had reached the fourth level of the spell. This was more than enough proof for his

terrific improvement in mental strength. According to the explanation in necromancy magic books, Han Shuo understood that one would reach the fourth level for the skeletal warrior summon only when their mental strength advanced to grand magus.

“Truly unexpected! This was all true! To advance to grand magus all of the sudden! This cemetery of death is strange, but truly miraculous!” Han Shuo was ecstatic. He couldn’t help but laugh heartily despite his fragile current state.

Struggling to sit up, Han Shuo’s eyes shone brightly as he look around. He saw that this second level was half the size of the first one. The surrounding area was empty, except for the oval altar in the center. No items were stored in this secret room.

The second level centered around the altar beneath Han Shuo, a mysterious magical formation was set up to occupy the entire room. There was nothing else except for it, seemingly a place to cleanse the soul and improve mental strength.

Han Shuo rested for a while before leaving the second level of the cemetery of death. He sat in the center of the magical formation, slowly gathering his exhausted magical yuan and restoring it bit by bit.

After about five days, Han Shuo heaved a sigh of relief and murmured in good spirits, “Although the evil god invaded my soul this time, it was actually rather useful. Not only did my mental strength advance to grand magus level in one fell swoop, even my magic cultivation showed signs of great improvement!”

Han Shuo wasn’t in a hurry to leave. He stayed in the cemetery of death, spending the entire day and night to indulge in the study of necromancy magic. Although he had the power of a grand magus, he still needed to brush up on some necromancy spells. Thanks to the absorbed memories from Clarendon, Han Shuo could officially begin his preparation for the archmage level. The memories played an important role.

Han Shuo practiced necromancy magic in the cemetery of death without rest or food, as if he was possessed. He repeatedly cast all archmage level

spells. He practiced every day until his mental strength was completely exhausted. Afterwards, his mental strength improved slightly with meditation.

Over ten days, Han Shuo could skillfully release the several archmage level necromancy spells that he'd gained from Clarendon. As for the two new spells written in the book of "Necromancy Magic" that he'd picked up in the cemetery of death. However, it was difficult to grasp them in a short amount of time. Han Shuo decided to not waste any more time and left the cemetery of death via the transportation matrix.

# Chapter 272: The effect of the Rebirth Pill

Lancelot Empire, Ossen City, the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

“Master Fanny, you’ve become more and more beautiful!” Gene looked at Fanny and praised sincerely in the testing fields of the necromancy department.

“That’s right, master Fanny. How did you do it? Can you please tell us how?” Lisa looked at Fanny with admiration and asked sweetly.

“Master Fanny, what herbs did you use? Please tell us!”

“Yes yes, please!”

Several female students of the necromancy major surrounded Fanny, chattering nonstop. For women, beauty could be said to be the matter that they were most concerned about. Like the forest trolls’ love for pillaging, a woman’s love for beauty was innate. No woman was an exception to this.

“I’ve told all of you many times already. There is no secret method. I only relaxed my mood and the change occurred naturally. You shouldn’t be so surprised.” Fanny explained with resignation. Although she knew her students wouldn’t believe her, this was the only answer she could give them.

Fanny was as if reborn after consuming the Rebirth Pill. Her mental strength had undergone a huge improvement and increased by twice as much when she meditated. Her mind was suddenly clearer. The magic theories she used to have problems with were now easily understood.

Fanny’s skin was also creamy, similar a newborn baby’s. Her face was a glowing white with a touch of rosiness on the cheeks, like a delicately crafted porcelain doll, giving people the feeling of surreal beauty. This miraculous transformation had occurred over ten days. The female students and teachers had all witnessed it. Even Fanny herself was unable to say that this was a natural transformation. Many female teachers had come to consult Fanny about this matter, even Dean Emma herself asked.

Only Fanny herself knew that this was thanks to Han Shuo’s Rebirth Pill.

She had taken a three day leave and spent almost all of it on the toilet. She'd been mad at his prank. However, when she looked in the mirror three days later, she was dumbfounded. She froze for dozens of seconds before exclaiming nonstop in ecstasy, "Bryan oh Bryan, you cute little fellow!"

"Master Fanny, Master Fanny!" Gene shout loudly a few times.

Startled, Fanny looked at Gene and said, "Master Gene, what is it?"

"Class is over. Master Fanny, I noticed that you've been staring off into space more often recently!" Gene had recently discovered that when he talked to Fanny, she often didn't pay much attention to him. The times he saw her fall into a daydream, her eyes flickered with yearning.

"Oh, class is over? Hehe, thank you for reminding me." Fanny responded apologetically. She turned to the students to advise them about something before walking back to her laboratory alone.

Hateful fellow, he said he would come see me in three days time, and yet he hasn't appeared for twenty days already, making me distracted all the time. You really anger me to death! Fanny gnashed her teeth in rage, walking to her lab with her head down.

Thud! Not paying attention to the path, Fanny suddenly bumped into a person.

"Sorry, sorry!" Fanny apologized nonstop before lifting her head. However, when she looked up, she was stunned for a second before exploding with anger. Her fists hammered as she cursed, "Damn you, you only know to return now? It's been twenty days, don't you know that you'll make people worry? Where did you get off to before only coming back now..."

She screamed, cursed, and hit the evilly smiling Han Shuo on the chest. Fanny seemed to vent all of her feelings as she listed all of his wrongdoings. Her voice gradually grew strange before turning into sobs at the end.

Han Shuo originally wanted to tease Fanny just a little. However, upon



hearing the strange tone in her voice and the footsteps closing in, he embraced her and jumped behind the big tree. His mouth rushed towards Fanny's fragrant lips for a kiss.

"Mmmm..."

Fanny's scolding turned into long moaning. Her hands desperately pounded against Han Shuo's chest, but her fragrant lips responded with enthusiasm.

This was a separate road to Fanny's lab surrounded by rows of ancient trees. When Han Shuo heard the incoming footsteps, he hastily embraced Fanny and jumped behind the large tree out of fear of being discovered. As Fanny responded intensely to his kiss, Han Shuo felt as if he was sinking into a beautiful dream. This charming, wondrous feeling instantly ignited upon the contact of their lips and ran deep into his soul. Han Shuo relaxed his vigilance and loosened his body, completely indulging himself in this feeling.

It was a while later that Fanny finally stopped beating his chest. Her slender, jade hands snaked euphorically around his neck. She was on the tips of her toes, kissing him fervently. She completely forgot everything else, forgetting that they were out in the open.

After who knew how long, Fanny panted and struggled, pushing Han Shuo away. She glanced alluringly at him as she protested coquettishly, "You thousand times damnable brat, why don't you ever keep your promises?"

"Mmm..." As she'd just finished speaking, Fanny covered her mouth and inhaled softly. Her cheeks instantly flushed as she looked behind Han Shuo with an exclamation.

Turning around, they saw Lisa holding a magic book, standing alongside Gene. Their eyes were filled with heartbreak as they stared at this side, dumbfounded.

"Master Gene, it's very immoral to peep on others' intimate actions!" Han Shuo was completely calm. He turned around and spoke unhappily to Gene without letting Fanny out of his embrace.

“I, I didn’t mean to. Just that Lisa was unclear about some magic knowledge that I couldn’t explain it, so we came to look for Master Fanny to resolve our doubts. It was really an accident!” Gene’s facial expression was ugly, but he still stammered an explanation upon seeing Han Shuo’s displeasure.

Fanny had surpassed Gene on some complex magic knowledge thanks to the effect of the Rebirth Pill. After the great changes to Lisa’s family, she’d suddenly become hard-working and seized every chance to improve her magic. Lisa and Gene had some questions to ask Fanny. They came for a look when hearing the panting, and hadn’t expected to see something that they shouldn’t have seen.

“I didn’t think, didn’t think that you were actually this intimate with Master Fanny. Master Fanny, Bryan, I hate you!” Lisa said these words out of rage, then turned around and ran off in tears.

“Master Fanny, I give you my blessing!” Gene was an adult after all. He suppressed the pain in his heart and whispered this sentence. He too then turned around to leave, his departing back seeming a little bleak.

“Bryan, you go console Lisa. I know how much she likes you, I’m afraid she can’t take this blow!” Fanny softly sigh at the events and told Han Shuo.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said in a low voice, “Forget it, this isn’t the appropriate time to see her. Give her some time, Lisa is much stronger than you think.”

“Let’s go, I’ll give you your certificate proving your achievement as an adept mage in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. You can graduate!” Fanny pondered for a bit and said no more. She let Han Shuo put his arm around her as they walked back to the lab, where she gave him a book with a magical brand on it.

“You should pay some attention to Lisa in the next two days. I think she’ll think it through.” Han Shuo said as he took the book. After such a thing happened, he was temporarily in no mood to act intimately with Fanny.

“Bryan, you’re leaving again?” Fanny was stunned. She suddenly hugged Han Shuo tightly and looked up at him, speaking very unwillingly.

“I’ve officially graduated from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Now that something like this has happened, I don’t want Lisa to feel sad, so I can’t stay here for the time being!” Han Shuo had wanted to stay with Fanny a little longer, but could only let go after giving it some thought.

“Then, where should I go if I want to see you? I don’t want you to disappear for months at a time without receiving any messages from you!” Fanny frowned and hugged Han Shuo tightly, not letting him move. She seemed like she wouldn’t let go until she received a reply.

Han Shuo had a headache as he thought about it. He said, “It seems I need to find a mansion within the Empire. Mhm, so be it, I’ll tell you my address after seven days at most. I promise to not suddenly disappear for a long time!”

“Okay. Oh right, my father may come to the Ossen City soon. I want you to meet him then!” Fanny nodded, her cheeks turning crimson. She said softly as she buried her face in his chest.

Han Shuo was dumbfounded. He secretly thought about his relationships with Phoebe and Emily. If this was discovered by Fanny or her father by chance, something serious might just happen. However he couldn’t refuse now, so he bit the bullet and said, “Alright, I’ll come see him at that time!”

Forget it, I’ll worry about it when it happens. I can only take one step at a time. Han Shuo secretly thought and said, “Alright, I’m going!”

“Mmm, right, thank you for the herbal pill. It was really miraculous. Do you have any more? I want to eat a few more!” As Han Shuo was about to leave, Fanny asked excitedly with shining eyes.

“Eh... This pill is extremely expensive, I only had that one pill. One pill is enough, any more would be useless!” Han Shuo sweated. Afraid that Fanny wouldn’t listen, he hastily left.

# Chapter 273: Climbing up step by step

After leaving the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, Han Shuo went straight to Lawrence's house. Together, they left for the barracks of the northern city guards.

Ossen City was divided into four sections, South, East, North and West. Each section had a big city gate and an independent army of guards responsible for maintaining law and order.

As they arrived at the city's northern campgrounds, Lawrence opened his mouth to speak, "Although we're ten days late, I think there's no problem!"

What greeted the eyes was a grand castle wholly made of solid rocks. Several armored guards stood in front of the city gate, looking over the recruitment of ordinary civilians with strong physique. They were being examined before they could join the rookies.

Lawrence walked over to them with Han Shuo and said with authority, "He is an adept mage who's just graduated from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. He'll join your magic corps from now on."

An officer was lying lazily on a chair, his mouth munching on the fruits on the plate. As soon as he heard Lawrence's voice, he scrambled to his feet and put on a flattering smile, "Greetings to the young master Lawrence!"

Lawrence nodded and pointed at Han Shuo saying, "He's my friend. He intends to join the magic corps of the city's northern guard. We'll proceed based on the formal procedures."

"An adept mage!" The officer was shocked. His expression was much more respectful as he looked at Han Shuo, "May I see your certificate?"

There were three jobs in the Profound Continent: swordsman, knight, and mage. Swordsmen held the lowest status, knights were a little higher, and the rarest and highest were the mages.

To a country, a mage of the same level brought more benefits to the

army. For instance, a senior swordsman or senior knight could only kill several soldiers in one attack no matter how powerful they were.

However, if an adept mage released a magic spell of great lethality, they could kill dozens or more than a hundred of soldiers in an instant. The higher the mage's level, the more powerful their spell was. For example, if a sacred magus released a forbidden spell, he could even destroy a city and kill tens of thousand soldiers in a second.

Because mages possessed magic spells with a large area of destruction, they were very useful in the military. Their status was obviously higher than swordsmen or knights. Generally, in any country, if a mage reached the level of archmage, they would be bestowed with a noble title and their own territory.

As for those of the grand magus or sacred magus level, they were the talent that every country competed over. The king of that country would agree to any of their conditions from wealth, position to beautiful women. Everything could be theirs.

That was why the officer's attitude had taken a complete turn for the opposite upon hearing that he was an adept mage who'd graduated from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Over the years, the Academy had produced many of the most outstanding figures in the Empire. Currently, several notable figures who were the best in their fields of expertise had all graduated from this academy.

"Of course you can!" Han Shuo took out his graduation certificate from his space ring and handed it to the officer.

Only now did the officer realize that Han Shuo wore a space ring. He was a slightly surprised, an adept mage who could possess a space ring was definitely not ordinary. The officer became even more respectful. He held the certificate and skimmed it before handing it back to Han Shuo with both hands, saying in all honesty, "There's no problem at all. We of the city's Northern Guard welcome you to join us. You will be a member of the Northern Guard's magic corps. Please follow me, I'll help you with the documents."

“I’m going with you!” Lawrence smiled at Han Shuo and followed the latter into the castle. The officer seemed to know Lawrence as he didn’t stopped him from following.

The three yin demons had been released earlier to circle around the castle. Han Shuo discovered that the castle was divided into several areas. The bottom floor was the rooms of ordinary soldiers, it could accommodate nearly a thousand people. The second floor was for ordinary officers, the third floor for senior generals and the members of the magic corps. Han Shuo paid some attention and realized that there was a basement was storing weapons and food.

Even though this castle was inside Ossen City, its defenses weren’t weak. The castle walls were ten meters tall with several guards in each direction. There were several heavy defensive weaponries and even three magic towers set up.

This was the base camp of the Northern Guard. Many more soldiers were stationed outside. The scattered Northern Guard was divided into three portions. One portion trained in the jungle, another stood defense at the northern gate, and the remaining was in charge of patrolling to prevent brawling inside the city.

Before he’d came here, Han Shuo knew Lawrence was acquainted with the highest commander of the city’s Northern Guard, Count Boris Carlin, so he hadn’t been worried at all.

In the Lancelot Empire, the majority of military power was in the hands of the nobility. Lawrence’s uncle, Boris Carlin, for example, was a count of the Empire. The Carlin family in the Empire was regarded as a grand family. Lawrence’s father in name and Boris’s older brother, Eevee Carlin, was one rank higher as a Marquis of the Empire.

Eevee Carlin had an intimate relationship with the King due to his connection with Lawrence. With Eevee’s support, plus his own extraordinary military talent, Boris Carlin was able to sit on the position of the Northern Guard’s highest commander.

Obviously Lawrence arranged for Han Shuo to be here because his uncle

was in charge of this organization. The soldiers in the castle all knew of the relationship between Lawrence and Boris, that was why they treated the former so respectfully. Even Han Shuo, following Lawrence, also received the same treatment.

“Oh, my lovely Lawrence, you haven’t come to see me in such a long time!” The group was heading to the third floor of the castle, when an army man of one meter eighty centimeters in height with a rough, bearded face, called out loudly from a distant staircase.

“Hi dear uncle, aren’t I visiting you right now? Hehe, I’ve brought an outstanding person here. Isn’t your nephew good to you?” Lawrence laughed all the way as he pulled Han Shuo to Boris.

Boris laughed heartily with a resounding voice. He swept a glance over Han Shuo and said, “Is this the Bryan that you’ve mentioned to me many times? Haha, his body is unexpectedly strong, and he’s an incredible mage to boot. Truly unimaginable!”

Due to his practice of magical cultivation, Han Shuo was now one meter ninety centimeters tall. His back was as straight as a javelin, naturally emitting an extraordinary presence. Although he was wearing an ordinary magic robe, this presence emitting from his body simply couldn’t be concealed.

“Greetings honored Count Boris. Please take care of me from now on!” Han Shuo had a firm grasp on the situation. He smiled and bowed respectfully.

“Well said, well said!” Boris laughed loudly again and spoke to the guiding officer, “Gilok, you help Bryan complete the procedures.”

“Lawrence, Bryan, come come, come to my room for a bit!” Boris waited for the two to step up the stairs before enthusiastically grabbing onto them, leading them straight to the biggest room on the third floor. All the guards respectfully saluted Boris along the way.

Boris’ hand was rough like an old tree bark’s. Han Shuo immediately understood from the sensation that he used heavy weaponry. Han Shuo had heard Lawrence mention that Boris was an earth rider.

Boris' room was built in with big boulders, bright and spacious. There wasn't any luxurious items, only some simple furniture. It seemed Boris wasn't an extravagant person.

"All of you are dismissed. Don't let anyone in for now!" Boris ordered upon reaching the doorstep. The two senior swordsmen withdrew themselves without a word and stood guard at a distance from the door.

When the three had settled down in the room, Boris went straight to the point, "Bryan, I'll be frank on account of your relationship with Lawrence. Since you've come here, I'll help you obtain the title of duke in the fastest way possible. Lawrence told me that you have endless potential and will definitely become a great assistant of his. I believe in his vision."

"Thank you, Sir Count!" Han Shuo nodded slightly and smiled with gratitude.

"No need to be polite. Hehe, helping you is helping Lawrence, which is also helping myself. We'll have you stay in the magic corps for now with no particular status. However, when you make a military achievement to the Northern Guard, plus your identity as a mage, I can help you apply for a noble title. From then on, your rank will gradually increased based on your contributions." Boris looked at Han Shuo and slowly explained.

"Uncle Boris, for this period when Bryan is in the Northern Guard, the Viscount title will do just fine. The higher titles aren't as easily acquired through the Northern Guard, I have my own plans!" Lawrence had long since made his plans about Han Shuo's position. Considering the achievements and power of the Northern Guard, it might only be enough for Han Shuo to become a viscount here. Even Boris was only a count after all, it would be difficult to promote Han Shuo once more in the Northern Guard.

"Hehe, you little boy. Good, I just have something here, if you can do well Bryan, your credit will definitely be recognized. I can help you obtain a title faster then!" Boris rolled his eyes at Lawrence before telling Han Shuo with a smile.

His thoughts moved, Han Shuo was immediately interested, "What



matter?”

# Chapter 274: Who dares to act wildly?

“The Imperial weapons factory has developed a new type of chariot that can consecutively shoot bolts thousands of miles away. This secret arsenal was located in the wilderness to the north of the city and was originally under the responsibility of our Northern Guard. However, one night about half a month ago, a group of assassins suddenly snuck in and killed the guards, in addition to a dozen inventors there. They also took the blueprints of the chariot.”

“His Majesty the King was furious when he heard this news and gave me a month to arrest this gang and retrieve the blueprints at all costs. This matter is really stressing me out. If you can help me resolve it, I guarantee that you’ll easily receive the title of baron!” Boris turned gloomy upon talking about this matter, his hearty laugh from earlier had long since disappeared.

“Mhm, I too am thinking of a way to resolve this. If we don’t capture those people and take back the blueprint within a month, it could affect my uncle’s career!” Lawrence sighed softly and turned to Han Shuo as he spoke, somewhat worried. Boris was his backer. In his struggle for the throne, whether or not Lawrence could stand out mainly relied on the power of his supporters.

First prince Charles currently had the biggest influence and also the most supporters. Lawrence had the weakest force due to him being an illegitimate child. His status would certainly be affected if the people closest to him lost their standing.

Han Shuo wrinkled his brows, thinking for a bit before opening his mouth to say, “If it’s been half a month, wouldn’t they have left the capital already? If they really did, it’d be like finding a needle in a haystack if we want to catch them!”

“They shouldn’t have. I immediately reported this to His Majesty before anything else when this happened. Master Candide, one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, took notice of this and ordered the

guards to strengthen the defense of the four gates, not letting any suspicious character leave. I'm positive that they haven't been able to leave Ossen City!" Boris said in a low voice, his face solemn.

"I see. Then did Master Candide tell you who was taking charge of this mission?" Han Shuo asked. Everyone with a high position all knew of the Dark Mantle's existence. Candide was the most mysterious, most difficult to reach figure. Han Shuo understood the protocol of the Dark Mantle. An enemy country must be pulling the strings behind such a major matter, so the Dark Mantle couldn't afford to not send anyone to handle it. Boris smiled wryly and shook his head as he replied, "I only know of his name, but didn't have the honor of meeting him. I got this information from a higher-up. Although I tried to check afterwards, I wasn't able to find out who's in charge of this."

Han Shuo nodded with a faint smile and said, "This I understand. I will try my best. When I see Master Candide, I will ask him about what's going on."

Boris was shocked, he urgently asked, "You, you know Master Candide?"

"I forgot to tell you uncle, but Bryan has another identity as a Dark Mantle member!" Lawrence turned to explain to Boris, then asked with the same shocked expression, "Bryan, I only know you're a member of the Dark Mantle, but can you really meet that old monster Candide directly?"

"He's directly in charge for me!" Han Shuo nodded with a smile.

Lawrence was immediately ecstatic upon hearing this. He looked at Han Shuo with eyes full of excitement, "I really didn't think that you had such a special position in the Dark Mantle to directly answer to that old monster. It seems like I've truly made the right choice!"

"Very good!" Boris was also overjoyed. He gave Lawrence a grateful look and said to Han Shuo, "Then I'll leave this matter in your care completely. As long as you can handle it, I'll take care of obtaining a baron title for you!"

"I'll do my best!" Han Shuo didn't dare to guarantee anything. After all, he didn't know the specifics of the situation. The Dark Mantle might have

a wide network, but it wasn't omnipotent.

"Alright. Uncle Boris, Bryan belongs to your magic corps only in name, so you needn't assign him to any jobs. He won't come to the Northern Guard if there's nothing else. We'll be going for now." Lawrence stood up and said straightforwardly. He didn't mouth empty pleasantries in front of his uncle.

"Rest assured, I know what to do. Helping him is helping you, and also helping myself. I understand this clearly!" Boris obviously wouldn't keep Han Shuo in the camp to do petty chores after knowing the latter's identity as a member of the Dark Mantle. He understood Han Shuo had joined purely to accumulate military credit and rely on the Northern Guard for a quick promotion. Han Shuo absolutely wouldn't stay for long.

Lawrence and Han Shuo left the Northern Guard together. As they exited through the city gates, Lawrence asked Han Shuo, "Are you certain you can handle this? This matter is related to my uncle's career, I'll leave it in your hands!"

"I can only try my best. After all, I don't know the specific details yet." Han Shuo replied. At this moment, when he was getting onto Lawrence's carriage, Han Shuo suddenly frowned and whispered, "Lawrence, be careful on the way!"

Lawrence was stunned and asked in a low voice without a flicker in his expression, "Is someone attempting to kill me?"

"You get in the carriage first, I won't leave together with you, but will protect you from the shadows!" Han Shuo nodded, indicating that Lawrence shouldn't act rashly and alert the enemy.

"Alright, then I'll be going first!" Lawrence said loudly, his face flashing a smile like nothing had happened as he got into the carriage and left.

As soon as Lawrence had left in the carriage, Han Shuo turned down another street. He walked dozens of meters before seeing a carriage in a corner. He shouted lowly, "Chester, why are you here?"

Chester, wearing a coachman outfit turned his head upon hearing the

familiar voice and exclaimed in delighted surprise, “Bryan, why are you here?”

Two small hands suddenly lifted the curtain. The touchingly charming Emily appeared, covering her mouth as she lightly shouted in joy, “Rascal, what are you doing here?”

After a long time, Emily was ever heartbreakingly beautiful. Her long hair was done up high, and she wore a long purple dress, along with her figure elegant and solemn eyebrows revealed an inviolable holiness. Her presence was completely different from the flirtatious manner the first time Han Shuo had met her.

“I went to the Northern Guard for a job. I discovered Chester looking around so I came to see. What are you guys doing here?” Han Shuo wrinkled his brows, asking urgently.

“The Northern Guard lost a chariot blueprint. I’m in charge of this mission and have sent people to inquire about the details of the situation.” Because of their relationship, Emily told Han Shuo about the secret mission without hesitation.

Delight flooded his heart, Han Shuo said, “So that’s why. Haha, we are really destined to be together! Okay, I’ll talk to you when I come to the Dark Mantle’s base in the city’s northern castle tonight. Now I have some matters to deal with, see you tonight.”

As he finished speaking, Han Shuo nodded towards Chester and quickly vanished into the night, not paying attention to Emily, who was full of confusion.

“Master Bryan is becoming more and more mysterious these days. I heard he made a great achievement again, the Dark Mantle network is spreading legends of his power!” Chester couldn’t help but say in admiration upon seeing Han Shuo disappear in the blink of an eye.

“He only pretends to be mysterious. Why hasn’t that brat returned yet? We need to quickly handle this matter and return to the base in the northern stronghold as soon as possible!” Emily was impatient when she saw Han Shuo appear. She began to begrudge her man who’d gone over to

the Northern Guard.

“Be careful!” Sitting in the carriage, Lawrence lifted the curtain to speak softly to earth rider Jino, who was riding a horse beside him.

“Rest assured, we will protect the young master well!” Jino rode a war horse. He wore shiny silver armor, his hand grasping a silver spear.

“Mm, just be very careful!” Lawrence was completely calm, but still repeatedly advised.

After his partnership with Han Shuo in Valen City, Lawrence knew very well about the latter’s miraculous ability, so he had no doubt about Han Shuo’s words. With Jino leading the experts out in the open and old assassin Lucky near him for personal protection, Lawrence wasn’t too worried.

Moreover, Han Shuo had told him he’d secretly protect him before leaving, so Lawrence was even more assured, given his understanding of Han Shuo’s strength. After all, Lawrence had personally seen his terrifying power.

When the group reached a long alley, a long, shrill whistle suddenly resounded. The ground violently shook before a three meter long earth spikes shot towards Lawrence’s carriage. The spikes also ambushed Jino’s group on war horses at the same time. The horses were pierced and killed in the blink of an eye.

Fortunately, Lawrence’s group had been on alert. As soon as the ground had trembled, they’d immediately jumped out of the carriage and off their horses to an area free of the earth spikes.

Several archers shot a series of sharp arrows from the rooftops around the alley. The arrows howled through the air as they whizzed straight towards Lawrence’s group. Jino and the knights quickly spread out to surround Lawrence and raised their shields in defense.

“Pollak, continue to release the earth spikes!” A black robed mage shouted towards another rooftop.

“I’m Bryan from the Northern Guard’s magic corps. Who dares to act

wildly in my jurisdiction? Are you tired of living?” Bryan came out from another direction, laughing coldly, his hand holding a head dripping with blood.

“Pollak!” The black robed mage immediately screamed in shock upon seeing the head in Han Shuo’s hand.

# Chapter 275: Killing two birds with one stone

There were a total of ten people in the group that had ambushed Lawrence—

three mages, four archers, and three swordsmen.

Amongst the three swordsmen, only one was a swordmaster, while the other two were senior swordsmen. Except for the earth adept mage that Han Shuo had already killed, there was one space adept mage and the black robed dark archmage.

The black robed mage felt a chill down his spine when he saw Han Shuo appear with Pollak's head in hand. The two mages had been back to back, yet he hadn't even noticed when Pollak was killed. This indicated the absolutely extraordinary strength of the newcomer.

"Kill this person first!" The black robed mage shouted, about to chant a magic incantation.

Suddenly, the big tree next to him swayed in an odd manner. Like a peacock displaying its tail, the tree branches turned into sharp arrows and shot towards the mage in a hail of sharp missiles that covered the sky. He simply had no time to react as dozen of branches transformed his body into a pincushion. He turned into a hedgehog, his blood flowing profusely.

The mage's eyes were still wide open as he died. He couldn't accept the fact that the tree had suddenly turned into a murder weapon. Why did the ordinary tree suddenly turn into an unblinking murder weapon?

The two senior swordsmen were dressed in black nightwalker outfits as they jumped down from the rooftop, intending to kill Han Shuo firsthand. Ludicrously, three cracks somehow appeared on the ground where they landed. They'd wanted to borrow the force of their movement to spring towards Han Shuo, but let out a tragic scream as they were swallowed by the cracks like flies casting themselves into a spider's web. The remaining people looked on, dumbfounded at the weird happenings with perturbed



hearts. The swordmaster assassin then ordered in a grave tone, "Retreat!"

The four archers and the space adept mage were as if granted amnesty by this word. They quickly turned around, about to flee.

"Want to escape? Heh heh, it's my first day of work today! I'll gain some standing for catching all of you!" Han Shuo leisurely gave chase while smiling cutely.

The swordmaster leapt, his feet about to tap the small tree next to him when the tree unexpectedly came to life, the snake-like branches tightly wrapping around his ankle. More and more of branches twisted like octopus tentacles and tightly bound the lower half of his body.

The swordmaster's face was dreadful as he waved his sword, attempting to hack off the soft branches. However at this precise moment, old assassin Lucky emerged from the shadows and approached like a ghost to finish the struggling swordmaster.

Han Shuo was about to act, but halted upon seeing Lucky approach. He understood this swordmaster would be hard pressed to escape death, so he turned his sights to the four archers and the space adept mage.

"Bryan, capture one alive!" Lawrence was both surprised and overjoyed. He didn't expect Han Shuo to be so stunning and calm in the face of so many experts. He'd used some unexpected method to casually play with them in his hand.

"Ah! Murder murder! Shut the door, quickly shut the door!" Even though this alley was remote, there were still people in the broad daylight. Several civilians opened the windows to take a peek upon hearing Han Shuo's shouts, then hastily shut both their windows and doors in horror of the fear of being implicated.

Han Shuo's sensitive hearing soon caught the sound of a cavalry team quickly approaching from afar. He looked in the direction where the four archers had escaped and laughed sinisterly.

His body flashing with a whooshing sound like a stone thrown from a catapult, he landed in the midst of the four archers in the blink of an eye.

The Demonslayer Edge instantly took three lives like a demon summoned from hell.

Han Shuo restrained the last archer by grabbing the back of his neck, lifting him up using one hand. The archer was only one meter and seventy centimeters tall, so his legs flailed around upon being lifted up. He grunted gutterly and couldn't utter a complete word as he looked down in horror at Han Shuo.

The quiver on the back of this poor archer had long since been thrown away. Although he struggled with all that he had, he couldn't reach Han Shuo since his two arms were shorter than the latter's. It looked quite comical.

"Kid, be good and your crime will be lessened!" Han Shuo grinned. He walked back towards Lawrence while easily holding the archer.

The other space adept mage didn't get to take a few steps before he was coldly shot down by a dark arrow in the middle of his back. The dead mage fell from the rooftop to the ground.

The person who shot the arrow was the old assassin Lucky. Han Shuo had seen the happenings clearly, so he wasn't surprised about the space adept mage's death.

"Who, who dares to fight on the street!?" The cavalry rushed from a distance only when everything was over. The leading officer was fully armored as he shouted loudly.

"You city guards are truly unreliable!" Lawrence on the other side shook his head and let out a long sigh. He didn't spare a glance towards the officer and looked towards Han Shuo with appreciation, "Many thanks, Bryan!"

"Alright. I choked this person unconscious, so you look after him yourself. Remember that I protected you this time, so the Dark Mantle higher-ups will take note of this accomplishment. In addition, I protected the order of the northern castle and prevented a malicious assassination, so the Northern Guard should record this credit for me!" Accomplishing two deeds in one go, what a great harvest! Han Shuo was secretly smug.

“Got it!” Lawrence understood what he meant and answered with a smile.

“Mm, there’s no more danger on the road, I’ll be leaving then!” Han Shuo only flung out these words before leaving in style.

The officer had originally wanted to stop him, but he simply didn’t have to courage to say anything and let Han Shuo leave leisurely when he recognized Lawrence and saw how the two were chatting warmly.

Han Shuo reached the Dark Mantle’s northern stronghold at night as he’d promised. Emily had been waiting for quite some time. When she saw Han Shuo appear, she immediately waved her hand to signal Chester to withdraw so that she could be intimate with Han Shuo.

The two discussed what had happened after they’d parted at the Valley of Sunshine. They also talked about the Northern Guard’s stolen blueprint.

“Are there any clues?” Han Shuo asked Emily after listening.

“I’m inspecting this closely, but I can be certain that the people haven’t left Ossen City since the Dark Mantle immediately started investigations. Our people are stationed at all four gates. The foreigners are being detained by the Empire, so they have no chance to slip out.”

“We actually discovered a few suspicious groups recently. However, we can’t be sure if they were the ones behind this. I’m investigating this with full force. As long as I can determine which group did this, none of them will be able to escape Ossen City. You just wait for my news. Although this problem is tricky, the Dark Mantle will definitely handle it properly since it occurred inside the city.” Emily had a cautious expression as she whispered in a low voice.

“Store these two things well. They will definitely help increase your power!” Han Shuo took out the magic staff embedded with three amethysts, and a notebook in which he recorded everything he remembered from Ayermike Cotton’s ancient notebook. He handed them over to Emily.

“For, for me?” Emily was stunned upon seeing these two things, her mind temporarily dizzy. She understood clearly how valuable these things were.

Ayermike Cotton’s handwritten notebook had recorded his experiences, understandings, and feelings about dark magic. It was a sacred object that every dark mage would give an arm and a leg for. As for the magic staff, its value was even more difficult to calculate, given the terrifyingly rich dark elements on the surface.

Emily had already had a faint premonition when she heard Han Shuo say he had taken down a copy of the notebook. However, her heart still pounded wildly in disbelief when he actually handed these two treasures to her.

“Of course, they belonged to you the moment I got them. However you need to prepare a reason for this magic staff so it won’t rouse Candide’s suspicion!” Han Shuo had turned in the original handwritten notebook to Candide, but concealed the matter about t Ayermike Cotton’s magic staff. To dark mages, this magic staff certainly wouldn’t have the ordinary effect of magnifying magic spells. Han Shuo reminded Emily in advance so that she could evade Candide’s scrutiny.

Emily inhaled deeply and murmured, “The Dark Star staff belonged to magic god Ayermike Cotton. It’s thick covering of dark element can help dark mages gather their mental strength faster. Be it training or casting magic, the speed should be five times faster when using the Dark Star staff. This staff is considered a divine artifact for dark mages”

“Then there’s also the comprehension of dark magic from magic god Ayermike. If I can completely understand everything, my power will increase by leaps and bounds and reach new heights. These, these two things are simply priceless artifacts for dark mages!”

“No need to be so moved. I know full well of their value. They belong to you now!” When Han Shuo saw Emily so happy to the point of forgetting everything else, he hugged her by the waist and continued, “Eat this pill. It can give you eternal youth and is very beneficial to the study of dark

magic.”

Emily’s heart almost stopped beating from excitement when she heard the two words “eternal youth”. One good thing after another was falling on her head today, all of which was brought about by Han Shuo. This was the first time she’d ever experienced such a thing in her life, and it also proved her position in Han Shuo’s heart.

“Eternal youth, eternal youth...” Emily was most concerned about her age. Her being older than Han Shuo had been a knot in her heart. Now that there was a medicine that could maintain eternal youth, she was willing to pay any price no matter what. Her whole being became distracted as she muttered nonstop.

“Eat it, I’ll help you dissolve the pill!” Han Shuo whispered. He pulled her over by the hand and brought the Rebirth Pill to her lips.

Emily’s eyes shone brightly, she swallowed the Rebirth Pill without hesitation. Afterwards her bones emitted cracking sounds as the Rebirth Pill reformed her body bit by bit Han Shuo’s help.

Like Fanny and Phoebe, Emily also had a need for the toilet. She only felt assured after Han Shuo told her the pill’s side effect.

Han Shuo left the stronghold and went straight to the Boozt Merchant Guild.

In the deserted training field inside the guild, Phoebe was wearing a pure white warrior outfit, her hair braided and tied into a ponytail. The sword in her hand whistled as it danced around. Her body moved like a lightning bolt within the field, shadow images appeared one after another from the high speed. Extremely sharp silver crosses blossomed from the sword as they hacked a huge rock into fragments with rumbling sounds.

Suddenly, Phoebe seemed to discover something. She raised the sword in her hand and shot spinning cross-blades towards a small tree. Cracking sounds echoed as the tree exploded into hundreds of pieces.

A black light flashed, a shadow behind the tree rushed forward at a very high speed and slipped through the spinning cross-blades. A huge killing

aura enveloped Phoebe and restrained her. Dread spread from the depths of her soul and filled her mind. In the blink of an eye, everything around her seemed to be confined by the killing intent. Phoebe suddenly felt her body stiffen up, she simply couldn't move. A deep fear surged in her heart.

However, the violently churning killing intent suddenly stopped when it almost touched Phoebe's delicate body. It spread to the sides, not hurting her in the least bit. When the killing intent disappeared and she relaxed her whole body, Han Shuo appeared right in front of her eyes with a slight smile.

"Congratulations! I didn't expect you would reach the rank of great swordmaster at such a young age. Truly incredible!" Han Shuo looked at Phoebe with a smile and congratulated her.

Phoebe rushed into Han Shuo's chest with happy surprise, like a young swallow returning to its nest. A faint fragrance, mixed with a dash taste of sweat, instantly assaulted his nostrils. She tightly embraced Han Shuo and said in a sweet, excited voice, "All thanks to that medicinal pill or I wouldn't be able to breakthrough so quickly. Take a look, how am I different from before?"

Like Fanny, Phoebe's skin was soft and delicate like silk. Her already beautiful smile was now even more soul-shaking after the Rebirth Pill's reformation.

"You've become much more beautiful!" Han Shuo replied honestly.

"Mm, I'm all sweaty, let me take a bath first!" Phoebe softly pushed Han Shuo away and walked to her bathroom, somewhat embarrassed. Suddenly, she stopped halfway and said in a light voice that couldn't be lighter, "Come with me!"

# Chapter 276: The lovebirds shared a bath

Ossen city palace, to the west in a luxurious residence...

NSFW

First prince Charles was currently pressing down on a plump, beautiful woman on a table. He moved strongly from behind, the beautiful woman's white buttocks swaying along in rhythm. She was like a \*\* enjoying his \*\*.

After a bit, Charles let out a moan. His two legs trembled, his body softening like cotton candy as he collapsed on the beautiful woman's body and groaned, "Treasure, you are really charming!"

"Your Highness First Prince, please be sure to help my younger brother!" The beautiful woman lay still without moving, letting Charles' hands wander all over her body as she whispered coyly.

"Rest assured, the whole Empire is mine in the future, this small matter is nothing much!" Charles let out a perverted laugh. He took out an aphrodisiac pill, about to swallow it for another round of "battle".

However, at that moment, a strange sound echoed in the room. Charles' expression changed. He immediately put the pill away and quickly put on his pants, saying in a hurry, "I have an important matter to attend to, you must leave. Now!"

The beautiful woman hurriedly pulled up the dress pooling around her knees upon hearing this. She left through the side door without another word and disappeared in a blink of an eye.

The thin and tall duke Ashburn rushed in directly following the strange sound. He gave Charles a glance and said with displeasure, "I can't believe you still have the heart to be licentious at this moment."

"Sorry uncle, what happened?" Charles looked very humble in front of Ashburn. He bowed and honestly admitted his wrongdoings.

"Failure. Of the killers sent by Shadow Ghost, one was captured alive, the rest were slaughtered." Ashburn said in a low tone, his face gloomy.

“How could that be? We investigated clearly earlier, even if those killers couldn’t kill him, they shouldn’t have ended up like that?” Charles was shocked, he couldn’t understand how Lawrence had done it.

Ashburn was in a bad mood. The Shadow Ghost had suffered a heavy loss and one killer had even been captured alive, which made him very worried. He said again in a gloomy manner, “Something unexpected happened. That meddling Bryan seems to played a major role, otherwise the situation wouldn’t have been so bad!”

“The boyfriend of the Boozt Merchant Guild master Phoebe? How could it be?! He’s but an adept mage, what could he do with that kind of power?” Charles could hardly believe it. He had met Han Shuo last time in the Rose Garden and felt that Han Shuo’s power wasn’t enough to be feared.

“This person isn’t simple. After Aubrey came back from the Boozt Merchant Guild, his body was hot one moment and cold the other, and it turned into a serious illness a few days later. Even Aubrey, with his power, fell victim to this person’s trap. Bryan definitely isn’t easy to deal with. It seemed we first have to get rid of this hindrance now that he’s appeared again.” Ashburn paced back and forth as he thought for a while before saying coldly.

“All will be as uncle says!” To Charles, this uncle was his important backing. Ashburn held a great deal of power and played a crucial role in Charles’ fight for the throne. Moreover, Charles didn’t dare not listen to Ashburn given their familial relationship.

Nodding his head, Ashburn said, “Phoebe’s master is the sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot. He came to visit me earlier. The old fellow hasn’t expressed if he supports Lawrence or not, so we temporarily shouldn’t make an enemy out of him. This old fellow knows very well that I also have some experts, so I can’t allow them to act because of Bryan’s intimate relationship with Phoebe. The Shadow Ghost is now severely damaged and may not be able to mobilize their men again in a short time. Only you can kill Bryan!”

“No problem. A while ago at the Brut Merchant Alliance, the great



swordmaster Leah Cain offended the lightning sacred magus Reynold Dila. He took advantage of the chaos in the Brut Merchant Alliance to escape to the Empire and flocked to my banner. He'll arrive in two days. No one knows about this yet, so he's the perfect one to send out."

"That maniac?" Ashburn was started, then nodded as he said with a sinister laugh, "Then I can be at ease!"

.....

Phoebe's room.

The sound of running water echoed from within. Phoebe's clear, cheerful voice sweetly resounded, "Heh, are you comfortable?"

Gentle mist covered the whole room from a spacious bathtub, the water inside decorated with countless petals emitting a fresh fragrance. Han Shuo was wearing shorts as he lay on the edge of the bathtub. Phoebe had a thin veil draped over her body. She sat next to Han Shuo and leaned over to massage him, helping his muscles relax.

Han Shuo squinted his eyes as he lazily lay still. He said, somewhat disappointed, "Comfortable yes, just not in the way I imagined it. I thought you wanted me to join you in the tub and do something else!"

"Humph, I knew you'd have naughty thoughts. Giving you a massage is good enough! I haven't ever given anyone a massage up until now, but you still aren't content!" Phoebe had her hair up in a high bun, with a few strands naughtily falling on her shoulder. The thin veil couldn't cover up her youthful air as her white jade skin revealed a natural rosininess.

Han Shuo had done it with Emily before coming here, but still found it hard to contain himself. It was a pity that he promised to not force Phoebe, so no matter how difficult it was, he could only grit his teeth and bitterly endure for fear that she'd be truly angered.

"Bryan, what was that pill you gave me? How could it be so miraculous? If you can refine a lot of it, our guild will definitely earn a lot of money. I'm afraid no woman can resist the temptation of this medicinal pill even if they have to pay a sky high cost!" Phoebe softly asked Han Shuo like a

little wife. However, her mind was still thinking business as she massaged Han Shuo's shoulders.

"Forget it. That pill cost too much in precious resources. Besides, the Rebirth Pill can not only give you eternal youth, it can also help you revitalize yourself. Be it body or spirit, both will be reinforced immensely. I had to spent a lot of time collecting the treasures of heaven and earth in the depths of the Dark Forest to finally refine a few. You think it's easy to make?!" Han Shuo explained with a wry smile. Both Fanny and Phoebe were obsessed with the Rebirth Pill. Han Shuo gave them the Rebirth Pill as he was mostly worried about their power. Unfortunately, they only cared about maintaining their beauty and didn't focus much on raising their strength.

"Is that so? Then there's really no way!" Phoebe exclaimed in disappointment, then softly giggled, "That's also fine. From now on, no one can have such beautiful skin like me, hehe!"

Han Shuo's heart immediately jumped upon hearing her say so. He secretly wondered if Phoebe, Emily, and Fanny would detect anything from each other's delicate skin when they met each other. If so, then wouldn't he be hoisting himself high on an execution stage of his own making?

Slightly shaking his head, Han Shuo didn't want to think about it anymore. He turned his body to embrace Phoebe tightly. Her soaked, smooth, white skin seemed to merge with the thin veil, causing him to have naughty thoughts.

"Just kissing okay?!" Phoebe said softly with a chuckle and turned her fragrant lips to Han Shuo.

When their lips touched, Han Shuo finally couldn't suppress himself. However, he was in a bind as he remembered his promise to Phoebe earlier.

Suddenly, an idea popped in his head. Han Shuo recalled several secret demonic magic methods from Chu Cang Lan and formed a secret plan. While he intensely kissed Phoebe's cherry lips, his hands caressed some of her sensitive areas. He tried using a few provocation methods to see if

they were really that miraculous.

“Oh...”

Phoebe moaned out sobbing-like sounds. Her soft body's temperature kept soaring as her smooth skin flushed red. Her breathing grew more and more urgent. She finally couldn't suppress it any longer and hugged Han Shuo tightly like an octopus.

Phoebe was already this aroused after Han Shuo had surreptitiously used two moves. This truly made him happy inside. He secretly thought that the demonic magic from that old monster Chu Cang Lan was truly useful. He moved his hands up and down then rested them around her small waist while kissing Phoebe.

It wasn't long before Phoebe lost control of herself first. Her eyes glazed as if she'd fallen into an erotic dreamland. She took the initiative to take the thin veil off her body. She panted and glided over to Han Shuo, softly calling, “Bryan... Bryan...”

Secretly rejoicing, Han Shuo put on an evil smile and said, “If we continue like this, I'm afraid I won't be able to hold myself back. Let's stop here today?”

“You scoundrel, I knew I couldn't escape the palm of your hand. Forget it, forget it!” Phoebe softly exclaimed and slowly removed everything on her body, revealing a perfect figure. Highly protruding peaks, flat belly and a pair of long, extremely beautiful legs appeared just like that in front of Han Shuo without cover.

Letting out a light cry, Phoebe took the initiative to move over to Han Shuo and reached out with her jade hands to help fling off his shorts. She used her strength to hug Han Shuo tightly and buried herself into his broad chest, whispering, “After seeing you relieve yourself last time in the Valley of Sunshine, I had already intended to give it to you then. From now on, you don't need to hold back anymore!”

Han Shuo was between laughter and tears, but had no way to explain. He hadn't thought that a misunderstanding would lead to this. It seemed this was also thanks to Emily's assistance.

NSFW

Han Shuo naturally wouldn't be polite when a beauty was right in front of him. He turned and pressed Phoebe down, his broad chest squeezing her high twin peaks. His hands unceremoniously caressed her body and skillfully parted her firmly closed legs. He looked directly at her face and asked, "Why do you like me?"

While he spoke, his pole also lifted and touched Phoebe's wetness. His hands didn't stop caressing her sensitive areas to rouse her lust.

"I don't know, maybe after that assassination. I hated you then, but your image kept appearing in my head. I didn't know when this resentment gradually disappeared, but your image couldn't be dispersed from my mind." Phoebe answered quickly in the midst of her gasps. It seemed these words had been in her heart for a long time and had never ceased.

The moment Han Shuo stepped into this world and started practicing demonic magic, he had decided to not live life with any restraint. The more he came in contact with this originally cold beauty, the more he understood his feelings for her. He knew he couldn't leave her, even though it wasn't the same obsession that he had for Fanny.

While Phoebe twittered, Han Shuo closed his eyes for a moment in silence, his hands subconsciously casting the demonic magic provocation method. He himself didn't know how effective this secret method was, but Phoebe had tacitly given her approval. While he had yet to act, Phoebe suddenly let out a loud scream.

A moment later, Han Shuo felt his lower body being wrapped in a warm, humid grip.

After a long while, Han Shuo sluggishly sat in the bathtub. Phoebe was sitting on his strong thighs like a kitten, her hands wrapped around his neck. She buried her face in his chest in a weak, lazy, but satisfied manner.

"Did it hurt?" Phoebe's earlier performance could only be described as insane. This was her first time, so Han Shuo couldn't help but ask in concern.

“I, I don’t know. I think I went crazy. There was basically no pain. When I snapped out of it I was already like this!” Phoebe was embarrassed, her voice small as a mosquito’s.

Han Shuo was shocked upon hearing these words. He secretly thought that the demonic sexual provocation method was truly overbearing indeed. Even a girl with a resolute mind like Phoebe couldn’t help but fall into madness. If it had been an ordinary woman, they might have lost all reason and become a harlot begging for punishment.

“I’m dead tired, let’s rest for a while!” Phoebe was truly tired. She’d initiated the earlier lovemaking and had demanded madly from Han Shuo. Moreover it was her first time, so her whole body was sluggish.

“Mm, you rest!” Han Shuo gently picked Phoebe up and placed her on a warm place next to the bathtub. He himself sat cross-legged in the bathtub and circulated the magical yuan.

# Chapter 277: Advancing to Archmage

## Necromancer

The eastern section of Ossen city was where the business organizations gathered and associations were established. Aside from all sorts of shops, the Magic Association, Swordsman Association, Archer Association, Thief Association, and Mercenary Association were all located in the eastern part of the city.

These large and small guilds were extremely influential and spanned the entire Profound Continent. They were in every single country and were accredited organizations for all professions. As long as any mage or swordsman was accredited by the association, they would be able to receive an appropriate rank that was recognized by any country on the Profound Continent.

The Magic Association's building was like a tall tower. It looked like a magic tower from afar. Unlike the Swordsman Association and Mercenary Association buildings, its entrance was not filled with endless people. Instead, very few people entered, causing the Magic Association's entrance to appear rather deserted.

Mages were the most mysterious group of people on the Profound Continent. In terms of numbers, they were naturally unable to compare to the vast number of swordsmen and knights. That was why there appeared to be so few mages that came to the Magic Association to be tested.

Since Phoebe was too tired right now and had yet to wake up. Han Shuo arrived at the Magic Association by himself after daylight broke, after putting her on the bed properly. Right now, Han Shuo had the mental strength of a grand magus, but was still an archmage in name. Furthermore, Han Shuo had fully assimilated Clarendon's soul and could now proficiently use all the necromancy spells that the latter had known after several days of endless practice in the cemetery of death.

However, aside from the magic abilities that Clarendon possessed, he'd also gained the knowledge of two new spells, "Plague" and "Soul Shock",

from the book entitled “Necromancy Magic” that he had found in the Cemetery of Death. “Plague” was similar to “Corpse Reanimation”. It was a most notorious, as well as the most feared, large-scale killing magic. The spell “Plague” had made a great contribution as to why necromancers were so feared.

“Plague” was a pure destructive magic. The scale of this magic was not large, but what was terrifying was that it had the ability to spread quickly. As long as one person was affected by “Plague” within a town or city, unless they were immediately burnt to death and buried, the spell would follow the person wherever they went, infecting more and more people and cause them to die as their bodies rotted.

As long as a village, city, or even an empire did not quickly deal with it, the place might become a hellhole. If coupled with the spell “Corpse Reanimation”, an archmage necromancer, who was at the archmage level, would be able to reanimate all of those people who had succumbed to “Plague”, creating a terrifying zombie army out of nowhere.

Han Shuo did not plan to practice “Plague” yet, since this spell was truly too terrifying. Once “Plague” was casted, even Han Shuo himself would find it hard to control. This sort of pure destructive magic was a nightmare for any country. There was no question about him being the public enemy of the entire continent if he were to cast such a spell, so he decided not to practice it after careful consideration.

“Soul Shock” was a spell that directly affected the soul. Archmage necromancers had a higher understanding of the soul, and could use their own mental strength to attack the opponent’s soul as a kind of surprise attack.

Normally, a mage’s mental strength was far stronger than that of a swordsman or a knight. In face of this sort of direct attack on the soul, they were still able to defend a bit with their mental strength, but swordsmen and knights had much weaker mental strength compared to mages, so they would be at a huge disadvantage in face of this sort of attack on the soul.

Han Shuo was currently practicing “Soul Shock”, but since Clarendon’s memories did not have any experience in using this spell, it was impossible for him to quickly grasp it. Spells of the archmagus level were far deeper and difficult to understand than spells of the previous levels. Even if one knew the incantation, it was still very difficult to cast it correctly. Only when their recognition and understanding of the soul reached a very high level would they be able to cast it. Although Han Shuo had yet to reach this realm, it would not be able to stop him from advancing to the archmage level.

“Excuse me, did you come to advance your level?” A young woman, wearing a sky blue one-piece, asked with a smile after Han Shuo walked into the Magic Association.

Han Shuo nodded, then said with a smile, “That’s right, I plan on advancing to a necromancer archmage, so where should I start?”

“First, you need to provide proof that you are indeed an adept mage. Then you have to pay a thousand gold coins as a testing fee. Regardless of whether you succeeding or not, this fee will belong to the Magic Association. Do you accept?” This girl replied politely with a kind smile, while looking at Han Shuo with a bit of shock. There were not many mages that practiced necromancy. It surprised her that such a young man had the confidence to advance to the rank of archmage.

A thousand gold coins. It seems that this Magic Association is very profitable! Han Shuo momentarily blanked, then asked directly, “No problem, when can we start?”

“Give me your certificate and the gold coins, I can only tell you after going upstairs and asking about it!” The young woman replied with a smile.

Han Shuo handed over his graduation certificate from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, as well as two bags of gold coins to the girl. After a glance at Han Shuo’s proof, her expression became very odd, and looked at Han Shuo as if she saw a monster, before quickly saying, “Wait a moment, I’ll be right back!”



The moment she finished speaking, the girl hiked her skirt a little, then ran up the magic tower. Her expression was extremely strange, causing Han Shuo to be a bit surprised.

There were five floors in the Magic Association in total, with large-scales boundaries on every floor. There was dense magical essence within the boundaries. Although Han Shuo felt a bit confused by the girl's actions, he didn't release a yin demon to go and pry due to the existence of the magical boundaries.

After a while, a kind-looking old man with white hair hurried down the stairs. From the magical symbol on his chest, Han Shuo could tell that he was an earth grand magus. There were also a few mages behind the old man, two water archmages, two thunder archmages, and four adept mages.

"I am Ares Hosein, the person in charge of the Magic Association in the Lancelot Empire. I am in charge of the advancement exams for mages in the Lancelot Empire. Are you planning to advance to the rank of necromancy archmage?" The old man walked over with Han Shuo's certificate and looked at him with glittering eyes, as if he was a bit surprised.

Han Shuo nodded and said with certainty, "That's right, are there any problems?"

"No-no problems at all!" Ares quickly said and looked at Han Shuo's certificate. "You advanced from a mage apprentice into an adept mage in less than two years. This-This is a miracle! Especially since you practice necromancy. If it weren't for that fact that I am familiar with your dean, Emma, and recognize that she created this certificate, I would definitely think that you had faked it."

So this was this was the case! Han Shuo thought with surprise. Then he smiled, "Then, can I start?"

"Of course, of course. Our test is different from your academy's. We only need to test your precise mental strength. You just need to release the strongest magic you are capable of releasing in order for us to determine if

you passed or not,” Ares’s attitude was surprisingly good. He said amiably, “Come with me to the second floor, we’ll conduct the test there.”

There was a blue boundary in the middle of the second floor, while the hard wall was engraved with all sorts of magic symbols. After arriving on the second floor, Ares took out a magic stone used to test mental strength and handed it to Han Shuo, “Pour your mental powers into it. We can use the data from it to confirm whether your mental strength fits the criteria.”

As Han Shuo slowly infused mental strength into the magic stone, it slowly began to glow. When Han Shuo noticed that Ares was revealing a satisfied expression, he stopped infusing mental strength in order to not pass the archmage mental strength test in a surprising manner.

“Not bad, your mental strength has indeed reached the level of an archmage. Next, you can stand inside the boundary and cast one of the strongest spells you know. We can determine through the spell whether you have truly reached the level of an archmage!” Ares’s attitude towards Han Shuo was extremely good as he pointed towards the boundary kindly and said.

With the level of development of Han Shuo’s brain, his speed in gathering and releasing mental strength was ten times that of normal mages. Last time in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Forces testing, Han Shuo had understood that when other people tested their mental strength, the magic stone would glow slowly, but because Han Shuo’s brain was different from normal people’s, the speed at which he gathered mental strength was extremely quick. Thus, he pretty much instantly caused the magic stone to glow at the brightest luminosity.

During the test with the magic stone today, Han Shuo intentionally released his mental strength slowly, and didn’t completely release his mental strength of a grand magus in order to avoid unnecessary trouble. Therefore, he didn’t pass with any surprise.

“No need to stand in the boundary. Us necromancers don’t need to be that troublesome!” Han Shuo smiled lightly, then properly chanted out a necromancy spell. An evil knight, in pitch black armor, riding a warhorse

with both eyes spurting fire and carrying a huge bone stick appeared on the ground out of nowhere.

It was a publicly acknowledged fact that evil knights could only be summoned by archmage necromancers. When Han Shuo's evil knight appeared, it basically proved his level as an archmage. This was even more convincing than other powerful spells.

"God, you actually became an archmage from a magic apprentice in less than two years. This is too unbelievable! Oh yes, why did Dean Emma allow you to leave the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force? Her necromancy major shouldn't have an archmage necromancer yet. She should've tried to keep you," The moment Ares saw the evil knight appear, he knew that there was no need to say anything more. Han Shuo truly did possess the power of a necromancy archmage.

## Chapter 278: A crazy proposal

“So, can you confirm my qualifications now?” Han Shuo understood full well that his magical cultivation played a huge role in his achievement today. Another reason was that his luck was quite good.

“No problem. Please wait for a moment and I’ll complete everything the rest for you!” Ares replied readily and turned to nod at the archmage next to him. The baggy-robed archmage took Han Shuo’s documents to the third floor.

“Mister Ares, that person has come by again.” The young girl, who’d been waiting downstairs, tapped her way up and informed Ares.

Ares was stunned. He waved his hand and said, “Let him come up!”

Not long after, Candide came up with a remote expression. He was immediately a bit dazed upon seeing Han Shuo standing there.

Han Shuo was also stunned, as he hadn’t expected to meet Candide in a place like this. A glint flashed through his eyes, which quickly returned to normal. He stood still while still maintaining his smile.

“You old thing. Only now did you find time to spare to come visit me!” Ares laughed heartily. He seemed to have known Candide for a long time.

“I wouldn’t bother coming if I didn’t have something to ask. What, are you busy with something right now?” Candide swept a glance at Ares, then over at Han Shuo. He asked with a frown, pretending to not know who Han Shuo was at all.

“Hehe, nothing! The Babylon Academy of Magic and Force just produced a magic genius. It took him less than two years to go from a mage apprentice to archmage. This is truly a great thing! His records will become an important note in the Magic Association.” Ares pointed excitedly at Han Shuo and introduced him to Candide.

Candide too was clearly shocked. He truly hadn’t expected Han Shuo to have reached the rank of archmage necromancer. His eyes glinted as he stared at Han Shuo a few times over before opening his mouth to speak,

“Ares, if you don’t mind, I would like to have a private chat with this young magic genius.”

“I don’t mind, but I don’t know if he minds or not!” Ares glanced at Han Shuo, leaving it up to him.

Ares obviously didn’t know of the relationship between Han Shuo and Candide. Han Shuo understood what Candide was saying, so he turned to nod at Ares, “I have to wait for my documents anyway. Since I have nothing to do, I don’t mind chatting with him for a bit!”

“Alright, then I’ll go upstairs first. The rest of you guys can go downstairs. I won’t allow anyone else to come up!” Ares ordered the people on the second floor before turning to Candide with a smile, “His archmage certificate will be completed by the time you two are done chatting. Just come up and let me know then.”

“No need to nag, I already know what to do!” Candide likely had a very close relationship with Ares, as he impatiently urged the latter.

Waiting until Ares and his group left, Candide looked at Han Shuo in an odd manner and said, “I’ve just got news from the Valley of Sunshine that you killed Ferguson from the Church of Light. I was going to find you to get a better understanding of the situation. I didn’t expect you to be here, with the identity of a archmage necromancer to boot. You’ve truly given me a surprise!”

Han Shuo wasn’t able to suppress his heart’s desire during the chaos in the Valley of Sunshine. He had acted out madly, killing grand magus Ferguson of the Church of Light and heavily injured chief Adam of the House of Menlo. This news had spread all over the Valley of Sunshine. Candide had no reason to remain in the dark towards this matter as one of the Dark Mantle’s three heavyweights.

Han Shuo silently looked at Candide, knowing that he didn’t need to say anything about this matter since Candide already knew about it. On the other hand, he knew Candide would mention this, so he’d prepared something to say beforehand.

Seeing Han Shuo sink into silence and not say anything, Candide looked

raptly at him, saying in a low tone, “I don’t know how you managed to kill Ferguson. I likely wouldn’t be able to kill him myself. Ferguson is dead now, but with the great influence of the Church of Light, you’ll meet an endless amount of trouble.

“Moreover, I heard that you cast the lost spell Corpse Resurrection? I think the Calamity Church will certainly try to recruit you. These two churches have a massive amount of believers all over the Profound Continent. They have dozens of methods to deal with you, so how are you going to deal with it?”

“Different situations call for different measures. If they dare to act against me, I’ll kill all of them without leaving a single one behind!” Han Shuo’s face was ruthless. His body naturally emitted a killing intent as he said in a voice as cold as ice.

Han Shuo didn’t need to conceal anything since Candide already knew about this matter. When he released the killing aura from his body, a figure at Candide’s level immediately reacted.

Nodding his head, Candide replied with a grave expression, “I believe that your power is by no means weak. However, the Church of Light doesn’t only have Ferguson. They don’t even need to deal with you directly. They only need to pressure the king. I think His Majesty won’t run the risk of offending the church for a minor character like you.”

Han Shuo was even more silent upon hearing these words. With his current intelligence and Candide’s reminder, Han Shuo could naturally understand what he was trying to say.

Taking a deep breath, Candide said, “You’re someone that I brought into the Dark Mantle myself. I’m very happy that you have such a great amount of power. Now that you have the identity of an archmage, I will give you an idea!”

Han Shuo’s thoughts raced, he asked in surprise, “An idea?”

Han Shuo had already been mentally prepared on how to live his life afterwards before he had killed Ferguson, so he wasn’t too worried. If the Lancelot Empire sold him out under the pressure from the Church of

Light, Han Shuo was confident that he could use the cemetery of death to escape. However, it'd be more difficult to move around from then on.

Now that Candide had an idea, Han Shuo naturally wanted to know if there was a way to deal with this two pronged attack against him.

“Be it the Church of Light or the Calamity Church, both are religious institutions. Their power can't dictate the movement of the Lancelot Empire, despite their widespread influences. The Church of Light is a little more difficult to deal with since they act in the light. However, if you can somehow prove your strength to be powerful enough to make His Majesty value you more than the Church of Light, given my understanding of him, the king won't care one whit about the church's pressure.”

“As long as his Majesty is willing to protect you, even the Church of Light wouldn't dare to do anything to you within the Lancelot Empire. After all, they aren't powerful enough to destroy the Lancelot Empire.” Candide looked at Han Shuo and voiced his advice.

Han Shuo was enlightened by Candide's words. What a country needed most was indeed talented people. Those with potential were especially important to the future of the country. The Lancelot Empire had been able to maintain its strong standing for so many years due to the efforts of deity Ayermike Cotton.

A sacred magus could release a terrifyingly strong magic that could directly destroy a city. A deity at the demigod level was even more powerful and could create unimaginable destruction. It was precisely due to the existence and assistance of Ayermike Cotton that the Lancelot Empire became so prosperous.

After many years passed, a supernaturally powerful figure was still the most important resource to a country, particularly holy existences, such as sacred swordmasters, sacred magi, and sacred knights. The number of powerful figures was the best basis on which to determine the strength of a country. If Han Shuo could prove to the king that he could reach such a level, the king wouldn't be concerned about the threats from the Church of Light and would even wholeheartedly ensure his safety.

“Candide, do you mean...?” Han Shuo understood his advice, but hadn’t thought of a specific way to actually do it. After all, words alone weren’t enough to prove to others that one was very powerful, were they?

“The simplest way is to challenge others and prove your strength through challenging powerful people. I’ve heard that you’ve been hanging out with Lawrence in the city’s Northern Guard. What can Lawrence hide from me? It would actually be faster for you to obtain a noble title through challenging others. When your strength arouses interest from His Majesty, you’ll be able to become a noble without any accomplishments to your name. Why bother with trying to achieve military feats?” Candide mocked, seemingly dismissive of Han Shuo and Lawrence’s plans.

“Challenge, challenge powerful people. Good idea...” Han Shuo muttered to himself. He then took a deep breath and sincerely thanked Candide, “Many thanks lord Candide. I know what to do now!”

Nodding his head, Candide said casually, “If it weren’t for the fact that you are under my charge, and you brought back Ayermike Cotton’s notebook, I wouldn’t go to such lengths for you. I already came up with this plan to help you once I heard that you’d killed Ferguson. Challenge the people listed on this scroll one by one. You can kill them all, as they’ve committed crimes worthy of death, but have managed to escape the punishment of the Empire’s laws. Even the Dark Mantle can’t find any evidence to catch them, so we want to borrow your ability to execute them.”

“Since you have the power to kill Ferguson, it won’t be hard to execute these people openly and fairly. I will help record your credit. You can quickly gain fame by killing these people. As for the king, I’ll be responsible for communicating with him and obtaining the title of viscount for you if all goes well. Not only will His Majesty not exert pressure on you due to the Church of Light, but he can even warn them against you. As your position and fame rise, that kid Lawrence will be very excited. This is really killing many birds with one stone!”

Candide laughed craftily with a sinister face after finishing his speech. It seemed like he had considered this for a long time, and was very smug



about this idea.

“Master Candide, why do I feel like I’m being used?!” Han Shuo was flabbergasted. He understood that this method was good. However, upon seeing Candide laugh so sinisterly, he still felt that the old man helping him was only one aspect, and the main purpose was to use him to eradicate opposing elements.

Rolling his eyes at Han Shuo, Candide said, “Consider this a mission. I’ll record the credit under your name. These damn dogs thought they could escape from my palm? Heh heh, this time, you’ll all die together!”

“Understood!” Han Shuo nodded in agreement. He knew from Candide’s insidious sneer that the old man already had some sort of plan.

“Good. I still have some magic knowledge to consult Ares about. Ayermike’s notebook is truly too profound. even I couldn’t fully understand and have to ask that old thing!” Candide complained and started walking upstairs. At the door, Han Shuo saw him release some magic to dispel the previous enchantment formed before their conversation had begun. Then Candide called out, urging, “Come, quickly give this brat his certificate! He’s very impatient!”

“Coming!” Ares replied as he came down with a slight smile. He walked over to Han Shuo and handed him the certificate before saying with a smile, “Congratulations Bryan, with this certified proof from the Magic Association, you are now officially an archmage.”

“Thank you.” Han Shuo replied with a smile. He glanced at Candide, who was looking on with a sinister face, secretly cursing in his heart before walking downstairs.

“Congratulations, you’re something alright! Already an archmage necromancer at such a young age!” As Han Shuo reached the first floor, the receptionist offered her congratulations with admiration.

Han Shuo nodded and flashed a bright, radiant smile at the girl before taking a direct path away from the Magic Association.

The girl blushed at his brilliant smile, her heart beating many times

faster than normal. She secretly thought that he was so tall, young, and handsome!

Han Shuo was one meter ninety centimeters tall and possessed a natural evil temperament due to his practice of demonic magic. Him attracting the attention of the opposite sex was simply a matter of course.

“First target – Colbert, a swordmaster who’s raped and murdered seven girls. Currently residing in the outskirts of the Empire’s Bimson City, mayor of Billow, title of baron!” Han Shuo raked his gaze over the list that Candide had given him after leaving the Magic Association. He smiled coldly as he walked towards the Empire’s transportation matrix.

# Chapter 279: The arrogant challenger

Lancelot Empire, in a small town named Bellow on the outskirts of Bimson City.

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Mayor Colbert had just finished eating a snack under the sunlight and was humming a little song as he lazily lay on the highest, most luxurious balcony in town. He squinted at the town girls walking around, trying to decide whose house he would visit to relax for the evening.

This small town wasn't big, but it could still produce a few thousands gold coins in tax revenue every year. Colbert could live somewhat comfortably off of this money. From time to time, when his interest was roused, he could randomly use brute force or abuse his privilege on the women in town. No one dared say anything.

That was because he had the title of a baron and the power of mayor, and he himself was a powerful swordmaster. All of these conditions were more than enough to make him an emperor of this small town.

"Ai, when will this kind of life end?!" A civilian had just returned from the mountains and was complaining in a low voice.

"I heard that Roots' wife was raped by Colbert again. This is the ninth time this year. How about we leave Bellow? This is no way to live!" Another civilian let out a long sigh and said helplessly.

"Mhm, we need to be a careful if we want to leave. We will die very miserably if he finds out. Truly evil!"

"Excuse me, is this Bellow?" Someone suddenly asked while the two were whispering to each other. The speaker was a very tall youth with a bright smile on his handsome face.

"That's right. Young man, what did you come here for?" One of them asked, puzzled.

"Does your mayor go by the name Colbert?" Han Shuo smiled and asked again.

The person nodded, his expression changing slightly as he added with disgust, "You know our mayor? And what do you do?"

"I have some small matters, where does he live?" Seeing this civilian reveal an expression of disgust upon hearing Colbert's name, Han Shuo immediately understood the situation in his heart.

"Go straight ahead. The biggest, most luxurious house you see is where he lives!" The other person answered then pulled his friend away from Han Shuo, whispering, "Don't you want to live anymore? You see how tall and strong he is? He's definitely a friend of that bastard Colbert. Don't bring trouble upon yourself!"

The two whispered back and forth as they quickly left after throwing Han Shuo a disdainful look. Han Shuo's sensitive hearing caught it all. He secretly thought that this Colbert was truly devoid of conscience. Even as a mayor of this small town, there wasn't a bad thing that he hadn't done.

Han Shuo quickly walked to the biggest house and said to the guard at the gate, "I want to meet mayor Colbert."

"Who are you?" The guard frowned and threw Han Shuo a glance as he replied.

The three yin demons surveyed the rooms in the house and took note of every detail for Han Shuo. He smiled and said, "I heard that mayor Colbert was a powerful swordmaster. This time I've come especially to challenge him to a fight. Please report this for me!"

"The mayor has no interest in you. You'd better leave while you can!" The guard rudely replied, seeming to have no intentions of making a report.

Taking a step forward, Han Shuo broke apart the door. He raised his voice and shouted, "Colbert, you coward! As a swordmaster, you still don't dare to accept my challenge?"

"Boy, are you purposely trying to make trouble?" The two guards were instantly shocked. They drew their swords, about to make a move.

Han Shuo fanned out two slaps, pushing back the two guards before they

could see anything. Smiling as he look at the two clutching their faces, Han Shuo said leisurely, "It would be best if you two were not to seek your own deaths!"

Han Shuo's loud shout echoed so far that half of Billow heard it. The townspeople immediately stopped what they were doing to come watch when they heard that someone had come to challenge Colbert.

Colbert had been squinting, leering randomly, when he obviously heard Han Shuo's voice. He shouted furiously from the high balcony, "Where do you come from, brat? You dare come to Billow to cause trouble!"

A dozen soldiers rushed out from inside the house to accompany Colbert's shout. Afterwards, Colbert walked out from the broken door with a cold face and shiny set of silver armor.

"What the hell are you looking at?! You damnable bunch of lowly people, scram!" The first thing Colbert did after walking out was roll his eyes and glare, cursing the civilians. Then he angrily looked at Han Shuo and said, "Little brat, you deliberately came to cause trouble, didn't you?"

"I have heard of Baron Colbert's great name as a swordmaster. I also train in the ways of the sword and was passing through Billow, so I hoped to ask your Lordship for some guidance. But I don't know whether your Lordship... has the guts to accept?" Han Shuo smiled blandly, waiting for Colbert's answer.

Colbert glared at Han Shuo and said in rage, "You, a little brat who doesn't know the height of the sky, dares to challenge me?! You really must be tired of living. Good! I accept your challenge. However, don't blame me if you die!"

"Of course!" Han Shuo replied straightforwardly.

"You guys back off. See how I kill him!" Colbert waved his subordinates away. He drew his sword, taking a deep breath. He suddenly calmed down.

"Young man, I'll let you attack first!" Colbert put on a generous face and said calmly to Han Shuo.

"Alright!" Han Shuo didn't drag his feet. As soon as he finished speaking,

he walked calmly to Colbert and deployed a punch.

“Oh?!” Colbert was a little stunned seeing Han Shuo not take out his sword. However, he was even more surprised upon seeing no fighting aura radiating from that punch. Feeling strange, Colbert sneered and raised his sword to stab right back at the punch.

“Heh heh, courting death!” Han Shuo also spared a moment to jeer. His magical yuan condensed, dazzling red light bursting out from the punch.

The red light instantly surged and destroyed the milky white aura surrounding Colbert’s sword. The punch smashed into the sword, making a metallic clang. A current of hot air burst out, accompanied by Colbert’s tragic scream. He was blown away along with his sword and couldn’t stop vomiting blood.

“Oh my god, the demon is heavily wounded!”

“Great! I hope he just dies this time! We’ll be free then!”

“He’d best die, or Billow Town won’t have a day of peace!”

After seeing Colbert become heavily injured after just one hit, the townspeople, who were watching from a distance away, became as joyous as if it were a holiday and murmured in low voices.

“I, I have no hatred nor injustice with you, so why did you come for me?” His mouth overflowing with blood, Colbert immediately understood that Han Shuo’s strength was far above his after being heavily injured by a single punch. However, he didn’t know how or when he’d offended Han Shuo.

“Heh heh, because you deserve to die!” Han Shuo smiled coldly. He slowly approached Colbert and said, “I am Bryan, and you are the first!”

Bang! echoed a blow. Colbert had no strength to resist when the punch smashed down on his head. He immediately bled from all seven orifices and died on the spot.

“I fairly and openly killed him in a challenge, and all of you are witness to this.” Han Shuo turned to the lackeys, expressing that he didn’t do it on

purpose. After saying this, he left Billow Town in style under the shocked, puzzled, and fearful gazes of the people.

The Empire wouldn't pursue the matter if one killed the opponent after a challenge was accepted. Candide had explained clearly to Han Shuo earlier. The old man would take care of the aftermath, so Han Shuo wasn't worried at all.

"Second target – water archmage Deborah in Bimson City. Killed a family of eighteen people three years ago in a magic shop over a magic staff. The aftermath was handled cleanly, leaving no clues. Successfully escaped the punishment of the Empire. Mm, she's the one!" Han Shuo took out the paper Candide gave him and skimmed it.

Candide had put his heart into it indeed. Each target was in close proximity to the previous one, making it convenient for Han Shuo to act.

Two hours later, In Bimson City, at the residence of Count Chapman Dean.

Han Shuo wore a mage outfit, his hand grasping the white bone staff. He gracefully appeared at the residence of Count Chapman Dean and spoke to the guard with a smile, "I'm looking for the honored water archmage Deborah."

"Follow me." This guard saw Han Shuo in a mage outfit with the white bone staff in his hand to boot. Therefore, he didn't dare be discourteous and led Han Shuo in respectfully.

When they arrived inside a big courtyard, the guard spoke, "Please wait a moment, I'll go inform Master Deborah!"

A while later, a short, slightly fat woman of around forty years of age walked out. She wore a luxurious magic robe and a blue space ring on her finger. She frowned suspiciously at Han Shuo and asked, "Who are you? I don't think I know you?"

Nodding, Han Shuo answered with a smile, "Of course, this is our first time meeting. However, I have admired your great name for a long time. This time, I came here to ask for your guidance on some magic knowledge,

I hope you agree!”

Upon hearing Han Shuo’s words, Deborah impatiently waved her hand, “And I wondered who you were. Don’t care. Scram now. Don’t make me angry, damn brat!”

Sweeping a look at the guard, Deborah reprimanded, “Next time clearly ask who the visitor is. Don’t think that all mages are acquainted with me. I have no time to deal with this immature brat!”

Finishing her speech, Deborah treated Han Shuo as though he were nonexistent and walked back inside, intending to continue fiddling around with some new magic potions.

“Ugly old granny, you don’t dare to accept my challenge? Or do you think that you’re so ugly that you wouldn’t want to let others look at you for too long?” Still with a smile on his face, Han Shuo deliberately played the old trick, using vicious words to anger his opponent.

Sure enough, Deborah immediately fumed over Han Shuo’s malice. She abruptly turned around, staring sinisterly at Han Shuo and said with a cold smile, “Fine. I accept your challenge. I’ll send you on your way to the underworld.”

A light flashed as a blue magic staff appeared in her hand. Deborah chanted an incantation and three men, five meters tall and each made of water, suddenly appeared out of nowhere on the rooftops and shot towards Han Shuo. The water men wielded sharp ice awls that emitted a brilliant cold light as they stabbed towards Han Shuo.

“Interesting!” Han Shuo let out an odd laugh. The white bone staff in his hand trembled as he quickly chanted an incantation. A white bone shield suddenly appeared in front of his body.

The five ice awls were faster than the water men and rammed straight at the shield’s surface with a huge amount of force. The ice awls shattered as cracks also appeared in the shield.

Han Shuo unhurriedly shrank the white bone shield’s size. The white bone staff once again shone. Two hate warriors, one evil knight, a dozen



zombies, and twenty-odd skeletal warriors in addition to a team of flying gargoyles appeared in the air, filling the yard.

The evil knight rode a warhorse spitting fire, his hand holding an enormous bone lance. He stabbed out at the five meter tall ice man, piercing a big hole through the latter. The evil knight ordered his skeletal warhorse to spew out a breath of fire, and the rest of the ice men evaporated into mist with a sizzling sound.

“You, you’re actually an archmage necromancer!” Deborah was terrified, her voice trembling as she shouted.

Necromancy mages were at a disadvantage against light mages of the same level. However, they held a major advantage against other magic majors due to their ability to summon powerful creatures. If it hadn’t been for the disappearance of the realms of grand magi and sacred magi as chronicled in the Necromancy Codex, the number of necromancy mages wouldn’t be as few as they were now.

When the Canopy of Necromancy spread out across the sky, the speed and strength of the dark creatures inside suddenly increased immensely. Caught within the Canopy of Necromancy, two water men were surrounded by a huge number of dark creatures.

The evil knight in particular now charged forward with terrifying force directly towards water archmage Deborah. The hovering gargoyles flashed out as deadly shadows, one after the other in, a manner that appeared very fast and strange, thanks to the aid of the Canopy of Necromancy.

Han Shuo didn’t need to rely on the little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie nor his magical cultivation in this fight. He had gained an absolute advantage using purely necromancy magic alone. Except for light archmages, no other mage at the same level as him could be his match. Even if the opponent was a light archmage, Han Shuo could still easily kill them as the little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie were all immune to light magic.

Therefore, Han Shuo was invincible when fighting mages of the same rank, even without using demonic magic!

# Chapter 280: Infamy

“Damn it!” Deborah cursed in a low voice. She had clearly felt that something was wrong and immediately retreated to her room. She was actually very quick, despite her short and fat stature. She intended on hiding in her room to hinder the attacks from the dark creatures.

She released a high level water magic ice spell, creating a white fog that covered a vast area. A crystal clear ice wall sealed the door and emitted white mist beneath the sunlight.

The evil knight spurred his warhorse forward, holding a bone lance bigger than his body, as he charged. He raised the bone spear and stabbed fiercely at the ice wall.

Clang!

Miraculously, the ice wall condensed by the ice spell actually had great defensive ability. The huge bone lance had created such a huge impact upon colliding with the ice wall, but could only drill a small hole. It couldn't break through the defenses of the ice wall.

“Ice Blade Slash!” Deborah's shout echoed from inside the room.

Cold wind howled as snow scattered across the sky. Blades of ice spun as they shot towards the dark creatures that occupied the yard. The low level skeletal warriors couldn't withstand the ice blades, causing their bones to scatter across the ground. Even the flying gargoyles fell down in succession under the attack of the ice blades.

However, higher ranked creatures, such as zombie warriors and hate warriors, still stood firmly after being struck by the ice blades. The group slowly advanced towards the room that Deborah was in, joining forces with the evil knight and assaulting the ice wall.

Han Shuo smiled coldly as he stood proudly in the yard under the Canopy of Necromancy. He leisurely watched the fight between the dark creatures and Deborah, and secretly exulted in the most appropriate way to use necromancy magic.

Clang!

The ice wall finally crumbled into pieces beneath the ferocious stabbing of the bone lance in the evil knight's hand. He rushed into Deborah's room with his warhorse. Two hate warriors and several zombie warriors followed behind and instantly surrounded the room.

"I surrender, I surrender!" Deborah paled in horror and involuntarily screamed.

When the evil knight destroyed the ice wall and charged into the room with its necromancy troops, Deborah knew that defeat was nigh. She was instinctively scared by the ferocious, heartless eyes of the evil knight and immediately shouted out in a desperate attempt to preserve her poor life.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

A dozen bone spears hurtled through the windows, two of which ambushed Deborah behind. Deborah had yet to react when they pierced through her chubby body and pushed her towards the evil knight.

The evil knight raised his huge bone lance up high. When the lance fell, Deborah's head also went flying. A stream of blood spewed out and fell upon a smoking green potion, causing it to blow up.

"Murder, murder!" The guard, who'd led Han Shuo in earlier, was instantly horrified when he realized from Deborah's tragic scream that she must've been killed. He shouted loudly while running to the courtyard in the back. Through the yin demons' surveillance, Han Shuo noticed troops quickly approaching in the distance. Since his target Deborah had been handled, Han Shuo wasted no time. He immediately sent the necromancy creatures back and cut off the mental strength that'd been used to maintain the Canopy of Necromancy, before leaving the yard using the levitation skills.

Over the next five days, Han Shuo used the transportation matrices to visit various cities and towns in the Empire to challenge powerful people. Not only did he win every fight, he even killed his opponents on the spot. His infamy speedily spread through the Empire.

Han Shuo's identity was slowly acknowledged amongst the ranks of the powerful in the Empire thanks to Candide deliberately spreading the news. Many nobles heard of this powerful young man's story and expressed their strong interest in him.

In a strictly guarded, luxurious hall in the Lancelot Imperial Palace, His Majesty the King, Uhtred Lancelot wore a loose robe, sitting on his throne as if waiting for something.

Uhtred was almost sixty years old and his body had become increasingly weaker due to his licentious youth. He looked thin despite his big bones and his hair was still black and glossy thanks to the treatment of special magic potions. It was a pity that his complexion didn't look too good.

"Your Majesty, Lord Candide has arrived!" A guard suddenly came in and softly informed.

This guard was clad in a shiny armor, his bearing cold and calm. His entire body emitted the air of a top expert. It could be seen from the insignia on his armor that he was a powerful sky rider.

"Let him in!" Uhtred instructed in an even tone upon hearing of Candide's arrival.

After a while, Candide respectfully came in with his darkened face and said in a low tone, "Candide greets Your Majesty!"

"Sit. I heard that one of your subordinates is a kid who has become very famous in these two days. What's going on?" Uhtred glanced at Candide and asked casually.

"He is called Bryan and was indeed recruited by me. This kid's strength is extraordinary, and his mindset is mature. He hasn't been part of the Dark Mantle for long, but has already helped with several major events. Oh, the notebook of Ayermike Cotton was also brought back from the Dark Forest by him. He's truly a rare genius." Candide explained in a respectful manner after sitting down.

"So he's Bryan, hehe, interesting, interesting. I remember that just yesterday, the Red Archbishop Kosse from the Church of Light sent people

to ask for Bryan. I didn't expect to hear about him today. Candide ah Candide, isn't this a little too coincidental?" Uhtred spoke in a pleasant voice, as if he was recalling the past with an old friend.

Candide was secretly shocked, and he hastened to explain, "Your Majesty, please pardon this offense. This was arranged by me with the purpose of tying up some loose ends that are unfavorable to the Empire's peace. Bryan's strength is extraordinary. He not only passed the archmage test of the Magic Association, but has also mastered a special cultivation technique. The Empire needs such a young rare genius like him."

Uhtred looked at Candide and coldly snorted, "Candide, you think this kid is worthy enough for me to worsen our relations with the Church of Light?"

"I do think he is! Bryan is only eighteen this year. He entered the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force and became an archmage necromancer from a mage apprentice in less than two years. His skills are excellent. The future of such a person is limitless."

"It's just that he practices necromancy magic and has mastered some knowledge that is disadvantageous to the Church of Light, so they have deliberately acted against him. There was a light grand magus called Ferguson in the Valley of Sunshine. Bryan ultimately killed him and earned their rage."

"Being able to kill a light grand magus already proves his power. On the other hand, the most important point is that Bryan is still very young, so his future development is limitless. I think such a talented person shouldn't be let go. It's worth it even if we have to offend the Church of Light!" Candide answered respectfully.

Uhtred's eyes flashed upon listening to Candide's rant. He slightly straightened his body and looked at Candide, saying, "From an apprentice to an archmage necromancer in less than two years, and able to kill a light grand magus? Candide, are you sure that all this is true?"

"Your Majesty, you also know that my wife is the Dean of the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, so I'm absolutely sure this is true. I gave him

the order to challenge some notorious powerful people because I was originally doubtful of his strength. Now given the information that I've gathered, he indeed has the power."

"The rarest thing is that, such a genius like him actually has a very clean background. He has a strong sense of belonging to the Empire and is willing to serve the Empire. I believe he will grow bigger and might even become another figure like Karel Ascot as long as we give him the proper amount of time. Oh right, he's also the boyfriend of Phoebe, the most beloved female disciple of Karel Ascot!" Candide continued to explain.

"Oh, you say he has some sort of relationship with Karel Ascot?" Uhtred's face finally changed, surprised as he asked Candide.

"Yes. Not only so, he's even a good friend of His Royal Highness Lawrence. You know that His Highness studied military strategy at the Knight Academy, and is a disciple of Karel Ascot as well. The relationship between Phoebe and Han Shuo is very good. Last time in Valen City, Han Shuo contributed the most in exposing Bob Ascher's conspiracy." Candide was striking while the iron was hot upon seeing Uhtred reveal his surprise.

Uhtred fell silent as he listened to Candide. He thought for a moment before opening his mouth to speak, "Is that so? Then this Bryan is very interesting from what you've said. Oh, I heard that great swordmaster Leah Cain of the Brut Merchant Alliance has come to Ossen City. He's been quite arrogant these past couple of days. I lost three experts of his level to that guy. If that Bryan is as powerful as you say he is, let him challenge Leah Cain. If he can defeat that guy as proof for his talent, not only will I be willing to offend the Church of Light for him, but I can even bestow him with a title of nobility."

"Humph! This crazy swordsman Leah Cain has been too notorious. He fled to our Lancelot Empire after having offended sacred magus Reynold Dila in Brut. Such a despicable cowardly absconder actually dares to act so wildly? He's seeking death!"

"Understood!" Candide was slightly horrified upon hearing that Uhtred

wanted Bryan to challenge Leah Cain. He was silent for a while, then secretly let out a long sigh as he agreed with resignation.

# Chapter 281: Getting famous

Han Shuo was very busy over the next couple of days. He traveled through the majority of the Lancelot Empire through the teleportation matrixes. Within these few days, Han Shuo had killed three archmages, four swordmasters, and a great swordmaster all through challenges.

At the start, the challenges were rather smooth because Han Shuo's age was extremely deceiving. His enemies would think that he was of no threat, and would furiously accept the challenge after being provoked by Han Shuo. Later on, after continuous successful challenges made Han Shuo's name infamous, and when many powerful people linked together the identity of the people who had been killed, they silently started to have their own ideas.

Towards the end, the last three powerhouses on the list suddenly disappeared. Even after the Dark Mantle conducted thorough searches, they were unable to obtain any intelligence. Whenever Han Shuo reached a city, all of the experts within city would become worried, regardless of whether they'd done anything that they should feel guilty about. All of them were afraid that Han Shuo would look for them, and so they all disappeared under the guise of travelling.

These people couldn't help it as the people that died in Han Shuo's hands in recent days were all heavyweights. If they did not accept Han Shuo's challenge, then it would have a huge impact on their reputation. But once they accepted it, they might lose their lives. That's why they had no other choice but to find an excuse and hide.

When a great swordmaster died in Han Shuo's hands, the caused the notorious name of the young expert Bryan to reach its climax, causing the rest of the names on the list to disappear. That was why Han Shuo could only return to Ossen city for further instructions from Candide.

"Lord Candide, it's not that I didn't try my best. The three people in the end disappeared completely. It seems that I can only wait until you find them," Han Shuo and Candide were in a room in a small room at the



north of the city.

“You did very well. His Majesty has already heard about your work, there is temporarily no need to take care of those three guys. We have another troublesome matter on our hands. If you can complete this task, His Majesty will definitely help you and grant you a noble

title,” Candide said with a low voice. He frowned and taking a sip from the cup of tea in his hands.

“Oh? What is it?” Han Shuo momentarily blanked then asked.

“Leah Cain of the Brut Merchant Alliance also has the power of a great swordmaster. This person is titled the Crazy Swordsman. He is extremely vicious and savage, but have great power. He’s currently in our Ossen city. In the recent few days, he’s challenged three great swordmaster in Ossen City and was extremely disrespectful after winning. This has caused His Majesty to greatly dislike him.”

“His Majesty means to have you challenge Leah Cain. If you can defeat Leah Cain, then His Majesty will ignore the Church of Light’s pressure and fully protect you and bestow upon you a noble title. It’s just that Leah Cain’s strength is extraordinary, and possessed the strength of a great swordmaster more than ten years ago. According to the Dark Mantle’s news, this Leah Cain is very close with His Highness the first prince, Prince Charles. Due to your relationship with Lawrence, I’m afraid that you might lose your life if you are unable to beat him!” Candide looked truly worried about Han Shuo.

“Where is this Leah Cain right now?” Han Shuo was not afraid at all as he asked Candide with a smile.

“In the Garden House at the northern part of the city. The Garden House is the property of the first prince, Prince Charles. Other people doesn’t know this, but the Dark Mantle naturally does. It is also through him staying at this place that we guessed that he is related to the first prince. What, are you planning on challenging Leah Cain? Although they’re both in the great swordmaster realm, the difference in strength between one just entering it and one that has been in it for ten odd years is really large.

Furthermore, Leah Cain is called the Crazy Swordsman, he will be extremely difficult to deal with!" Candide exclaimed.

"Don't worry, I will deal with him!" Han Shuo finished the entire cup of tea in one gulp and directly stood up. Then he smiled, "To be honest, I kind of got addicted to the continuous challenges recently!"

In the recent few days, Han Shuo had continuously fought against several powerhouses, causing him to subtly feel like his strength was about to break through to the next level. The only way to quickly improve in the bloodlust realm was through battle and slaughter. When he did so against master, his strength improved even more quickly.

In eight continuous battles, Han Shuo challenged archmages and swordmasters, all of them powerhouses who were rather famous. He challenged a great swordmaster at the very end. That person was very dangerous. It was only through that fight that Han Shuo felt like that he showed signs of a breakthrough.

By now, Han Shuo definitely wouldn't use the little skeleton, earth elite zombie, or wood elite zombie. With his magical cultivation in the bloodlust realm, he was able to face a great swordmaster head on. If he didn't use the magical advantages he had, Han Shuo still had strength equivalent to a great swordmaster.

Leah Cain was possibly a bit stronger than a great swordmaster. Perhaps Han Shuo might run into some trouble, but if he used the little skeleton, the earth elite zombie, and the wood elite zombie, Han Shuo believed that he would absolutely succeed in killing Leah Cain, and so didn't pay heed to Candide's worries at all.

"Be careful, this guy is just very dangerous. He is famous for being hard to deal with in the Brut Merchant Alliance. Don't relax your guard!" Seeing that Han Shuo was walking outside, Candide issued a reminder as he was still worried.

"Understood, I'll be going then!" Han Shuo replied, then walked outside.

"Bryan!" Just after leaving the inn, he heard Emily's voice ring out from a carriage at the corner of the street. Chester, dressed like a carriage driver,

waved his hand towards Han Shuo.

The Dark Mantle's information network was everywhere, adding onto the relationship between Emily and Candide, it was not hard if she wanted to find Han Shuo. Han Shuo also knew that Emily would come and find him. That why he hadn't been surprised at all when he heard Emily's voice.

Han Shuo looked around and suddenly saw a carriage parked afar. The knights at the entrance of the carriage were all familiar faces. The curtains of the carriage were lifted to reveal Lawrence's face. Lawrence was looking at him with a face of excitement as if he had a lot to say.

Han Shuo first stepped towards Emily and said, "Wait a moment for me."

With that, Han Shuo then quickly walked in front of Lawrence's carriage and called out softly, "What are you doing here?"

"Hehe, I accidentally found Madam Emily's carriage hurrying over here. I thought about it then followed, I didn't think that I would actually find you," Lawrence gave a soft, odd laugh as he said to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo understood that Lawrence might know about the relationship between him and Emily, so he merely rolled his eyes at Lawrence without saying anything. "Alright, what did you come to find me for?"

"Haha, I heard that you beat several experts in a row, and that you now have an enormous reputation. I didn't think that you were no longer hiding yourself and had started to truly reveal your prowess. This is for the best! In the last few days, I went to the royal palace twice, His Majesty asked me some things about you, seeming to be very interested at you. This is a good sign!" Lawrence was clearly very happy as he spoke with a smile.

"Of course he is paying attention to me. His Majesty told me to challenge Leah Cain, so I'm thinking about killing him now." Han Shuo said plainly.

The moment he said that, Lawrence felt shocked, then insanely happy as he said, "Leah Cain is on the side of the first prince, Prince Charles. I am

certain about this through my own means. Bryan, are you confident in killing him?”

“What do you think?” Han Shuo looked towards Lawrence with a smile that was not quite like a smile, and replied with a question.

“Of course you do. You are very miraculous, I believe you! How about this, I’ll help you since you are going to challenge Leah Cain and spread this far and wide. As long as you can beat Leah Cain, your notorious name can be bleached. Hehe, since Leah Cain is someone of the Brut Alliance, there is probably no one in our nation who likes him!” Lawrence laughed evilly.

“Do as you’d like. If there’s nothing else, then I’ll find you after killing Leah Cain!” Han Shuo said.

“Nothing else, nothing else. Go and busy yourself with your own business!” Lawrence smiled strangely as he looked towards Emily’s direction.

From Lawrence’s expression and speech, Han Shuo understood that the former already knew about the relationship between himself and Emily. This was likely because he’d noticed Han Shuo and Emily hiding behind a fake mountain and getting intimate during his family’s banquet. He become even more certain about this after the events of Valen City.

However, with Han Shuo and Lawrence’s relationship right now, Han Shuo naturally believed that Lawrence would seal his mouth shut. There was nothing good about this for Lawrence at all if it came to light.

“Mhmm, I’ll be off then!” Han Shuo replied, then turned and walked towards Emily’s direction.

“Let’s go!” said Han Shuo after arriving at Chester’s location and entered Emily’s carriage.

“Mmm... Bryan, too miraculous. That pill was too miraculous!” Emily leapt into his embrace the moment Han Shuo entered the carriage, grabbing him tightly and voluntarily presenting her lips, in obvious emotional agitation.

Chester acted like normal, pretending that he hadn't heard anything as he slowly drove the carriage down the street.

After Chester's carriage left, Candide gazed at the direction the carriage left in out of the shadow of a corner. He muttered, "I was wondering why Emily would help him so much. So this is why. This brat's courage for lust is truly huge, he's with Emily alright. God, what a playboy!"

# Chapter 282: The reputé of a genius

At the Garden House in the northern part of the city, lush palm trees filled the structure that was suffused with the fresh feeling of spring. The garden had been arranged in an exquisite fashion, with all sorts of flowers emitting pleasant fragrances, and had been planted in the surroundings. Several maids moved carefully amongst the flowers, watering and pruning them.

First prince Charles was squinting as he conversed with a crude-looking man on a soft patch of grass. The latter had two criss cross scars on his neck, was a meter and seventy five centimeters tall, and looked very sturdy with his brawny arms and legs. His eyes glinted with a brutal, beastly light.

“Mister Leah, olou shouldn’t have challenged those three great swordmasters as soon as you arrived. You’ve just arrived here from the Brut Merchant Alliance after all, and our nation is prejudiced against foreigners. If my father finds out that you’re one of my people, this could affect his impression of me.” Charles frowned with displeasure, clearly irritated by Leah Cain’s unauthorized acts.

Leah Cain leered and chuckled, saying brazenly, “Your Highness first prince, although I’ve joined your banner upon arriving in the Lancelot Empire, I don’t have to listen to you for all matters. I am a swordsman first and foremost. Since I’ve come all the way to the Lancelot Empire, I will challenge the local experts as according to my habits. How else will I be able to improve my skills?”

Damn it, what a brute! Why don’t you go challenge Karel Ascot if you’ve the balls to! Let’s see how horribly you die then! Charles cursed inwardly, his expression darkening even further. He turned to Leah Cain, “Let’s just drop this matter. I hope you tell me before you do anything like this next time. Do you remember the Bryan whom I mentioned to you? The one I wanted you to help me kill?”

Leah Cain blanked momentarily, then nodded. “Oh, the kid with the strange techniques that you mentioned last time? What? Has he appeared

in Ossen City? Do you want me to kill him today?"

Shaking his head ruefully, Charles said, "The situation is different now. Bryan's reputations has greatly increased over the past couple of days during his leave of absence from Ossen City. His reputation has grown greatly after challenging these experts, and now, word on the street is that he's returned to challenge you."

"After this news was released, all of the nobles and experts within Ossen City began paying close attention to this. You've been training in the Garden House, so you may not have been aware of this, but even my father is interested in this matter now. It's no longer appropriate for you to kill him secretly. What I mean for you to do is why not go and challenge him directly then kill him in that way? No one will be able to say anything about this then. What do you think?"

"No! Absolutely not! Who am I? I'm Leah Cain! How can I lower myself to challenge this unweaned brat? Hmph, I'd welcome it if he challenged me, but I'd never go to the door of an infamous kid just to challenge him!" Leah Cain rejected this suggestion soundly, with no room for discussion.

Sitting in his chair, Charles viciously swiped at the arm rests and cursed inwardly again. If it wasn't for you really having some skill to your name, I'd already have someone kill you where you stand, damn it! You're just a brute! How dare you repeatedly talk back to me??

"Alright then. There are many people paying attention to this matter now. There have been some people circling the Garden House for the past two days. They're likely waiting for Bryan to come and challenge you. I'm not at liberty to come find you. You just need to mind yourself. If Bryan comes, you must kill him immediately to prevent further troubles from developing!" Charles was a bit irritated as he stood up after speaking to Leah.

"Don't worry. He'll be dead without a doubt if he dares to challenge me! Hmph, all young men are asking to die these days by acting so cockily! I'll have him learn just how much stronger his seniors are than he is!" Leah Cain snorted coldly. After traveling to many ears, the news quickly spread

to every corner of Ossen City. Only a few experts and nobles of Ossen City heard of it in the beginning, but once someone upgraded this to a matter of national pride, even commoners learned of it as well.

In this way, Han Shuo's birth and origins were slowly revealed in utmost clarity!

A slave when young, the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force made an exception and enrolled him when he demonstrated surprising potential. He ascended from a lowly rank of mage apprentice to a rare archmage necromancer in less than two years. He even had a mysterious technique about him. All of this added together made Han Shuo out to be genius.

As citizens of Ossen City discussed this matter fervently, a few large guilds were already placing bets on this. Gamblers expressed high concerns towards this matter, and no one knew of the Boozt Merchant Guild betting enormous sums against Cameron's Merchant Guild.

On the west side of Ossen City, in the middle of the night.

Out of the north, south, east, and west parts of the city, the west side was the dirtiest and poorest part. This place could be considered the congregation zone of all the poor. There was trash everywhere on the streets, with flies and bedbugs everywhere. Some beggars, with rags on their bodies, were dozing off in the corner. A stench permanently permeated the surrounding air.

However, the moon still shone, even on the poorest areas. As the pure, white moonlight shone down, it cast long shadows for Han Shuo and the others. Some stifled sobs traveled out slightly from one of the ugly and crude houses.

"I really didn't want to come here!" Chester's expression was long as he sighed.

Although Emily stayed within the carriage, her brows were knit tightly together as well. Her tender and white skin was as clear as white jade, and the precious jewels on her head and closely tailored silks and laces marked her as being quite at odds with the surroundings.



Emily had seen Chester's information and knew that he was born a commoner. Before he had entered the Dark Mantle, he'd spent some time in the western part of Ossen city. However, he didn't miss those days. That was easy enough to see. No one would think too fondly of a place like this.

"Alright, we'll leave as soon as we're done. There are the poor and rich in every country. This is a truth that will never change, and we don't have the power to change all this!" Han Shuo called out softly as he sat within the carriage.

A troop of about a hundred knights were following behind the carriage at a leisurely pace. The troop was in a long formation in the narrow streets.

"Come on. We don't have much time, so stop complaining!" Emily also rushed Chester onwards.

Chester didn't say much else as he skillfully drove the carriage down the quiet streets. He headed for the dirtiest and poorest part of the west side after making it down this street.

Chester slowed down the carriage after a moment in a place filled with sewage and a disgusting stench. "Master Emily, the broken down buildings ahead are where the intelligence seems to point to."

Emily changed into a black robe in the carriage and hid her identity as a senior executive of the Dark Mantle. She slowly stepped down from the carriage and spoke to Han Shuo, "According to the intelligence, it's the buildings in front of us. The enemy is a leader from the Angel Empire called Yoland. He seems to be a sky rider."

Nodding, Han Shuo released three yin demons and bade them slowly slip inside. He himself walked towards the troop of knights who were trailing them, telling an officer, "Don't prematurely alert our enemies. Spread out through the buildings and create a perimeter. Try to approach slowly. Capture anyone alive if you can. Otherwise, execute them on the spot. We can't let a single one escape."

"Understood!" The officer responded and made a gesture towards the knights behind him. The knights slowly spread out and encircled the

buildings from a distance away.

There had been several mages in the center of the knights, who were now revealed due to the knights spreading out. The mages in the Magic Corps of the Northern Guard were all journeyman or adept mages. There was only one thunder archmage. Boris had told him before the mission had started that he was to listen to Han Shuo's commands.

Some of them had been unruly and rebellious at first, but when Boris told them of Han Shuo's identity, all of became docile and didn't dare to not listen to Han Shuo's commands.

Han Shuo had traversed half of the Lancelot Empire in the past few days, challenging villains with infamous reputation. They'd all been killed on the spot, and that kind of violent, ruthless method made Han Shuo's evil prestige come to life. The group of mages in front of him had all quieted down afterwards.

Someone who could kill numerous experts was someone that they couldn't afford to antagonize, not to mention that he had full control over the team from the commander of the Northern Guards. They would be foolish as to provoke Han Shuo.

"Alright, all of you find your positions. It's best to stay in between the knights. Listen to my orders afterwards and attack with the strongest spells you've got!" Han Shuo flicked a glance over the thunder archmage and gave his orders.

"Understood, Sir Bryan!" The thunder archmage said respectfully with a nod. He wasn't angry at all about Han Shuo taking his position as the commander of the Magic Corps.

# Chapter 283: Coolly composed

Before Han Shuo's arrival at the Northern Guards, thunder archmage Killua had been the leader of the Northern Guards magic corps. However, due to Han Shuo's appearance, he could only take Han Shuo's orders now.

Killua had originally been a bit reluctant, but after Boris spoke a few words to him, he immediately understood that Han Shuo only come to the Northern Guards to gain some military achievements, and that the magic corps of Northern Guards would be just a jumping board for Han Shuo. After that, not only did that remove any complaint he might have had, he would even intentionally curry Han Shuo's favor in hope of a little bit of help when Han Shuo became successful.

"Be careful, they have twenty something people and they're all pretty strong!" Han Shuo said quietly when he returned to Emily's side after giving his orders.

"I understand, what do you think we should do?" Emily nodded in reply, then asked for Han Shuo's opinion.

"When the hundred knights surround this area, immediately use magic to destroy all obstacles. Capture the experts if you can, otherwise, it's fine if you kill all of them. As long as we can find the blueprints, we've essentially finished this mission!" Han Shuo thought about it and said quietly.

"We'll do as you say. Those Northern Guards seem to trust you very much. You have to command them well, so that they don't mess up!" Emily said docilely in front of Han Shuo, she had already become used to having him in charge.

"Then alright, pay attention to Yoland, don't let him escape!" Han Shuo replied before slowly floating into the air.

Han Shuo quickly passed through the knights and mages like a ghost. Using the three hundred and sixty degree surveillance of the three yin demons, Han Shuo continuously gave orders to the surrounding knights. He had them discard their horses and hide in the surroundings. The

contingent of knights slowly surrounded the other party, keeping a hundred and fifty meter buffer.

Han Shuo stood proudly in the sky and calmly commanded the knights and mages of the Northern Guards. He made sure to put suitable men in every location. In the meantime, everyone lowered their voices and quietly approached the dirty and broken down building.

The distance slowly decreased as the encirclement tightened. When the two parties were only fifty meters apart, Han Shuo waved at Killua and the others. Upon seeing his action, they immediately started to chant magic spells quietly, their expressions solemn.

“My lord, we’ve been surrounded. I can hear unusual sounds from the wind!” A wind mage said anxiously to Yoland, who had a dark and muscular body and was riding a tattooed beast.

“How is that possible!” Yoland suddenly sat up from a pile of straw he’d been resting on. He quickly looked out the window, his expression immediately darkening as he shouted softly, “Everyone, assemble. Find a chance to break through the encirclement!”

The twenty something people within the room all stood up silently after hearing that. All of them unsheathed their swords and knives and prepared to charge out.

As the leader, Yoland remained calm in the face of such a terrible situation. His space ring brightened slightly as he took out the blueprints that he’d spent much effort in obtaining. He carefully dug a hole in the wall and said quietly, “The brothers that have come on this operation are all not afraid of death. I will put the blueprints in the widened gap in the wall. If any of you can leave this place alive, you can wait until Ossan City is no longer so heavily under guard before returning to take back the blueprints to the Empire. Do you hear me?”

“Don’t worry my lord. We know what to do!” That wind mage replied seriously. The other people in the room also had on determined expressions, prepared to make the sacrifice.

Suddenly, five rays of lightning struck down from the sky. The

zigzagging lightning illuminated the pitch dark sky. At the same time, several walls of flames appeared around the building, causing the surrounding temperature to spike up to dangerous levels. Meanwhile, the ground started to tremble as spires started to project from the ground.

Yoland and the others who were within the house understood that the attack had already begun. All of them leaped out from the door and windows, and started to charge separately from all directions through the attacks of lightning, fire snakes, and rock spikes.

“Kill!” Han Shuo’s cold voice rang out through the entire night.

Killua’s lightning suddenly slammed down. When the houses were struck, every single one of them exploded with a deep rumble. Two men rushed out from those houses. They instantly fell limp onto the ground when they were struck by a bolt of lightning.

The hundred knights of the Northern Guards were all elites of the military, every single one holding the strength of a companion-at-arms or a sergeant. Under Han Shuo’s orders, each one methodically blockaded the roads. Once they noticed someone dashing towards them, they would immediately move to block the target mercilessly.

“Send three knights to the north to stop them. Killua, have the Magic Corps attack the four experts rushing in from the south. Yoland is in the west, he is a sky rider, so those in the west have to be careful...”

Using the vision of the three yin demons, Han Shuo sent his commands forth leisurely. He would accurately mention the other party’s strength and numbers every single time, then send out suitable number of troops to stop the charge of the assassins.

Emily and Chester slowly approached the direction that Yoland was charging towards under Han Shuo’s directions. As a thief, attacking straight on wasn’t Chester’s forte, so he remained among the group of the knights that was setting up the blockade and left it up to Emily, who was ready to attack any time with dark magic.

“Damn it, why is the enemy so clear about our movements!” Yoland had told everyone to separate and attack using the strongest force they could

muster. He'd noticed a few weaker areas in the beginning that could have been broken though. Sadly, before they'd even drawn near, those places had suddenly become heavily guarded, causing those trying to break through to suffer enormous losses.

The mages all cast spells in directions that they couldn't see under Han Shuo's orders. Yet, the spells would always leave Yoland's people in dire straits, and heavily wound or even kill those people waiting in the dark.

"I didn't notice anyone casting Sky's Eye. I don't know why the enemy is able to see our movements so clearly!" The wind magician's voice was frantic as his anxiety broke through.

"Everyone, if you think that you can escape easily after breaking the law in the capital city of the Lancelot Empire, then think again! Hehe, everyone here is clear on your identities. As long as you lay down your weapons, surrender, and identify yourselves, we can allow you to live and wait for the mediators from your country to negotiate," Han Shuo fired off a string of orders before hollering at them with a smile.

Their actions were completely revealed to Han Shuo through the yin demons' surveillance. Then, he would organize experts of appropriate skill to stop the would-be escapees. He had successfully killed enough of the assassins, leaving only thirteen. On the other hand, the Northern Guard only had four lightly wounded and one heavily wounded when the other party fought back until the brink of death. Aside from that, there was no one who had died.

Yet, only fearless attacks were the answer to Han Shuo's announcement. None of the assassins from the Angel Empire showed the slightest bit of hesitation. After Han Shuo had finished speaking, they viciously tried to break through the encirclement again.

Han Shuo could determine that these people were all death sworn from their reactions and strength. They probably hadn't had any thoughts of surviving after entering the Lancelot Empire. It was an unrealistic notion to capture these people alive. Thus, after a bit of hesitation, Han Shuo suddenly commanded, "Everyone, don't hold back any longer, just kill

them all!”

“Brothers, rush out with all your might. Even if you can’t, you have to bring several of them down with you!” shouted Yoland after hearing Han Shuo’s merciless orders,

“You have no more chances!” Emily’s cold voice sounded as she glared at Yoland from her black robes, “The technicians in the military factory were all helpless civilians. All of them were killed savagely. You guys truly do deserve to die today!”

“Haha, since they were not people from my empire, so what if they died!” Yoland laughed maniacally as he raised a huge broadsword and rode atop of his tattooed beast. He dashed directly towards Emily. “Woman, are you stop me by yourself?”

“Foolish!” Han Shuo’s thick murderous aura spread out with lightning speed before Emily could chant a spell. The Demonslayer Edge shone with crimson light as the blood red sword aura cleaved down towards Yoland from the sky with unparalleled ferociousness.

Yoland had been dashing towards Emily and hadn’t thought that Han Shuo would suddenly attack like this, not to mention from above. Although he had the strength of a sky rider, he still found it a bit difficult to face this sort of sudden attack. The broadsword that he was holding horizontally had to quickly rise to meet the Demonslayer Edge attacking down from above his head.

Clang!

Sparks exploded everywhere and a clear crack appeared in Yoland’s broadsword. He snorted as his shoulder trembled, while the four short legs of the tattooed beast underneath him snapped, unable to withstand the force. The tattooed beast fell onto the floor as its wolf-like head continuously spat out blood.

“Haha, don’t think of obtaining the blueprints even if you kill me. All of the technicians were killed, you won’t be able to create the war chariots without the blueprints!” Yoland looked tragically at the tattooed beast underneath him first before laughing savagely with a grimace. Since he

had no way of attacking Han Shuo in the sky, he could only sprint quickly towards Emily.

“Isn’t it just hidden in the gap in the walls? What’s so hard to find about that!” Han Shuo said with contempt. Han Shuo ignored Yoland as the latter’s expression drastically changed and dashed towards the room the targets had originally been hiding in with lightning speed.



# Chapter 284: A big gamble

Though Yoland had been about to attack Emily, his heart suddenly spasmed when he heard Han Shuo reveal his most closely guarded secret. Just as he intended to turn around and run back into the room to destroy the blueprint, several bolts whizzed at him with whooshing sounds. Emily waved the magic staff in her hand and a sharp Grim Reaper's Blade sliced across Yoland's body with a deathly glint.

"Stop him! Don't let him take the blueprint!" Yoland's voice was shrill. He hastily raised his broadsword to block the Grim Reaper's Blade.

The assassins of the Angel Empire were originally about to break through the encirclement, but abandoned the idea upon hearing Yoland's shout. They swiftly turned back, one by one, and rushed straight at Han Shuo.

Unfortunately, their power was a far cry from Han Shuo's. The difference in speed was like heaven and earth. Han Shuo utilized the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens and flew into the room like lightning. The assassins only caught up with him after he'd pulled the blueprint from a hollow corner on the wall.

"Die!" Han Shuo coldly shouted before landing with the Demonslayer Edge. He walked towards the furiously sprinting assassins of the Angel Empire.

When Han Shuo released the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, the Demonslayer Edge exploded with brilliant purple-red light. The light sparked like a rainbow on the tip of the blade, and rapidly formed one willowy flame after another. The beautiful light from the flashing purple red flames danced on the blade of the Demonslayer Edge. They gathered into twisting threads of fire that entangled each other, creating two magic nets of flame—one purple, one red.

The madly charging Angel Empire assassins only had one obsession in their heart, to destroy Han Shuo. Faced with the two blazing hot and icy cold magical nets, they all released their strongest level of fighting aura,

trying to tear the nets apart.

However, Han Shuo had firmly grasped a whole new level of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire at his current strength. The two nets of magic twisted and swayed about in the air as if two fishing nets thrown into the sea. The lights from the swords simply landed on empty holes and wasn't able to penetrate the beautiful flames.

"Not good! Fall back!" The distant Yoland, who'd desperately dodged the Grim Reaper's Blade, also rushed towards Han Shuo. Upon seeing his subordinates' swords unable to rip apart the magic nets, he immediately understood that these nets of unknown material couldn't be torn by just the sword. That was why he couldn't help but shout a reminder to his subordinates.

However, the two strangely swaying magic nets in the air actually possessed an extremely fast speed. The nets didn't wait for the assassins to react before they spread out and shrouded the whole group.

When the red net fell down, the flame threads touched three assassins like scorching hot iron. A thick smoke erupted as their skin and flesh was burned to a crisp. Every one of them was paralyzed and fell to the ground amidst their own tragic screams. The purple net blanketed the remaining four assassins. Their limbs instantly stiffened, and their bodies shivered as if they had been trapped in an ice block. The cold air maintained their previous dodging or attacking postures.

"I'll end my life with yours!" Yoland had finally reached Han Shuo. Upon seeing his brothers shrouded in the nets, each either burned to ashes or frozen solid like ice, he roared and raised his sword, rushing at Han Shuo without a care for his life.

"Heh heh! I'm afraid you won't have that chance!" Han Shuo released the Demonslayer Edge with an indifferent smile on his face, and charged towards Yoland.

Yoland's expression turned hideous as he raised his broadsword to receive Han Shuo's attack. Yoland kept laughing maniacally when he saw Han Shuo quickly close in. He was about to disregard everything to risk his

life to fight Han Shuo, when a pair of arms suddenly emerged from the ground where he stood and tightly grabbed his ankles.

“Shoot him dead!” Han Shuo had been rushing towards Yoland when he suddenly screeched to a halt in body mid-air. He shouted to the dozen Northern Guard soldiers who were holding bows and approaching in the distance.

Yoland couldn't budge his feet. He stared dumbly at Han Shuo, floating in the air. The latter was only about five meters away, right in front of him, but Yoland had no way to move. When Yoland slashed downwards on the pair of big arms with his sword, the arms holding his legs retreated back into the underground. His two feet suddenly felt a soul-shaking pain as two bone spikes shot out from the ground and pierced deeply from his feet to his knees.

While he was wailing like a pig being butchered, several arrows quickly shot towards Yoland, whistling through the air until they penetrated his body. Before he died, his killing intent, filled with resentment, transformed into an air barely visible to the naked eye and was absorbed by Han Shuo.

The lineup of the twenty-odd assassins from the Angel Empire had no survivors left, including Yoland. None of their resentful killing intent had escaped Han Shuo's absorption, enabling his demonic magic to grow increasingly perfect. The feeling of breaking through was becoming increasingly stronger.

Han Shuo walked to the four frozen assassins and shot out four pitch black lights into their bodies. Four cracking sounds echoed as the originally frozen stiff assassins fell limply down. Han Shuo turned to speak to the leader of the Northern Guard army, “These four aren't dead yet. Guard them strictly, and don't let them commit suicide. This will be our answer to His Majesty as well.”

“Rest assured, Master Bryan, we know what to do!” The leader readily agreed and ordered the soldiers behind him, “Men, tied up these four assassins and gag them. Don't give them the chance to bite their tongues and kill themselves!”

Following the orders of their leader, the dozen soldiers quickly walked forward and took out special binding tools from the bags that they always carried. From their practiced actions and plentiful equipment, Han Shuo could instantly confirm that it would even harder for these four assassins to seek death.

When they were brought to the Northern Guard's prison, they would be anesthetized, and their spirits drained of strength. They would be too weak to even bite their tongues. It might actually be possible to torture something out of them.

Han Shuo stopped paying attention to these four. He walked to Emily's side, took out the blueprint and gave it to her, saying, "Take this. This mission can now be considered completed. I will give you the blueprint so you can hand them in to the Northern Guard. As you have the blueprint that the Northern Guard's been desperately seeking, you can report in to His Majesty now!"

Emily naturally wouldn't stand on ceremony with Han Shuo. As she couldn't reveal her identity, she didn't say anything to him and only nodded before turning around. She swiftly walked to Chester's carriage and got in. They left together and quickly disappeared out of sight.

"Master Bryan, we could successfully capture the assassins of the Angel Empire and recover the blueprint they'd hidden this time only thanks to you. If Count Boris can say a few good words in front of His Majesty, this deed is enough to grant you a title." Lightning archmage Killua walked over to Han Shuo and offered his sincere congratulations. He seemed even more excited than Han Shuo.

"Hehe, it's everyone's credit. I wouldn't have been able to catch them all by myself, without everyone's combined efforts. Mm, you all get back to work. I still have something to deal with, I'll need to leave for a moment!" Han Shuo looked at Killua and said with a smile.

"Alright then master Bryan, please leave first. We can take care of the aftermath!" Killua respectfully replied.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo didn't linger. He chose another direction

and quickly disappeared from sight in a dirty, chaotically slum of the city's west end.

When night fell and everyone was resting, Han Shuo soundlessly appeared at the Boozt Merchant Guild. He followed the familiar path to Phoebe's room.

"No need to consider anymore. I believe that Bryan will definitely win. Our crisis may even be completely over with this gamble. Let's take out all of our active funds and fight it out with Cameron and his group!" Phoebe stood in the middle of the living room, voicing her resolution in a competent and astute manner.

"Little Phoebe, this needs reconsideration. I know of the relationship between you and Bryan. His strength is good, but Leah Cain has been famous for too long and is also very powerful. Everyone agrees that he has a better winning chance. This bet is no trivial matter. If we lose, I'm afraid that our Boozt Merchant Guild will also go down with it!" Boozt Guild veteran elder Andrew leaned on his walking stick and spoke, somewhat worried.

Andrew was an original elder of the Boozt Merchant Guild. Before Phoebe had taken over, he had wholeheartedly cared for her, so she was very much concerned about his viewpoints. However, Phoebe had gained majority control of the guild after becoming the owner. During this period, the Guild had actually made great progress under her hand. Andrew was satisfied, understanding that Phoebe wasn't one to work based on her emotions. He might not have been so worried if it wasn't for Leah Cain's widespread fame.

"Rest assured grandpa Andrew, Bryan's strength is much more formidable than you can imagine. Moreover, Cameron has forced us to this state already. The merchant alliance he has lead is intensely suppressing us, and it's difficult for us to do anything now. Even without this gamble, they will still pressure us bit by bit until we're exhausted. If we can win this time, we can reverse the situation. Those merchant guilds cooperating with Cameron won't give him face if he faces a heavy loss. Only when we hold a huge amount of gold coins, can we truly control the

situation.” Phoebe calmly explained her analysis to Andrew.

“Aii, since you’ve said so, let’s do it like that. I hope Bryan won’t disappoint us, otherwise our Boozt Merchant Guild can be considered finished!” Andrew thought for a while before finally nodding in agreement to Phoebe’s proposal. This showed the immense crisis the guild was facing. Otherwise, they wouldn’t have chosen such a gamble to save the situation.

# Chapter 285: Dazzling

Phoebe sat alone after Andrew left, frowning in contemplation. It seemed that the crisis the Boozt Merchant Guild was facing was indeed very serious. Otherwise Phoebe wouldn't choose to strike using a gambling method, given her cautious nature.

Han Shuo slowly came in without a sound, his eyes bright as he looked at Phoebe as soon as he entered the door. After a moment of silence, Phoebe was suddenly surprised. Looking up to see Han Shuo, she revealed a smile and said with delight, "You've come back?"

"Rest assured, Leah Cain will die to my sword tomorrow, without a doubt!" Han Shuo smiled and walked towards Phoebe. He reached out his hand and smoothened the spot between her wrinkled eyebrows before speaking softly.

"I believe you. Our Boozt Merchant Alliance took out seven hundred thousand gold coins this time. Cameron will have to compensate us five times that amount based on the current odds as long as you kill Leah Cain. Cameron won't be able to bear the costs no matter how much money he has. After this victory, our Boozt Alliance will have an enormous amount of gold coins and the danger from Cameron's group will naturally disappear!" Phoebe very much enjoyed Han Shuo's tenderness. She relaxed her body and leaned on his chest, saying softly.

"Alright, go rest early. I'll meditate here for tonight. I'll go to the Garden House tomorrow to issue a challenge to Leah Cain and settle this problem as soon as possible!" Han Shuo patted Phoebe's shoulder and urged.

Phoebe nodded meekly upon hearing Han Shuo's words. Her expression relaxed into a smile as she said, "Rest assured, I'll come with you tomorrow and watch you kill Leah Cain for myself. I know you'll definitely win!"

Phoebe didn't stay after finishing speaking. She walked into the back room with a chuckle and softly said, "After you win, keep me company for a nice chat!"

Han Shuo sat cross-legged in the hall after Phoebe left. He silently circulated his magical yuan and recovered his mental strength bit by bit, gradually adjusting the state of his body.

In Han Shuo's body, the demon infant was as if surrounded by a bloody whirlpool. Each drop of blood essence was like a precious ruby, sparkling translucently as each drop formed a red, lustrous crystal shape. The drops of blood essence swirled into a whirlpool and nourished the demon infant in its center. The layers of blood red mist, which was the killing intent gathered in the bloodlust realm, surrounded this whirlpool, also nourishing the demon infant.

The demon infant was a copy of Han Shuo, except about the size of a fist. A black spot appeared between its eyebrows where the Demonslayer Edge was stored. The enormous amount of killing intent absorbed during this time had been stored in his body and condensed into a black spot in the demon infant's glabella.

In this way, the connection between Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge constantly matured. The demon infant and the Demonslayer Edge could also support each other to absorb even more energy. Once the Demonslayer Edge successfully developed its own soul, its connection with Han Shuo would be another step closer. Slicing off a human head from a thousand miles away with only a thought wouldn't be an impossible feat.

In the past several days, Han Shuo had been going to war everywhere and killing many experts. Han Shuo had swallowed and absorbed their killing intent and resentment in order to improve himself bit by bit. He'd already absorbed an enormous amount in particular from his trip to the forbidden land, which had helped both him and the Demonslayer Edge improve immensely.

Han Shuo had slowly gained control over his nature in the bloodlust realm. Once the killing intent accumulated to a certain extent, it would gradually transform from quantitative to qualitative. Only then would he be able to break through to the separate demon realm and his strength would take another step forward. Not only would Han Shuo be able to practice higher level secret demonic skills, but he could also separate his



consciousness from his body. He would possess some unimaginable miraculous abilities.

After a night of meditation, Han Shuo was in high spirits the next day as he left the Boozt Merchant Guild with Phoebe and went to the Garden House where Leah Cain resided.

The past several days, news of Han Shuo challenging the Crazy Leah Cain had spread throughout Ossen City, thanks to the deliberate work of Candide and Lawrence. Many aristocratic spies were lurking in the neighborhood of the Garden House. In addition to them, experts from all walks of life were full of enthusiasm as they waited for Han Shuo's arrival.

Han Shuo stepped down from Phoebe's carriage and was walking alone to the Garden House when someone recognized him. Amidst the whispering and discussion, the spies of every house quickly sent in reports of this news. The whispering turned into a hubbub in the blink of an eye. More and more people gathered at the Garden House upon hearing the news.

Leah Cain was famous among the aristocrats and powerhouses as the Crazy Great Swordmaster of the Brut Merchant Alliance. Such a character had raised a storm when he had appeared in Ossen City and defeated three of the city's great swordmasters. It was a pity that Leah Cain was a foreigner, otherwise the Lancelot Empire's civilians wouldn't be so upset about this.

Han Shuo's fame had bloomed just the same during this time period. Of course, his reputation wasn't that good either. Because he had continuously killed his opponents, his infamy had spread far and wide. Even though Han Shuo's reputation was bad, he was still a citizen of the Lancelot Empire after all, so everybody hoped for his victory.

The nobles and civilians cheered as they sent him in on the way to the House Garden. These people had known to come here early because Lawrence had revealed to them that Han Shuo would walk down this path within the next two days. They tried their luck whenever they were idle and waited in this place. Everyone danced in happiness, as they didn't

expect Han Shuo would really come today.

Han Shuo was one meter ninety centimeters tall. He wore a simple and capable-looking black warrior's outfit, his figure handsome and masculine. After a long time of cultivating demonic magic, cultivators would possess a striking evil temperament. When the noble ladies saw Han Shuo for the first time, they already harbored goodwill for him regardless of right and wrong. People were first whispering in discussion, but later, they all screamed nonstop upon throwing a glance at Han Shuo's blazing eyes.

"Humph! I'll die from anger! He disappeared for so many days in one go and made me wait again this time. If it weren't for the uproar this time, I'm afraid I wouldn't have known when I'd be able to see him again!" On a path to the Garden House, Fanny was leading a group of people from the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. She looked towards Han Shuo from afar and bitterly whispered her complaints.

"Master Fanny, what did you say just now? Look, it's really Bryan. When I first heard of this news, I thought it was fake! I didn't think that it really was Bryan. He's unexpectedly challenged that wicked Leah Cain, everyone is so excited about this!" Amy from the necromancy major animatedly waved her fists as she watched Han Shuo walking towards the Garden House. She turned to Fanny and noisily screamed.

"I, I didn't say anything!" Fanny covered up with a smile and said, "I didn't expect this brat to be so calm in front of so many people. It seems that he has really matured!"

"Bryan is really very powerful. His deeds have spread everywhere in Ossen City. Even our necromancy major has gained some new students. These new students actually chose our weak necromancy major as soon as they entered the Babylon Academy. The tables have turned!" Athena was excited all the same. She looked at the proudly walking Han Shuo and exclaimed.

Lisa tagged along this time, but she was silent compared to the past. She was no longer constantly twittering and only quietly followed the distant,

dashing Han Shuo with her gaze. Seeing him acting so leisurely, even in the presence of so many people, Lisa suddenly felt that he should have been this dazzling from the start.

“I am Bryan, I have come here to see Mister Leah Cain!” Upon reaching the gate of the Garden House, Han Shuo spoke smilingly to the guard.

A great number of nobles and civilians had crowded the alleys and gazing pavilions around the Garden House. The news of Han Shuo’s challenge had soon spread. Leah Cain had also left an order earlier, so the guard naturally knew what to do.

“Mister Leah Cain is currently training. He has been expecting your arrival and has made arrangements. You can enter as soon as you arrive.” The guard said respectfully.

“Great then, please lead the way!” Han Shuo said with a smile.

Han Shuo came in following the guidance of the guard. All of the onlookers were blocked outside. After all, this place was private property, so no one could enter without the owner’s permission.

“Let us in, let us in!”

“That’s right, we have waited a long time for this! Please let us in!”

“I am Count Asi of the Lancelot Empire, I want to see Mister Leah Cain!”

After Han Shuo entered, the nobles and civilians outside tried various methods to access the Garden House. Not far from the place, several carriages slowly lined up. The decorations of these carriage were extremely luxurious. It only took a look to know they belonged to the nobility.

First Prince Charles led a group of aristocrats in a slow approach. The group included Mister Hahn and Emily of the Betteridge family, finance minister Eevee, along with Lawrence, Boris of the Northern Guard, and many other nobles.

Candide, along with tall, handsome Amyes, who had a refined presence and was one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, also appeared

in a gazing pavilion opposite of the Garden House. Everyone was raptly watching the inner area of the Garden House.

# Chapter 286: The challenger

“Is this kid the Bryan you’ve been telling me about?” One of the three Dark Mantle heavyweights, Amyes, asked elegantly as he observed Han Shuo in the Garden House with amusement.

“That’s him. He’s truly done a lot of big things during this short span of time. His strength also seems to be unfathomable. However, I haven’t really seen it for myself. Let us use this opportunity to see his real strength?” The remote looking Candide said to Amyes.

Amyes only looked to be around thirty some years old. He wore a fitting white robe without any other ornaments, which gave him a clean and pure look. This elevated his extraordinary handsomeness even more. In addition, there was an attractive, graceful charm about him.

However, to the nobles of the Lancelot Empire, Amyes’ ever elegant smile and graceful handsomeness was shrouded by a shadow of death. A noble was simply out of luck if they were targeted by him. At the bare minimum, they would be thrown in jail after their property was seized, and at worse, instant execution.

Of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, Cecilia usually carried out activities in foreign lands, Candide was responsible for gathering domestic intel and investigating other Empires’ assassins. As for Amyes, he was in charge of monitoring and intimidating the dignitaries. The three of them coordinated with each other very well. Candide and Cecilia rarely showed their faces and never posed any threat to the Empire’s nobles, so Amyes was the one that most of them were familiar with and also feared the most. There wasn’t an aristocrat that wasn’t afraid of him.

“You should know very well of Leah Cain’s strength. Besides, he has a relationship with the First Prince Charles. If this boy can’t win against Leah Cain, I’m afraid he won’t be able to leave this place alive.” Amyes squinted to look at the proudly standing Han Shuo in the Garden House, and said to Candide.

“Heh heh. That’s hard to say. Ferguson was a light grand magus like you,

and yet he still died by Bryan's hand. From what I know, Ferguson's reputation isn't any less than Leah Cain's. If he could kill a light grand magus, he should be able to kill Leah Cain all the same!" Although Candide wasn't so optimistic about Han Shuo privately, he still had to put up a front before Amyes. After all, Han Shuo had been promoted by him.

Amyes smiled elegantly and nodded slightly before sitting down leisurely on a stone bench above a high platform. He took out a set of fine tea accoutrements and began to enjoy it.

Han Shuo was currently quite worried in the Garden House. Through the three yin demons' observation, he found Emily, Phoebe, and Fanny outside. Even though they weren't in the same spot, he knew they'd definitely rush to him once he left the Garden House.

Han Shuo wasn't too worried about Emily. After all, she was much more open in the matter of romance. She might feel a bit unhappy, but the possibility of her causing a scene was the lowest. However, that couldn't be said for Phoebe and Fanny. They both knew nothing about his current situation. Once these two met, they'd raise a storm without a doubt.

As Han Shuo wallowed in anxiety from this situation, the great swordmaster Leah Cain walked out to the center of the Garden House. He carried a broadsword, his face cold, and the look in his eyes brutal as he swept a glance at Han Shuo. Leah Cain sneered, "Little guy, are you that Bryan?"

"That's me, you must know everything already, so there's no need for nonsense. The two of us will fight it out on this spacious lawn and settle everything in one go. Does that sound alright?" Han Shuo immediately threw all of his worries to the wind upon seeing Leah Cain appear. He looked raptly at the latter and replied casually.

"That works. I will teach you a good lesson!" Leah Cain laughed coldly. He swept a glance around the crowd outside of the Garden House and suddenly proposed an idea, "If you don't mind, can we allow the outside people to come in and watch the fight?"

Han Shuo wrinkled his brows in thought for a bit before saying, "I don't

mind myself, but there are too many people outside. I'm afraid it isn't very appropriate to allow all of them in here!"

"Then just let the nobles in. That shouldn't be a problem!" This proposal was due to Charles' prior reminder, otherwise, Leah himself didn't care about any of this.

Han Shuo was afraid of some unexpected stormy situations if the three women were to meet, so that's why he'd been hesitant. Now that he heard Leah Cain's words, he remembered that both Fanny and Phoebe didn't have noble titles. He instantly nodded and said, "Then so be it!"

Upon hearing the approval, Leah Cain waved his arm towards the guard standing in the distance. The guard seemed to have known beforehand as he shouted, "Those with a noble title in the Empire can come inside to watch. Civilians will not be allowed entry."

The nobles wandering outside one by one elegantly walked in with their noses up. The civilians in the surroundings had no opposition to this. The nobility held certain privileges on the Profound continent. The people here all understood and were used to this, so they didn't feel surprised

The nobles walked in with their followers. Phoebe and Lawrence also took this opportunity to come in as a couple. Phoebe suddenly felt that someone was watching her the moment she walked inside. She lifted her head to notice Emily's surprised look.

Emily was wearing a purple dress, her skin delicate like white jade as she stood with old Mister Hahn's group. She looked beautiful with an inviolable, noble air and had none of the melancholy that could usually be seen from a widow. She was too dazzling for words.

"Damn that Bryan! This Emily must've used that magical pill too. Does he have some relationship with Emily?" Phoebe immediately recognized that it was the effect of the Rebirth Pill with just one glance at Emily's delicate, pure white cheeks. On the other hand, Phoebe's eyes were filled with surprise as she looked at Emily. The two women only needed a single glance at each other to understand the matter.

"Hey! Bryan, you'll definitely win!" Lawrence was very optimistic as he

cheered for Han Shuo from afar.

“Humph, want to win with his strength? Dream on!” Not far from Lawrence, first Prince Charles said disdainfully. The bunch of nobles behind him immediately chimed in to lick his boots, taking turns to analyze the reasons Han Shuo would lose. Their goal was to gain some goodwill from Charles.

There was a grassy lawn as big as a football field in the middle of the Garden House. Han Shuo and Leah Cain were currently standing in the center of this lawn. The Lancelot Empire’s nobles sat in the surroundings. They brought their own highly skilled guards and kept their distance so they didn’t need to worry about their safety.

Leah Cain’s facial expression was sternly cold and he didn’t care much for Han Shuo. When he saw the nobles came in, his eyes moved to Charles. The chattering First Prince slightly nodded in response to Leah Cain’s gaze, indicating that he could start making a move.

Only now did Leah Cain look at Han Shuo again as he gripped his broadsword. His voice resounded coldly, “Little guy, ready to die?”

Taking in a deep breath, Han Shuo cleared all distractions from his mind. His face instantly became cold and ruthless, the arrogance in his voice wasn’t any less, “Mister Leah Cain, before this fight, let me remind you that I’m also an archmage necromancer in addition to being a martial artist. I hope you’ll be careful!”

“Humph, nothing but a useless archmage necromancer, wasting your power to train that kind of useless magic. I can already imagine how much skill you have. I really don’t understand what kind of garbage that great swordmaster that you killed was. He couldn’t even win against a brat like you who doesn’t focus on training martial arts. It seems like your Lancelot Empire doesn’t have a single truly strong expert!”

Leah Cain was truly too cocky. He had offended every noble around him with just a few sentences. Even the nobles betting on his victory revealed angry expressions.

Fool! Even if you win, don’t even dream of a gaining a foothold in this



Lancelot Empire anymore. No wonder you had to flee from the Brut Alliance. With your hot temper alone, you should've long since been killed if it weren't for your power! First prince Charles cursed nonstop in his heart as he looked at the arrogant Leah Cain. He secretly made up his mind to absolutely not reveal his relationship with Leah Cain, even if the latter managed to kill Han Shuo. He needed to prevent this from impacting the nobles' opinions of him.

"Mister Leah Cain, I hope you won't let me down!" Han Shuo's mind moved with a thought and the Demonslayer Edge appeared in his right hand. The two-meter long edge didn't look very sharp, the body of the weapon was an unusual dark brown. Basically, the Demonslayer Edge didn't look at all prominent without being injected with magical yuan.

"Little guy, since you dared to find me, I'm sure you must be well prepared. Today, I'll let you know the true power of your seniors. Don't think that you're invincible just because you won against some garbage!" Leah Cain let out a cold harrumph. He pointed his sword at Han Shuo and said haughtily.

Han Shuo no longer responded to Leah Cain, his face ice cold. He slightly raised the Demonslayer Edge and shot forward. His extremely fast speed created several shadow images on his path, so fast that it was difficult to tell which one was real and which one was false with naked eye.

# Chapter 287: Standing proudly in the sky

Even though Leah Cain was completely contemptuous, he immediately focused all of his attention when Han Shuo truly made his move. He raised the broadsword in his hand with a cold snort. A silver sword light suddenly spread out in front of him.

Leah Cain had stepped into the rank of great swordmaster many years ago. He had indulged in this realm for a long time, challenging and defeating many experts back in the Brut Merchant Alliance, and gaining the title of Crazy Great Swordmaster at the same time. If he hadn't offended the lightning sacred magus Reynold Dila of the alliance, he might have never had to flee to the Lancelot Empire.

The silver sword light instantly enveloped the area in front of him. Han Shuo could feel an enormous sword aura hidden within the light as he flew over to Leah Cain. He immediately infused the Demonslayer Edge with magical yuan. This indestructible weapon then burst out with black light and stabbed directly towards the silver sword light.

The Demonslayer Edge shot forward explosively with a black light and heavy killing intent. It abruptly bombarded Leah Cain's sword light. The silver sword light intertwined with the black light as several metallic pops sounded. Spots of light scattered out like stars before fading away in the air.

"Nngnn." Leah Cain let out a light cry and quickly retreated a step back. He looked at Han Shuo with shock, "Not bad little guy, your weapon is quite strange. It actually isn't fighting aura!"

The black light from the Demonslayer Edge snuffed the silver sword light into thin air. However when the silver sword light collided with the Demonslayer Edge, a huge force flooded into Han Shuo's arm through the weapon, numbing his arm a little.

Han Shuo didn't rush to make a next move. His face cold as he stared fixedly at Leah Cain, he focused his mind to the peak. After this exchange, he knew that Leah Cain was indeed much more powerful than the great

swordmaster he killed last time. They were both swordmasters, but Leah Cain had swelled in this rank for many years. His strength was truly extraordinary.

“This Bryan has some power indeed!” Amyes looked at Candide in surprise and exclaimed softly on the platform opposite of the Garden House.

Candide’s eyes shone brightly, his face full of interest as he replied while looking at Han Shuo, “This is my first time seeing him fight as well. Although he has no fighting aura, he could unexpectedly break through the sword light that Leah Cain had gathered from his fighting aura. It looks like his body is hiding a lot of secrets!”

The nobles around exclaimed incredulously nonstop upon seeing Han Shuo shatter Leah Cain’s sword light with his stroke. Amongst them, Lawrence and Phoebe were visibly joyous.

“This boy really isn’t bad. He saved us once last time at Eevee’s house, it can be considered that we owe him a favor. I hope that he won’t be harmed by Leah Cain!” Old mister Hahn laughed and said to Emily next to him as he looked at Han Shuo.

“It seems this Bryan may just win!” Emily replied with a chuckle. She knew in her heart that Han Shuo’s strength wasn’t just that simple. Based on the fact that he could fly through the air, that alone was a huge advantage as it wasn’t something Leah Cain could do.

“Haha, hopefully so!” Old Hahn laughed heartily.

As everyone discussed noisily, Leah Cain snorted coldly, “You do have some strength, but it’s a pity that you shouldn’t have challenged me!”

Leah Cain raised his broadsword after his words and stepped towards Han Shuo. His speed wasn’t fast and each step was heavy. The two scars on his neck looked ferocious as they crossed each other, his pupils filled with a mad fighting desire.

Leah Cain’s momentum was stronger with each step, the broadsword in his hand emitting a dazzling silver halo beneath the sunlight. The silver

fighting aura finally converged with the broadsword into a brilliantly beautiful rainbow that shot towards Han Shuo from a dozen meters away.

The speed of this silver rainbow was lightning fast. It whizzed right to Han Shuo's face as if having leapt over the distance of a dozen meters. This attack contained such an enormous force that several watching nobles around could also feel it clearly.

Han Shuo just stood there, like he been stunned by the extremely fast attack of the silver rainbow. He seemed to have not reacted yet. Everyone stared dumbly as the silver rainbow cut down on his body. It looked like he didn't know how to dodge.

"Quickly, run!" Many onlookers were worried for Han Shuo, they all screamed out to warn him. Unfortunately the speed of their voice couldn't match the attacking speed of that silver rainbow sword aura from Leah Cain.

A frightening sound boomed right out at the ground where Han Shuo was just standing dumbly right after the onlookers' warnings rang out. A gully fifteen meters long instantly appeared in that area. The deep gully was as if one had just sliced into a piece of tofu.

The silver fighting aura wreathed around the gully and didn't disperse. The enormous destructive force of this strength assaulted the two walls of the deep gully, creating loud rumbling sounds. When the terrifying sounds had stopped, the already enormous gully was now even bigger. All of the weeds within the fighting aura's area of effect had all turned into green dust.

"What a terrifying attack. The poor challenger must be done for!"

"Aii, he was still too young after all. It's inevitable he'd be vulnerable against an attack from an expert who's been famous for a long time!"

"Let's go. That young man must've died and fallen into that crack. The fun's over!"

"Mm, such a handsome man had actually died to that ugly monster. That damned foreigner!"

All sorts of pessimistic comments about Han Shuo resounded from the audience. They had dumbly watched on as Han Shuo hadn't make any move to evade Leah Cain's sword attack. Everyone was certain that Han Shuo had died and lost his life in that gully.

Suddenly, a loud shout resounded, "Oh my god, look to the sky!"

Throwing their heads back to look at the sky, everyone saw Han Shuo standing tall in the sky with the Demonslayer Edge in hand. He looked remotely down at Leah Cain. He wasn't injured a least bit.

"How can this be?!" Even Leah Cain couldn't help but exclaim in shock. He looked up, unable to believe his eyes.

If a swordsman wanted to float in the air, they had to reach the rank of the legendary divine swordmaster in order to fly using fighting aura. While mages could fly by using the levitation skill upon reaching the rank of archmage, the casting speed of the levitation skill wasn't as fast or as smooth as Han Shuo's skills.

Even though Han Shuo was a necromancy archmage, he couldn't have been able to dodge that rapid attack using that slow levitation skill. That was why even Leah Cain was shocked beyond belief upon seeing Han Shuo stand safe and sound in the sky.

"Amyes, can you sense any magic elements on his body? Why can't I sense any at all?" On the high platform, Candide exclaimed with surprise as he looked directly at Han Shuo standing proudly in the sky.

Even an usually relaxed and calm person like Amyes was startled. He shook his head, saying, "Strange, too strange. He doesn't use any magic or fighting aura, but can actually stand in the sky so miraculously. Just what is this?"

"It seems this has something to do with his unique cultivation art. Amyes, this art he practices is very wondrous. If the Lancelot Empire's army also knows how to fly that quickly, then the power of our army would be multiplied!" Candide exclaimed with excitement as he thought of this.

“Pay close attention. We have to stop Leah Cain if he deals a killing blow even if it violates the rules. This Bryan is truly magical. He is too useful to our Lancelot Empire, we absolutely cannot let him die!” Amyes said with determination, having determined to set everything aside in order to ensure Han Shuo’s safety.

“Let’s do it like that then. After this, I think is Majesty also knows what to do now!” Candide agreed immediately. His gloomy eyes focused on Leah Cain. The dark elements on his body suddenly became dense as he prepared to make a move at anytime without regard to his identity.

A person was watching Han Shuo on a lush, towering old tree. He was the one whom Han Shuo and Lawrence had met in the Rose Garden, super rank assassin Bollands. He was crouching within the foliage, his eyes were wide open as he observed Han Shuo and muttering, “Truly amazing. He can actually use a skill directly to stand proudly in the sky. It seems this Bryan is hiding other secrets besides his extraordinary attainment with murderous aura. Master was right to send me here this time!”

“Little guy, don’t think you are formidable just because you are an archmage who can fly in the sky. Get down here if you’re so good!” Leah Cain shouted furiously down below as he looked up at Han Shuo in the sky.

Even though he was a great swordmaster, he couldn’t fly in the air. He had no choice but stare dumbly, helpless, whilst looking up at Han Shuo in the sky.

“As you wish!” Han Shuo let out a long laugh in the sky before diving down like a meteor. The Demonslayer Edge emitted a purple-red spellfire that two meters long . A thick murderous aura emanated in every direction with Han Shuo as the epicenter. The surrounding onlookers all felt a wave of palpitations and involuntarily stepped a bit further away, shocked as they looked up at him shooting down from the sky.

# Chapter 288: Ripped asunder

“Not bad, little guy!” Leah Cain could clearly sense the enormous murderous intent from his opponent. His eyes shone with excitement for the fight. Fighting aura continuously gathered on his broadsword. He didn’t wait for Han Shuo to land on the ground as the silver fighting aura shot directly at the latter’s head like a silver rainbow.

A murderous aura condensed nonstop around Han Shuo’s body. His pupils had become a deep red, his expression ferocious. The sinister, evil aura in the form of a bloody mist rushed to swallow Leah Cain. The purple-red spellfire that was two meters long floated down eerily in a strange trajectory, like a large, beautiful feather floating with the wind.

An explosive rumbling echoed, the spellfire smashing into the silver fighting aura. Bursts of brilliant fireworks bloomed in the air as the two lights intertwined with each other. Deep red light, silver aura and purple lights shimmered endlessly. Metallic collisions resounded nonstop from the mystically beautiful fireworks.

Leah Cain was standing on the ground, his two legs forced knee-deep into the ground due to the powerful pressure from the explosion above. The violent reactions kept ringing in his ears. An alternating force of two polar opposite powers, hot and cold, shrouded his brain. The strange force was like a ghost slipping through his pores before violently flooding his internal organs.

Leah Cain first shivered all over from the cold, then suddenly felt as if his body was frozen solid. A blazing hot current then burst through his body like a volcano. The two hot and cold airs intermingled within, giving Leah Cain an extremely surreal and painful feeling.

“Aowuuuu...”

Leah Cain looked like a madman as he wailed crazily to the sky. He ripped apart the clothes on his upper body with one hand, revealing his strong muscles. Streams of silver light could be seen clearly as they wiggled around the his bare upper body. Purple and red glints reflected

from within. It looked extremely odd.

“I’m going to tear you apart!” Leah Cain roared. The broadsword in his hand had gathered every fiber of silver light. He looked to Han Shuo, who happened to be standing indifferently in the air.

The silver halo on the broadsword in Leah Cain’s hand suddenly shrank. The silver light faded away, and the glossy broadsword didn’t reflect a single gleam beneath the sunlight. This appeared extremely weird.

Han Shuo understood that Leah Cain’s strength was indeed extraordinary after exchanging blows with him. He hadn’t gained any advantage even after utilizing his full force of the bloodlust realm. If it weren’t for the Mystical Glacial Spellfire with the property of both fire and ice invading his body, Leah Cain wouldn’t have ended up so miserable after the attack either.

Han Shuo dived downwards while fiercely pouring magical yuan into the Demonslayer Edge despite his numb hands. Precisely at moment when he’d focused his power and was waiting for a chance to deal a fatal blow, Han Shuo suddenly discovered that the light from Leah Cain’s broadsword had suddenly vanished. Han Shuo’s instincts detected a grave danger. His extraordinary senses once again were at play. Han Shuo immediately contacted the three yin demons. Just as the broadsword in Leah Cain’s hand trembled, Han Shuo abruptly split into four clones and landed in four directions.

The previously dull broadsword suddenly burst out with glaring lights at the same moment. Icy awls as sharp as needles shot towards the sky in a drizzle, covering an area of about five meters. This attack had a terrifying penetration ability in addition to its intensity. It pierced through the sky before disappearing in the blink of an eye.

A yin demon had transformed into a clone to replace Han Shuo in the place he’d just been standing. As the icy awls pierced through that area, the invisible yin demon was also penetrated by a strange force. The violent fighting aura had coalesced into tiny shapes, unexpectedly possessing a particularly destructive force on the yin demon. The yin demon was



pierced through like a beehive, its presence fading to the extreme.

“What a terrifying attack!” Han Shuo couldn’t stop feeling horrified after landing.

Leah Cain was indeed terrifying. He could gather his fighting aura into such a small and intense form. When the fighting aura was condensed into thousands of icy awls, the destructive force hidden in those awls actually increased by a hundred times. Even an intangible existence like the yin demon had suffered injuries from this attack. Han Shuo believed that if he hadn’t reacted fast enough and swapped his body out, he definitely would’ve become a mangled mess.

While Han Shuo was shocked at Leah Cain’s attack, Leah Cain the attacker himself felt even more incredulous. He could never expected Han Shuo to evade his strike.

Han Shuo’s four clones and landed on the flat ground. The three figures transformed from the yin demons slowly faded like a reflection on a lake being hit with a stone. The shadows twisted and swayed for a bit before disappearing, leaving only one Han Shuo behind Leah Cain.

“Too powerful!”

“Woah! What was that just now? A rain of swords? So stunning! I didn’t think this ugly fellow could have produced such a beautiful attack!”

“Bryan was the formidable one here. If I didn’t see wrong, there was four Bryans just now. My gosh, truly miraculous!”

“You didn’t see wrong. I also saw four Bryans. What skill is this? It’s really too powerful!”

The whole audience burst into a hubbub after a moment of silence. All of the watching nobles, along with their followers, were discussing with surprise. Their faces was full of shock and excitement after seeing the astounding performance earlier.

“What, what’s going on?” Candide’s expression was that of disbelief as well on the high platform. He exclaimed with incredulity while looking at the distant Leah Cain and Han Shuo.

“That Leah Cain is truly terrifying. According to the intelligence of Dark Mantle, he’d always used that rainbow of a silver sword aura to gain the advantage before defeating his opponents in his fights during recent years. It seems his trademark move is the attack he’d just deployed, the dense drizzle of ice needles. I could feel the destructive force within. I really didn’t expect this crude, brainless looking Leah Cain to hide such a sinister and meticulous skill. Truly a terrifying person!”

Sighing in astonishment, Amyes stopped for a bit and continued to exclaim in excitement, “Candide, your Bryan is even more magical. There’s almost no way to avoid that attack, yet he used such a miraculous skill to instantly split into four and escape the area of attack. What an incredible boy!”

“Of course, otherwise why would I spend so much effort on him?!” Candide was secretly taken aback, but still answered smugly after hearing Amyes’ words.

The surrounding was filled with the mix of endless discussion and loud noises. Given this level of excitement from the audience, it was likely that the discussion would only stop when the two fighters resumed their battle.

Leah Cain and Han Shuo now had some certain understanding of their opponent’s strength after such an intense exchange. The originally confident Han Shuo had to tread with more caution, and the dismissive Leah Cain had to put aside his arrogance and treat Han Shuo as his most powerful opponent thus far.

The two were standing around fifteen meters away from each other at the moment. Leah Cain once again stood on the ground, panting lightly as he glared at Han Shuo.

The two men just stood there, staring at each other without a word. After a span of ten breaths, Han Shuo’s lips curled into a grin,

“Leah Cain, you’re going to be dead today without a doubt. Your attack just now was truly very powerful. Unfortunately, it needs a long time to gather and moreover, exhausts a great deal of fighting aura, doesn’t it?”

Leah Cain instantly paled in shock as Han Shuo’s words sounded. It

seemed Han Shuo had hit upon the weak point of this skill!

Han Shuo shot towards Leah Cain like a lightning bolt at this precise moment. The Demonslayer Edge was flying one step ahead like a snake baring its fangs and biting down on its prey. As Leah Cain used his broadsword to block, the Demonslayer Edge would circle around to attack from another side.

Han Shuo also rushed towards Leah Cain but didn't attack in the manner of the Demonslayer Edge. Instead, he flew up in the air and leisurely took out the white bone staff, his mouth starting to chant some incantation. When the Canopy of Necromancy blotted out the sunlight, two evil knights leading a troop of dark creatures appeared one by one on the lawn and tightly surrounded Leah Cain.

Two evil knights, five hate warriors, twenty zombies, seventy skeletal warriors and two teams of thirty gargoyles each had appeared. Leah Cain was entangled by the Demonslayer Edge and could only stare dumbly at the materializing dark creatures that were encircling him.

"Leah Cain is done for!" Amyes said gracefully before looking at Candide with a smile, and added, "Let's go, we will go together to meet His Majesty. His Majesty will definitely make the right decision with Bryan's value. Hehe, that boy Lawrence's luck isn't bad alright, we should grow closer to him!"

"That's right!" Candide nodded before drifting away with Amyes towards the direction of the Imperial Palace.

The two had yet to completely clear the area when Leah Cain's tragic roars echoed nonstop throughout the entire Garden House area.

Lurking underground, the earth elite zombie had grabbed on Leah Cain's ankles. The humble little skeleton had then caused great injuries to Leah Cain with a surreptitious ambush. The two evil knights trampled him to death afterwards. In the end, over a hundred dark creatures rushed in and ripped him apart. There wasn't a single piece of bone left behind.

# Chapter 289: A medal of merit

Leah Cain's fate had been sealed when more than a hundred dark creatures appeared. After all, a great deal of his fighting aura had been exhausted after exchanging blows with Han Shuo. Particularly in that last attack, Leah Cain had consumed a massive amount of fighting aura to produce the ice needles.

Han Shuo had the mental strength of a grand magus despite not being able to release the necromancy spells of this level. Such a huge mental force was enough for him to summon a large number of dark creatures. Amongst these creatures were the remarkably powerful little skeleton, the earth elite zombie and the wood elite zombie.

The three bizarre dark creatures lurked within the necromancy grand army and would randomly release attacks that caught an average person off guard, rendering them unable to defend themselves. Leah Cain had to deal with the Demonslayer Edge's all-pervasive attacks while facing two evil knights, creatures famous for their tyrannical strength. That obviously took most of his attention.

The three bizarre creatures took the opportunity to utilize their unique attacks to their hearts' content. This strategy was naturally effective as Leah Cain was instantly heavily injured by the little skeleton's sneak attacks. It was a matter of course for him to be trampled to death by the evil knights.

The hundred strong dark creatures instantly drowned Leah Cain and blocked the vision of the surrounding nobles as well as that of their entourages'. These people couldn't see what was happening at all. They could only hear the shrill, tragic roars from Leah Cain.

Han Shuo was standing grandly in the sky as Leah Cain's tragic screaming started to subside. He unhurriedly chanted an incantation, sending his summoned dark creatures back to the other dimension. Apart from the traces of blood scattered on the grass, there was nothing, not even a piece of bone left on the lawn to indicate these creatures had been

present.

Everyone understood that Leah Cain was finished! He must have been ripped apart and eaten cleanly by those dark creatures. The big, still wet patches of blood on the lawn were proof of this truth.

“Done, done just like that!”

“Leah Cain is dead! I mean, he should be dead!”

“Uhh, how can this be? He was finished so quickly?!”

The onlookers around all sent horrified looks at Han Shuo standing proudly in mid-air. They then looked back down at the bloodstains on the lawn and understood that the battle was over. Han Shuo had successfully killed the Crazy Great Swordmaster Leah Cain of the Brut Merchant Alliance. He’d won fair and square, and had shown his unique skills from beginning to end of the battle.

He’d used the necromancers’ most brilliant, common, and effective tactic of numbers in the end to directly stomp on the great swordmaster. No matter from what perspective one approached this battle, this match could be regarded as a classic one for the books. Leah Cain’s dense rain of ice awls and Han Shuo’s unique skill in splitting up into four copies were all deeply engraved into everyone’s memory.

A hubbub of discussions rose and fell. Han Shuo had been standing proudly in the sky when he suddenly let out a resounding shout and left a blinding speed. His elegant, dashing figure gradually turned into a black spot until the crowd could no longer see a trace of him.

It weren’t just the audience inside the Garden House who knew of Han Shuo’s grand victory, the civilians on the streets outside all deduced the result when they saw Han Shuo fly away in the air. Everyone cheered and yelled, the atmosphere as joyous as a holiday.

First Prince Charles’ face was terrifyingly gloomy. He never expected Leah Cain to lose, no matter how much he speculated about the match. To him, this was simply unreal.

A face that looked even more embarrassed than Charles’ belonged to

merchant Cameron. He stood right behind Charles with a bleak expression on an ashen complexion, his eyes glazed over as he stared into space. He simply didn't know what to do now. As the operator behind the scenes, Cameron had to draw out all of his capital for this bet like everyone else. He already had to pay an arm and leg for just Phoebe's Boozt Merchant Guild alone.

Phoebe was the complete opposite of him. Her usually cold face was currently full of uncontrollable excitement, her cherry lips muttering nonstop, "I'm rich, I'm rich!"

"Heh heh, heh heh, Bryan ah Bryan, you really didn't let me down!" Lawrence had never felt happier than he was today as he looked at Charles' gloomy face. He laughed loudly and left with Phoebe, walking arrogantly past Charles and Cameron.

"Let's go, father-in-law!" Although Emily soon knew of this result, she still felt an infinite glory as Han Shuo's secret woman when she saw his godly strength on display. The corner of her lips slightly turned up in a delightful smile as she turned to speak to old mister Hahn.

"Incredible, incredible little guy, heh!" Old mister Hahn showered nonstop praises, then left the Garden House with Emily.

When the nobles exited the Garden House, the details of Han Shuo's grand victory over Leah Cain quickly spread. At this moment, the entire Ossen City was discussing Han Shuo. Many noble young ladies secretly regarded him as the target of their admiration and adoration. Countless aristocrats wanted to recruit Han Shuo.

Ossen City, the Imperial Palace.

The two who'd left early – Amyes and Candide – were in a chamber with the king of the Lancelot Empire. They were softly narrating the details of the battle.

King Uhtred suddenly spoke loudly in joy after a while, "Good, very well done! I heard just yesterday that he'd found the blueprint, and today he's already killed Leah Cain of the Brut Merchant Alliance. This boy is truly worthy of enormous investment!"

“Not only that, your Majesty. Bryan also possesses an unique art. Not only can he become a top notch expert, his martial art can create an immeasurable impact to our Empire if widely promoted!” Amyes waited until Uhtred happily finished his speech before adding cautiously.

As these words fell, Uhtred asked in surprise, “What is this about?”

“It’s like this...” Gloomy Candide, one of the three heavyweights, carefully explained to Uhtred as he went over the details of how Han Shuo defeated Leah Cain. Then he added, “Your Majesty, Bryan has a clean background and is wholeheartedly loyal to the Empire. He’s worth it no matter the cost!”

Uhtred naturally had extraordinary insight since he’d been able to become king of Lancelot. His eyes sparkled when he heard Candide talk about the miracles about Han Shuo. He was silent for a while before issuing an order, “Candide, I intend to bestow him the title of count, award him with a mansion in the city’s north end, along with ten thousand gold coins. Promote him directly from Dark Moon to Dark Sun envoy with the right to access all Dark Mantle intelligence. In addition, you will personally lead Bryan and let him have his pick of territory. Don’t ask him about his martial arts for the time being. We first need to show him our sincerity.”

“Your Majesty is wise, I think Bryan will be very grateful!” Candide flattered.

“Mm, Candide, this Bryan was personally mentored by you, your credit is great. I now bestow you with a Medal of Bravery, consider this your reward!” Uhtred said to Candide with a smile.

“Many thanks to Your Majesty, your subject is very grateful!” Candide was overjoyed as he knelt down to receive the honor.

The Empire’s Medal of Bravery carried a special meaning. Only those with outstanding contributions to the Empire could be awarded this medal. Having this Medal of Bravery meant that Candide could enjoy the special privileges of the Empire in his lifetime. Even if the current king passed away, the next inheritor of the throne could never use brute force

against the Imperial heroes who possessed a Medal of Bravery. Moreover, this medal was hereditary. Even when Candide died, his direct descendents could still enjoy the special privilege.

Although the Medal of Bravery carried no tangible benefits, this little medal was like a card of privilege that gave an identity even much superior than an average noble title. Therefore, Candide was overjoyed upon hearing Uhtred bestow him a Medal of Bravery. He secretly thought that this Bryan was indeed his lucky star!

“Candide, congratulations!” Amyes elegantly turned to offer Candide his congratulations.

“Many thanks!” Candide smiled in response, his face couldn’t conceal his joy.

“Alright, this is a reward you deserve because you’ve discovered a person who can become a sacred swordmaster and sacred magus for the Empire. I hope you will provide Bryan with more guidance and make even more contributions for the Empire!” Uhtred smiled as he looked at Candide and spoke slowly.

“Rest assure your Majesty, I will help Bryan adapt to aristocratic life as soon as possible. This boy is highly intelligent, he will become a pillar of the Empire sooner or later !” Candide was so pleased after he received the Medal of Bravery that he immediately made these promises.

Nodding his head, Uhtred said smilingly, “Good. You can all leave now. I will warn the Church of Light and won’t allow them to act wildly in our Lancelot Empire. Hehe, I believe the title of count is just the beginning for this boy. I hope he won’t disappoint me!”

Candide and Amyes glanced at each other. They didn’t say anything else and bowed respectfully. They then left through the secret tunnel and returned to the Dark Mantle headquarters within Mt. Ordas behind the Imperial Palace. After arriving, Candide started to prepare for Han Shuo’s ennoblement matters.



# Chapter 290: First function of the bone staff

Han Shuo's name spread all throughout Ossen City in just a short few days. Thanks to his identity as an archmage necromancer and his deed of killing Leah Cain, this proved his strength. Uhtred used the fact that Han Shuo had recovered the blueprint to bestow upon him the title of count.

Uhtred also awarded him a gorgeous mansion in the northern part of the city, which included guards, maids, servants, and all that one could possibly want. The mansion had more than a hundred rooms of various sizes.

Even though Han Shuo had yet to officially receive the title of count, this didn't stop others from admiring and wanting to make friends with him. The gorgeous mansion already belonged to him from the moment he had left the Garden House.

Over the next couple of days, dignitaries from various noble houses came by to pay their respects to him. Unfortunately, the steward kept saying that the owner had yet to move in. Those who had come to visit could only leave their gifts behind.

Although he was currently the center of attention, Han Shuo himself actually didn't know about the situation going on outside. He flew alone to the mountain behind the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force after leaving the Garden House. There, he opened up the transportation matrix and returned to the cemetery of death.

Han Shuo had reaped many benefits from his battle with Leah Cain. He slowly digested the experience from this battle as he gradually recovered his magical yuan and mental strength. Han Shuo's body reached its peak condition by the time evening came. He immersed himself in the bloodlust realm, his deep red pupils furiously circulating with magical yuan.

After a few days passed like this, Han Shuo's deep red eyes gradually returned to normal. He heaved a soft sigh, "Just one more step. It's a pity

that this step seems to be an unbreakable bottleneck. I really don't know what's going on."

Han Shuo could faintly sense that he'd soon break out of the bloodlust realm. However, he couldn't bridge the gap no matter how much effort he put in. Breakthroughs in magical cultivation required opportunities and comprehension. Perhaps the day that Han Shuo became spontaneously enlightened, he would directly break through into the next realm. He could instantly succeed once he firmly grasped this step.

Blind, stubborn practice wasn't a good idea. When Han Shuo felt that he could no longer advance by relying on arduous training, he immediately stopped practicing demonic magic. He took out the tri-colored bone staff after some thought.

At this point, Han Shuo was certain that this bone staff was the result of the Eye of Darkness transforming, as the top of the staff and the Eye of Darkness gave off the same feeling. When Han Shuo focused his mental force into the bone staff, he could use it to successfully open the cemetery of death.

This bone staff was much more intricate and ancient compared to the white bone staff that Han Shuo had taken from the Calamity Church. The three different skulls seemed to contain three different kinds of power. Han Shuo could subtly feel this every time he grasped the bone staff.

The bone staff was, without a doubt, a treasure that belonged to the cemetery of death. Shaking the staff a little, Han Shuo muttered, "Let's try out this bone staff."

"Souls of the fallen soldiers, heed the dark herald's call and reveal your existence!" Han Shuo waved the bone staff and chanted an elementary skeleton summoning incantation. The tri-colored skulls on the bone staff suddenly shone brightly upon being infused with his mental force. A row of sixteen skeletal warriors appeared out of thin air afterwards.

Han Shuo was momentarily dazed, shocked even, as he looked at the sixteen skeletal warriors. Mental strength at the grand magus level would only result in eight skeletal warriors being summons when using the white

bone staff. But when he cast the spell using this bone staff, he'd unexpectedly reached the highest level of the skeleton summoning spell – level five. The number of summoned dark creatures had straight up doubled.

“This is too amazing!” Han Shuo exclaimed involuntarily. He started chanting the incantation to summon evil knights. When he had finished chanting, two evil knights appeared on the ground.

“Twice the results!” Han Shuo was utterly delighted. He then tried summoning the hate warriors and zombie warriors and achieved the same results. The number of summoned creatures had doubled when he used this bone staff whilst chanting the incantations.

After a successful experiment, Han Shuo couldn't help but continue and try incantations for Canopy of Necromancy and Acid Bog. He discovered that the area of effect for both spells were now twice as wide.

“Good stuff! This is really good stuff!” Han Shuo caressed the bone staff, never wanting to let go of it. He hadn't expected this bone staff to be so magical. It'd doubled the potential of the spells and increased his power by another level.

The bone staff was designed in an odd fashion and seemed quite ancient. In addition to doubling the power of necromancy magic, Han Shuo subtly felt that this staff hid several other secrets within it as well. It was a pity that he had no other methods to test it besides using it to release necromancy magic.

A white light flashed in the transportation matrix in the cemetery of death. Emily's figure appeared within the light. She opened her mouth to speak as soon as she saw Han Shuo, “I knew you'd be here!”

The transportation matrix leading to this place was stationed in a corner of the graveyard. Han Shuo was accustomed to arriving at the cemetery of death by using the hidden location in the mountains behind the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Only Emily knew this habit of his. When she went there and saw the magic sticks in the corner of the grave, she immediately knew that Han Shuo must've headed to the cemetery of

death.

“Oh, what brings you here?” Han Shuo smiled upon seeing Emily appear and pulled her into his embrace.

“Hurry and return to Ossen City. His Majesty the King has prepared to bestow upon you the title of count. Everything is ready and waiting for you to return to Ossen City. Who knew that you’d disappear for a few days? Even the Dark Mantle couldn’t find a single trace of you. Master Candide is very anxious, so he asked me to help him find a way to contact you. I guessed that you were at the cemetery of death, and it seems that I wasn’t wrong!” Emily rolled her eyes at Han Shuo in explanation.

“So that’s the case!” Han Shuo replied, then asked with a strange chuckle, “So His Majesty intends to grant me the title of count?”

“Yes. In addition to the title, he’s also bequeathing upon you a mansion in the northern part of the city and ten thousand gold coins. Candide seems to have prepared everything for you already, and it only awaits you to take it!” Emily said.

“Fantastic. I didn’t think that giving Leah Cain a beating could bring such great benefits. Heh heh, it seems that noble titles really aren’t so hard to get!” Han Shuo said with a smile before activating the transportation matrix and returning to the Ossen City with Emily.

Mt. Ordas, the Dark Mantle headquarters.

“Stinking brat, why don’t you disappear for ten more days huh?” Candide scolded with a dark face upon seeing Han Shuo appear.

“I was slightly injured after my fight with Leah Cain, so I had no choice but to recover first, so I returned a bit later.” Han Shuo lied, and smiled at Candide and congratulated his mentor. “Congratulations Master Candide, I heard that His Majesty the King bequeathed upon you the Medal of Bravery two days ago. Congrats congrats!”

Candide’s gloomy face finally revealed a hint of a smile when Han Shuo mentioned this, but he quickly recovered and said with a stern expression, “Alright alright, let’s not talk about this anymore. Give me your badge. His

Majesty has ordered me to promote you to a rank one Dark Sun envoy. Little brat, your luck is truly too good!"

"Let's go, come with me to meet His Majesty. His Majesty will bestow upon you a noble title and grant you a territory!" Candide said before leading Han Shuo through the secret transportation matrix in the Dark Mantle headquarters that led directly to the Imperial Palace.

Not long after, King Uhtred summoned the various nobles of Ossen City to gather in the middle of the spacious Lancelot Imperial Palace. He granted Han Shuo an audience and read the proclamation to begin the ceremony, "Bryan aided the Lancelot Empire many times in defending against foreign enemies... I bestow upon you the title of count, a mansion in the north of the city, and ten thousand gold coins. I hope you will continue to make great contributions to the Empire!"

"My thanks to your Your Majesty!" Candide had reminded Han Shuo of what to do and say earlier, so Han Shuo sincerely voiced his gratitude at this moment.

"Mhm, Brettel City in the furthest east shall be your territory. Brettel City is vast but extremely chaotic. I hope it will soon be restored to order under your leadership!" Uhtred raised his voice to speak loudly.

Several nobles revealed surprised expressions when they heard the territory would be Brettel City. It seemed that this city was very famous.

"Thank you, Your Majesty. I will definitely take good care of Brettel City and help restore the city to the order that it should possess in the Empire!" Han Shuo respectfully replied.

"Good. This shall be it for today. You are all dismissed!" Uhtred glanced at Han Shuo several times over before waving his arm to signify the end of the meeting. Everybody left one by one.

# Chapter 291: Mansion and territory

Brettel City was located to the east in the Lancelot Empire and bordered seven constantly warring duchies. These duchies weren't as powerful as the Lancelot Empire and were plagued with conflict almost all year round.

However, whenever the Lancelot Empire would try to invade these seven duchies, they would stop their internal conflict and tightly join hands to resist the invasion of the Lancelot Empire.

One duchy by itself couldn't compete with the Lancelot Empire, but seven of them together had the power beyond that of the Lancelot Empire. Fortunately, these seven duchies would never be united forever, otherwise the Lancelot Empire would truly be hard pressed to face their attack.

Brettel City was precisely a Lancelot Empire city that bordered the seven duchies. The size of the city was vast, but unfortunately its location was awkward. The city suffered from the impact of the chaotic warring between the seven duchies, so it was the place where crooks mixed with honest folk.

"Bryan, normally a count such as you has no way to control such a large territory. Brettel City is almost the size of the Valen City, only someone with the title of marquis is qualified to oversee such a city. Hehe, Brettel is chaotic indeed, but it's just right for a spirited young man like you."

"It would greatly benefit your future career if you manage Brettel City well. It will be up to you to grasp opportunities well if you wish to obtain the title of marquis or duke." In the secret chamber of the Dark Mantle, Candide looked at Han Shuo and explained in a low tone.

Sitting directly opposite of Candide, Han Shuo was perusing the information about Brettel City. He nodded at Candide's words and placed the documents to the side, lifting his head to say, "Brettel is a barren land, the soil cannot nurture any type of crops. It can only produce some specialized iron and silver ores. The city has been caught in the midst of warring between the seven duchies for a long time while bandits and thieves have run rampant. Even several official armies of the duchies have

disguised themselves as bandits to invade and pillage the city. This is a chaotic place where the city folks are tough. It's actually a very interesting area!"

"How so? Do you have any ideas yet?" Han Shuo was a count not, and he'd also proved his power last time in the Garden House by killing Leah Cain. Even Candide no longer had the attitude of a boss talking to a subordinate when he spoke with Han Shuo. He was viewing Han Shuo as he equal on the same level.

"No ideas yet for now. I want to go to Brettel City and see the situation for myself first!" Han Shuo replied indifferently.

"Then alright. Take these documents, they are proof of your identity as the Brettel city lord. The former city lord was removed due to his incompetence. The Brettel City's castle now belongs to you, you can show these documents to officially take ownership of it."

"Mm, in addition, Brettel City currently has three thousand guards all under your command. Perhaps you aren't well versed in leading the army to war. However, I think Lawrence can help you with this aspect. You only need to protect Brettel City from the invasion of the duchies and bandits, as well as maintain its order. That should be enough." Candide said.

"Alright then, I'll be leaving now. I'll contact you through the magic mirror in Brettel City's Dark Mantle stronghold if anything comes up!" Han Shuo nodded and said to Candide before exiting the Dark Mantle headquarters.

Han Shuo walked into a mansion in the city's northern end. A steward was already waiting in front of the gate. He immediately said respectfully upon seeing Han Shuo, "Respected Sir Count, you've finally come. My name is Kallas, I am your steward."

"Hello Kallas, what can you tell me about this mansion?" Han Shuo asked with a faint smile.

Kallas was a gray-haired old man wearing clean and simple clothes. His speech was refined and his behavior courteous. He must have been in his position for quite a few years. Kallas immediately responded respectfully

to Han Shuo's question, "Your Lordship, this mansion has belonged to you since the moment you defeated Leah Cain. Everything is operating normally. In the past few days, a total of thirty nobles from Ossen City have come to pay you a visit. We have received seventy-three types of gifts in total, all of them are being properly stored..."

Han Shuo remembered every detail as Kallas softly summarized the situation within the mansion. From Kallas, Han Shuo knew that many nobles didn't have territory in the Ossen City. Instead, they had a mansion here which they stayed in when they came to meet His Majesty the King.

Of course, there were also aristocrats whose territories weren't bustling enough for their tastes. As they didn't enjoy the life in their own territory, many nobles always resided inside the Ossen City. It was fine as long as they returned to their territory regularly, handled some matters, and made sure that no trouble cropped up in it.

There were maids, servants, stewards and all necessary resources inside the mansion. Han Shuo had the right to remove them, or needed to pay them a certain salary each month so they could maintain the normal operations of the mansion. Kallas described some of the miscellaneous things very carefully.

"Alright, Mister Kallas, I've understood everything. Mm, take me to the living room. Invite Lawrence and young Miss Phoebe here, I want to see the two of them. If other people ask for me, tell them I'm not here." Han Shuo discovered through the three yin demons' surveillance that many people had come to visit him. These people had been placed in different rooms so they didn't know of each other's movements.

One yin demon had been injured last time in the battle with Leah Cain. It had recovered after being nourished by the blood essence in the cemetery of death. Even though Han Shuo had spent a few drops of his essence blood, it was good that the yin demon was fine.

"Yes, Your Lordship!" Kallas replied. He brought Han Shuo to a big living room before withdrawing respectfully.

This living room was as big as a basketball court. Seven large, vibrant



lamps were hanging above. A soft carpet covered the floor. Many comfortable chairs was placed around the surroundings. The room looked bright and spacious.

Lawrence and Phoebe walked in together after a while. Lawrence laughed heartily and said to Han Shuo as soon as he arrived, "Congratulations Bryan, I heard that the king bestowed a title upon you today. I thought you would come back to your mansion, so I brought Phoebe with me."

Phoebe's face was glowing, a beautiful, bright smile blooming on her lips after she'd won an enormous amount of gold coins. Her eyes blazed as she looked at Han Shuo and said, "Bryan, Cameron is finished this time. His merchant alliance has suffered a heavy loss thanks to him, so his allies no longer trust him. The crisis of our Boozt Guild has been resolved."

Looking at the two happy people, Han Shuo nodded smilingly and said, "I intend to go to Brettel City. This city is full of mayhem, it's very interesting. If this Brettel City can develop well in my hands, it can be very beneficial to you, Lawrence."

"I've knew about you taking charge of Brettel City. This city is chaotic indeed, the civilians there are much tougher than in the Ossen City. The bandit armies of several grand duchies constantly pillage the villages in the surroundings. In recent years, the city lords of Brettel City have all been incompetent. This has caused all the businessmen to leave, and the nobles and civilians to lose their confidence in Brettel City due to this. It may not be easy if you want to quickly grasp control of the situation!" Lawrence said with a frown. He was quite worried upon hearing Han Shuo mention Brettel City.

The Lancelot Empire had sent out its armies repeatedly and tried to invade the seven grand duchies through Brettel City. However, the Empire had to withdraw every single time and eventually banished this idea. Whenever the main troops retreated, the few tens of thousands remaining Brettel City guards were insufficient to defend against the invasion from any duchy. The duchies took advantage of that opportunity to loot and raid, as was their habit.

However, even though the seven grand duchies had the power to take over Brettel City, they didn't dare to because they still had suspicions about each other, while also being afraid that they'd really infuriate the Lancelot Empire. This was why they only pillaged from time to time and never truly occupied the city.

Therefore, the former city lords of Brettel City had been much aggrieved and frustrated. The city was much weaker than any of the grand duchies. In addition, the land was barren, so there wasn't much benefit from it despite the vastness of the area. The King also wasn't willing to waste an enormous amount of manpower and resources in stationing an army inside the city to defend against the seven grand duchies.

Brettel City had become a kind of useless and meaningless existence ever since then. It would be a pity to give up, but not giving up wouldn't bring any benefits either. The situation was very awkward.

"Rest assured, I understand what kind of place Brettel City is. I already have a plan. After all, His Majesty has spoken. Brettel City is fully under my responsibility, I'll take good care of it!" Han Shuo let out a strange cackled and responded in a mysterious manner.

"What do you intend to do?" Lawrence asked, dumbfounded.

"You'll know when the time comes. I will make Brettel City even more chaotic!" Han Shuo spoke with an evil laugh.

# Chapter 292: Three hundred thousand gold coins

“Senior brother Lawrence, there’s something I want to speak to Bryan about alone.” Phoebe glanced at Lawrence and said softly.

Lawrence was startled but soon reacted. He smiled meaningfully and said, “Alright. Rest assured Bryan, I’ll arrange some fine military leaders to arrive at Brettel City before you travel there.”

Nodding his head, Han Shuo said with a slight smile, “Many thanks, I’m really not very good at military strategy. Your people will surely be a great help to me!”

“Alright then, you guys talk, I’ll go back first. I’ll personally come to Brettel City after a while to pay you a visit.” Lawrence flashed a wink at the two before exiting the room with a smile.

Han Shuo stepped forward and gathered Phoebe into his arms as soon as Lawrence had left, following up with a long, lingering kiss. Han Shuo picked her up and walked straight into the bedroom. He dropped her right on the spacious, soft bed and pressed himself on her.

Clothes flung out, the two naked bodies intertwined. Phoebe let out one sultry whimper after another, trying desperately to match Han Shuo’s pounding movements. She kept going until she had exhausted of every bit of strength.

After stormy turbulence, Phoebe lazily leaned onto Han Shuo’s strong chest. Her delicate fingers gently glided across his body as she murmured in satisfaction, “I can’t leave with you for now. Cameron’s merchant alliance is facing a crisis of disbandment due to their loss in his huge gamble. This has opened up an opportunity.”

There was normally a secret chamber in the mansion of every noble for storing precious goods or engaging in secret endeavours. This mansion the King had bestowed upon Han Shuo was no exception. Candide had told Han Shuo everything about this mansion when he met with Han Shuo in

the Dark Mantle headquarters, including the underground secret chamber.

Han Shuo saw a big, empty room after walking down the tunnel. There was nothing inside except for a few empty closets.

Setting up the magic sticks into a closet, Han Shuo arrived at the cemetery of death through the transportation matrix. The cemetery of death was gloomy all year round. Except for the stark white bones scattered everywhere, there was no vitality nor any changes. Han Shuo heaved a soft sigh of relief upon exiting the cemetery of death. He looked to the depths of the Dark Forest and spread out his senses.

“Why hasn’t the fire elite zombie been completed after so long!” Han Shuo frowned and muttered to himself, unable to comprehend things.

The earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie certainly hadn’t taken as long to emerge as the fire elite zombie. If it weren’t for Han Shuo being able to sense its presence, he would really have thought that it’d met with some troubles.

“Could it be because of the fire attribute treasure – the fire lotus, or the Lord of the Flames?” Han Shuo pondered for a bit and made this guess.

In contrast to the earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie, the place of extreme fire had given birth to a fire attribute treasure – the fire lotus. What would result from it hadn’t been mentioned in Chu Cang Lan’s memory. There had been a terrifying Lord of the Flames inside as well that had taken the fire elite zombie to be its child, which put an even odder spin on things. So many strange happenings together might have impacted the formation of the fire elite zombie. Otherwise, it shouldn’t have taken that long to emerge.

“Forget it. Let’s start the water elite zombie for now!” Han Shuo decided to stop thinking about it. He understood that there was no issue since he could still sense the presence of the fire elite zombie. He decided to go to the Valley of Sunshine and place the water elite zombie into the place of extreme water.

After flying through the air for a while, Han Shuo traveled from the Dark Forest to the territory of the Valley of Sunshine. He jumped down the

strange cliff to look for the Soul Destroyer base.

Surprisingly, Han Shuo couldn't sense Gilbert's presence at all. He only saw Grant when he walked in. The latter immediately paid his respects upon seeing Han Shuo and explained, "The chief and Gilbert have taken accepted a mission, they aren't here for now."

"What's the current situation?" Han Shuo ordered the three yin demons to circle around. He discovered that there were over two hundred mercenaries still present. As these two hundred people looked completely unfamiliar, he immediately understood that the Soul Destroyer mercenary band had expanded.

"What else could have happened? The great powers have switched from covert to direct fighting. During this chaotic period, Laureton's Cairo mercenary band has been the strongest. The other three powers was forced to join hands in order to take a stand against the Cairo mercenaries. A few strong bandit forces also participate from time to time. The current Valley of Sunshine has become a chaotic mess." Grant explained to Han Shuo with a smile.

"Oh right, after what happened last time, did the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo make trouble for you guys?" Recalling the events in which he'd killed Ferguson and heavily injured Adam Menlo, Han Shuo couldn't help but ask with surprise about what had happened after.

"Heh heh, those two do indeed hate us Soul Destroyers very much. It's a pity that they don't know where we are. They can't proceed even if they want revenge!" Grant looked smug as he laughed loudly.

"I see many new faces in our band. There aren't any problems with these people right?" Concern struck him as Han Shuo asked.

"Rest assured. We only picked these mercenaries after a strict inspection. Those who can come in here are all trustworthy. Hehe, Laureton has allowed us to recruit people in the Valley of Sunshine thanks to you. This has saved is a lot of effort. " Grant looked gratefully at Han Shuo and said smilingly.

“Good. I’ll be leaving now since Trunks isn’t here.” Han Shuo said goodbye to Grant after obtaining the information he wanted and flew straight to the Valley of Sunshine.

The members of the Cairo mercenary band in the Valley of Sunshine all knew of Han Shuo now. They dismissed all procedures necessary from him to enter the valley. Everyone greeted Han Shuo with a smile, their attitude towards him quite amiable.

Han Shuo went straight to his shop as soon as he entered the Valley of Sunshine. He started to operate the formation without another word before jumping into the well. He took out the materials from his space ring one by one and sank down to the depths of the waters. The waters were cold to the bones. Han Shuo summoned the little skeleton upon reaching the bottom.

The little skeleton located an ordinary looking zombie as per Han Shuo’s order and disappeared after bringing the later out. Han Shuo placed this zombie warrior in the center of the place of extreme water. He threw in the strange materials one by one afterwards and directed all of the available water elements in this place to gather at the zombie warrior.

# Chapter 293: The Temple Knights

Han Shuo didn't expend too much effort in refining the water elite zombie. Thanks to the earth, wood and fire elite zombies, he was well versed in the process. After everything was finished,

Han Shuo jumped out of the well and suddenly felt two unfamiliar presences.

The deathly air of the Shura Soul Formation was quietly circulating in the shop's courtyard. Dark grand magus Edwin of the Calamity Church and the female alchemist Belinda was wandering around outside. They didn't dare to come in, and could only look down in shock at this gloomy yard from the rooftop.

A concentrated sense of death could be found within the Shura Soul Formation. The two people absolutely couldn't see what Han Shuo was doing inside. But for Han Shuo, he only needed to lift his head after jumping out of the well to see the two experts of the Calamity Church clearly.

Edwin and Belinda obviously knew there was a great danger hidden below. They looked down in shock at the changes, not daring to risk entering the formation. They appeared very wary and cautious.

Thanks to the Rainbow Sickle ambush last time, the two already knew that this place was extremely dangerous. Han Shuo knew they knew, so it was understandable that these two didn't dare to draw close.

After circling around the courtyard to inspect it, Han Shuo walked towards the eye of the formation and shot a black light onto it. The violent, gloomy deathly air in the formation instantly dispersed and the formation returned to its inert state.

Han Shuo sat down on a chair in the courtyard, lazily looking up at Edwin on the rooftop. He asked indifferently, "Mister Edwin, it seems that you're always this surreptitious when you pay a visit. Can it be that this is how your Calamity Church operates?"

Edwin still didn't dare to come down even though the changes in the courtyard had disappeared. Having heard Han Shuo's words, he chuckled and said, "My apologies. We'll stay up here for our little chat. Congratulations on killing Ferguson. However, you've also completely offended the Church of Light. They'll spare no costs in dealing with you now. So, heh heh, our Calamity Church sincerely invites you to join us. We're willing to pay any price as long as you're willing to join us."

"Sorry, not interested!" Han Shuo had declined before, and he was still determined to turn them down all the same. He left no room for further negotiation.

"Alright then. Since you don't want to join us, let's discuss a bit about cooperation instead. Hehe, the Church of Light has dispatched a small troop of Temple Knights, whose goal is to deal with you. The Temple Knights don't number many, but each one is a true expert. This troop is the sword that the Church of Light uses to eradicate heretics. They are currently marching towards Brettel City, just waiting for you to arrive."

"Even if you hadn't come to the Valley of Sunshine today, my people would have still gone to inform you when you arrived at Brettel City. But I didn't expect to be able to meet you here, and that's why I'm telling you in advance to see if we can possibly cooperate!" Edwin was truly sincere, he'd informed Han Shuo of this important information at first opportunity.

Han Shuo involuntarily frowned at Edwin's words. The main headquarters of the Church of Light headquarters was positioned in the most powerful nation of the Profound Continent – the Oden Empire. This Empire was separated from the Lancelot Empire by the Angel Empire. The Temple Knights had always protected the Temple of Light loyally. It seemed the Church of Light was truly determined this time if they'd dispatched a small troop of Temple Knight just for Han Shuo.

"I won't cooperate with you for now. However if I need something, I just might contact you!" Han Shuo thought for a while before telling Edwin.

Edwin immediately grinned upon hearing Han Shuo's words and said, "The Calamity Church and the Church of Light are death sworn enemies



in the Profound Continent! Alright then, if you encounter any trouble, our Calamity Church may just appear at your side. Let's meet again then!"

Edwin and Belinda didn't linger after speaking these words. They swept a casual glance around the surroundings before cautiously leaving Han Shuo's rooftop and disappearing out of sight.

Han Shuo immediately stood up after Edwin and Belinda left. He released all three yin demons and had them follow after Edwin and Belinda. He intended to see why these two had come to the Valley of Sunshine.

Edwin and Belinda were very careful, they made a lot of turns along the way, guarding against the tracking of any possible enemy. However, they couldn't hide their presence from the three yin demons' surveillance.

In the end, the two people unexpectedly entered the Cairo mercenary band's headquarters. Han Shuo was secretly tracking them this time so he didn't enter the headquarters openly. Instead, he hid in a corner of the valley that wasn't very far away and used the three yin demons to spy on Edwin's actions.

To be honest, when he saw the two walk up to the door, Han Shuo could somewhat deduce that Edwin had reached an agreement with Laureton. Otherwise, Edwin and Belinda couldn't have come to Han Shuo's door so quickly after he'd just returned to the Valley of Sunshine less than a couple hours ago. The Valley of Sunshine was within the Cairo mercenary band's sphere of influence. The Calamity Church's spy network had spread far and wide.

"Mister Edwin, did you go see Bryan?" Laureton asked first when Edwin arrived.

Nodding, Edwin thanked him with a smile, "Many thanks for letting me know. I've just seen Bryan. Right, how's the preparation going? Three hundred Death Guards from our Calamity Church will arrive at the Valley of Sunshine in two days. After all, anyone but the Church of Light can have the mithril mine. If they craft mithril armor for the Temple Knights, it will bring us great trouble in the future!"

Laureton's expression was cold as he said ferociously, "Rest assured. I will immediately mobilize the Cairo mercenary band as soon as your Death Guards arrive to flatten those powers around the mithril mine. Humph! I almost lost my life there last time, I won't be so careless this time. Those three great powers will definitely pay back this debt in blood!"

"Heh heh, that'd be best. Since the Church of Light wants the mithril mine, we'll fill the mine with their lives!" Edwin laughed in a sinister fashion as he discussed the details of the plan with Laureton. Han Shuo listened for a while and carefully memorized their conversation. When Edwin and Laureton were about to leave, Han Shuo moved one step faster than them and soundlessly exited the area.

Han Shuo immediately departed the Valley of Sunshine after leaving the Cairo mercenary band. He returned to the Soul Destroyers to ask about the movement of Trunks' group. From Grant, Han Shuo knew that it would be some time before those two returned.

Han Shuo didn't linger in the Soul Destroyer base. Instead, he rushed back to the cemetery of death and returned to the secret chamber in his mansion. Kallas stepped into the secret chamber not long after his return and said respectfully to Han Shuo, "Your Lordship, a young lady called Fanny wants to see you. She said that you'd definitely see her if I informed you of her name!"

Han Shuo was dumbfounded. He suddenly remembered his promise to Fanny. He'd said that he would find her in a few days when he'd left last time. He hadn't expected to be so busy and had forgotten about this. Now it was Fanny who'd come looking for him.

"Where is she? Take me to see her!" Now that Han Shuo had his own mansion, if Fanny and Phoebe came to find him too often, his relationships with them would be exposed sooner or later. Just thinking about it gave him a headache.

Seeing him so anxious, Kallas was quite surprised. He immediately said in a respectful manner, "Your Lordship, please follow me!"

After winding through a couple of hallways, Kallas led Han Shuo to the

room where Fanny was. He pointed inside and said, "Miss Fanny is in there."

"Mhm, you are dismissed, don't let other people come here!" Han Shuo instructed.

Han Shuo waited for Kallas to leave before he bit the bullet and walked inside. He immediately saw Fanny sitting in the middle of the room. She was wearing a navy blue dress instead of her usual magic robe. She instantly humphed upon seeing Han Shuo walk in, coldly looking at him as she said, "Your Lordship finally has some time to spare for us common civilians?"

"I'm so sorry. There was something that happened so I was delayed a little. This won't happen again. Fanny, you must forgive me." Han Shuo smiled wryly and apologized as soon as he came in. He was indeed in the wrong, it was natural for Fanny to be so angry.

"This isn't the first time either. You never honor your promises!" Fanny still maintained her iron face as she fixed him with a cold stare.

Han Shuo smiled wryly as he looked at Fanny, putting up his hands in surrender, "I was wrong. You can punish me however you want!"

"Then good, just promise me that you'll be an honorary professor for our necromancy major and I'll forgive you." Fanny thought for a bit before glaring ferociously at Han Shuo.

Honorary professor was just a title for show in the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. A person with this title basically wasn't bound by the Academy's rules. They only need to occasionally give a speech in accordance with the Academy's request. There was strong competition amongst the different majors in the Academy. The ability to invite famous, powerful figures to be honorary professors was the standard with which to measure a department's influence.

"No problem!" Han Shuo readily agreed.

"You scoundrel, how do you have the ability to kill someone so evil as Leah Cain? How did you become an archmage necromancer? How many

things are you actually still lying to me about?" Fanny was happy when she heard Han Shuo's ready acquiescence, but then her many doubts flooded her heart and just burst out.

## Chapter 294: A massive amount of explosives

Han Shuo only needed half an hour of honeyed words and gentle caressing, to make Fanny, who'd come to incriminate him, beam with joy. Smiles blooming on her lips, Fanny left Han Shuo's mansion in contentment after listening to his sweet talking.

Han Shuo then traveled at the fastest speed possible to the Boozt Merchant Guild to find Phoebe. He immediately requested upon finding her, "I need a ton of explosives, ones with the maximum fatality. The amount should be enough to destroy a small mountain!"

"Gosh! What do you need it for?" As a normal girl, Phoebe was shocked upon hearing that Han Shuo was in urgent need for a huge amount of lethal explosives, the stronger the better. She only needed to use her toes to figure out what he was going to do.

"Don't ask so much. Hurry and help me get my hands on them. Also, don't let anyone know about this matter." Han Shuo had made up his mind regardless of anything. Time waited for no one, so the faster the better.

Once a woman entered a physical relationship with a man, she would change because of him, even if that woman was the cold and arrogant Phoebe. Moreover, she knew that Han Shuo was very clear-headed, so he wouldn't do anything stupid. Therefore, she didn't ask anymore questions despite her doubts. When Han Shuo urged again, she nodded and said, "Give me some time, I'll collect them using all means possible."

"Good! I'll come for the explosives the day after tomorrow. You should temporarily avoid going out for the next two days." Han Shuo instructed before leaving the Boozt Merchant Guild in a hurry.

After quietly returning to the secret chamber in his mansion, Han Shuo used the transportation matrix to arrive at the cemetery of death once more. He then utilized the art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens and flew

towards the mountain valley with the mithril mine. There, he summoned the earth elite zombie.

Three yin demons slowly drifted towards the center of the mountain valley, rapidly transmitting images and scenes into Han Shuo's mind. The alliance, of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, the House of Menlo, and the Katar orc tribe, was here. More than a thousand of their members were stationed near the valley, surrounding it within layers and layers of encirclement.

That mithril mine was still operating as usual. However, harvesting this mine was no easy matter due to its steep and narrow terrain, especially as the mithril was mixed in with the silver ores and located in the deepest place. The three powers were still unsatisfied with their progress, even after increasing the amount of overtime the past several days.

The three yin demons scoured every corner of the valley. The earth elite zombie lurked underground, shooting to and fro as the child of the earth. Under Han Shuo's commands, he dug out an undiscoverable hole deep under the mountain valley. This hole would be the container for the explosives he would receive from Phoebe.

Han Shuo knew there'd be a bloody battle in this mountain valley from Laureton and Edwin's conversation. The majority of fighting force from the four great powers were going to participate in this war, including Laureton's Cairo mercenary band. Laureton had recently used various incentives to lure over ten minor forces to his side.

The other three great powers had also poured in a great deal of troops into the valley due to the existence of the mithril mine. Once the fighting broke out, this mountain valley would become the biggest battlefield in all of the Valley of Sunshine's history. All Han Shuo needed to do was put enough explosives under this battlefield to destroy all of the enemy forces, subduing them all in one fell swoop.

This had to be done with caution. Only the earth elite zombie's miraculous ability to drill soundlessly underground enabled him to accomplish this task. The three yin demons hadn't registered any powerful

earth mages at this time, so he boldly allowed the earth elite zombie to die according to his arrangements.

Even with his miraculous ability, the earth elite zombie still took quite a long time to lay out the preparations for the explosives in the mountain valley. Han Shuo constantly kept watch on the experts present through his three yin demons. He was afraid that they would sense the movements underground and discover his plan.

Fortunately, everything went fairly smoothly. Han Shuo immediately left the mountain valley once the earth elite zombie had finished his preparations. He returned to and stayed in the cemetery of death, carefully studying the archmage rank spell, Soul Tremor. This spell was extremely obscure and was quite difficult to grasp.

“Soul Tremor” directly attacked the opponent’s soul using one’s own mental strength. One first had to grasp a certain amount of knowledge concerning the soul before they could master this spell. On the other hand, they also needed to master the method of using their mental force to attack. Just this step alone, of shaping the mental force into an attack was already very difficult to execute.

Han Shuo continuously practiced in the cemetery of death, frowning as he pondered the way to utilize his mental strength as an attack.

He could clearly sense this invisible mental force when he concentrated his mind. However, Han Shuo couldn’t materialize it into an attack no matter what method he tried.

“This is indeed somewhat difficult!” Han Shuo muttered. He was unable to gather the requisite mental force and turn it into a tangible attack.

“The consciousness is formless, but its power limitless. The heart is the foundation of the attack. When the heart moves, the soul too, will move...”

Han Shuo suddenly recalled an incantation about the consciousness that was described in demonic magic. Upon reaching the separate demon realm, cultivators could distinctly sense their consciousness. The consciousness was actually reinforcement for the soul. Cultivators in the separate demon realm could transform their soul into their consciousness.

They could live forever as long as this consciousness wasn't completely destroyed.

Since the consciousness was a formless existence, the cultivator would gain many miraculous abilities once their soul transformed. The most basic benefit would be the ability to use their consciousness to sense movements in the surroundings. The sensitivity and scope depended on the strength of the cultivator's consciousness. In a fight, the consciousness could form all kinds of exotic attacks, as long as it was strong enough. For instance, a mirage or a tangible attacks could manipulate the opponent's mind, turning them into a puppet or have other amazing effects.

The consciousness could also attack the opponent's soul like mental force, with much more varied and mysterious ways than a simple mental strength to attack. According to the demonic magic's teachings about using consciousness to attack, Han Shuo vaguely felt that consciousness and mental force were similar in their uses.

The main difference was that the consciousness was the transformed soul of demonic cultivators, and was an important part of the foundation, like the demon infant. In fact, consciousness was even a bit more important. The demon infant was the source of his magical yuan. Once it was destroyed, a demonic practitioner would lose all of their power. They'd become an ordinary person once their body was void of magical yuan.

The consciousness was the soul of a demonic cultivator. They could still make use of their past experiences and expend time to build another demon infant if theirs was destroyed, as long as the consciousness was preserved. However once the consciousness was destroyed, cultivators would have their souls disperse into nothingness, leaving behind no traces in this world. Mental force was similar to the concept of demon infant. Once completely lost, a mage would, at most, lose their ability to gather magic elements and cast magic spells. They would just become an ordinary person instead of losing their life.

In the cemetery of death, Han Shuo was constantly contemplated, particularly with regards to attacking with his consciousness. He carefully



sifted through his understanding and seemed to gradually grasp a clue. When he completely focused all of his mental strength in a calm state of mind, a thought flashed through his head. The mental force churned fiercely, giving birth to a wondrous resonance.

Han Shuo quickly chanted an incantation at this moment. A strange force appeared from who knew where and swiftly merged with his mental force. A kind of wave spread out like water ripples.

“Mm, that’s some improvement. Just a little bit more!” Han Shuo breathed out a whisper. Just now, he’d felt his mental force form a tangible attack. However, since there was no soul in front of him, his attack had no target, so he was unable to truly test its effectiveness.

“It seems I need to find a live test subject!” Han Shuo muttered to himself as he thought for a moment. He left the cemetery of death when he found that it was already somewhat late.

Han Shuo went straight to the Boozt Merchant Guild without prior notice. He found Phoebe in her room and asked, “How goes it?”

“I’ve managed to collect a few. However, due to the short timing and explosives being dangerous, prohibited goods in the Empire, the amount I collected wasn’t enough to destroy a small mountain. Mm, if you can give me a little bit more time, I can go look in some cities farther away.” Phoebe looked helplessly at Han Shuo, speaking somewhat apologetically.

“There’s not enough time. Just gather as many as possible then. Mm, this matter would best be kept secret, otherwise trouble may arise.” Han Shuo said with a frown.

“Rest assured, I used some small businesses and acquired them in great secrecy through batches. I think there should be no problems.” Phoebe replied.

Phoebe’s space ring then shone nonstop. A carefully wrapped bundle of explosives appeared in Phoebe’s hand and was placed into Han Shuo’s space ring. When Phoebe finished handing over all of them, she finally asked, “Bryan, what do you intend to do? You don’t want to destroy Brettel City, do you?”

“This has nothing to do with Brettel City. I haven’t even gone there yet.” Han Shuo casually answered. He hugged Phoebe and gave her a kiss before saying with a smile, “Alright, don’t worry about me, I know what my limits are.”

Han Shuo hurriedly left the Boozt Merchant Guild beneath Phoebe’s surprised gaze. He returned to the cemetery of death through the transportation matrix and quickly flew to the mountain valley with the mithril mine.

# Chapter 295: Undercurrents

The inky veil of night shrouded the entire mountain valley. Spring had arrived and the fragrance of flowers was still intoxicating, even at night.

In the quiet night, the low buzzing sound of insects accompanied the latent danger. Teams of mercenaries were stationed in every corner of the mithril mine in the mountain valley. The seemingly calm space was filled with prudence and alertness.

A group of black-armored people slowly crept through the thick bushes like shadows in the night, bringing with them a creepy, sinister atmosphere. Dark grand magus Edwin drifted above them in the air, guiding the way. Three hundred Death Guards followed closely behind without making a sound, similar to wraiths.

Two thousand mercenaries of the Cairo mercenary band followed behind the three hundred Death Guards under Laureton's leadership. They slowly approached the mithril mine in the mountain valley. A mix of a dozen or so small forces were behind the Cairo mercenary band. There were probably more than a thousand experts wearing mercenary outfits of various colors.

Even though the three great powers had gathered to guard the the mithril mine, they still needed to leave members behind to guard their base. That was why they had only dispatched roughly a thousand mercenaries total. This number was only a third of Laureton's two thousand elite mercenaries, the Calamity Church's three hundred Death Guards, and the thousand plus experts from a dozen small forces.

A black mass of gas slowly suffused through the air as dark grand magus Edwin released a dark spell. A faint layer of mist suddenly shrouded the moonlit area in front of the mountain valley, as if all the moisture in the night had condensed together.

The originally buzzing sounds of the insects gradually died down for an unknown reason. The House of Menlo's wind archmage Arthur had been resting with his eyes closed and seemed to sense the abnormal movement.

Opening his eyes to scan the mountain valley, he muttered to himself, “What’s going on? Why did the sounds of the insects stop?!”

The voice of the orc warrior Caloric echoed from the tent to Arthur’s left, “Hey, Arthur, it’s late already. Hurry up and get some rest.”

“I feel like something’s not right. I’m going out to take a look.” Arthur mumbled before exiting his tent. He slowly floated up using the levitation skill and looked out towards the area beyond the valley. “Hmm! Why is it all fogged up?” Arthur asked himself and drifted out of the mountain valley.

There were all sorts of tents scattered around the mountain valley, and some energetic mercenaries patrolling between them. These people immediately welcomed Arthur when they saw him drifting in the sky. Several mercenaries from the Rainbow Sickle joked in a light tone, “This fellow can’t sleep at night, could it be he’s gone out to find some fun? Heh heh, this makes sense. It sucks being assigned to this kind of place.”

“Leave him be. We only need to worry about our shift.” Another mercenary promptly responded.

“Shush!” Edwin, approaching from this side, suddenly let out a light cry. He made a gesture to the Death Guards behind him. The shadowy advancing Death Guards quickly crouched down, hiding in the bushes without revealing a single sign of life.

Laureton’s eyes were sharp as he caught Edwin’s action. He immediately waved his hand towards the back. A lineup, as long and twisted as a dragon, instantly quieted down to slight breathing. These people were quite far from Arthur, so their slight breathing wasn’t heard.

Arthur flew out of the mountain valley, frowning as he looked out into the distance. However, he couldn’t find anything unusual. He stayed for a while, muttering a few words before returning to the mountain valley.

At this moment, the positions, according to the distance from far to near, relative to Laureton’s group were: the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, the House of Menlo, and the Katar orc tribe. An orc warrior guarding outside the Katar orc tribe’s area was abruptly jolted by an ear-

piercing whistle. After he reacted, he discovered an arrow nailed into the large tree next to him. A letter was tied to the still trembling tail of the arrow.

Adam's House of Menlo was next. The two guards here were similarly snapped awake by an arrow with a letter tied to it. Lastly, it was the Rainbow Sickles' turn. They were right in front of the mithril mine and also received a letter tied to a still shaking arrow.

At that moment, the leaders of the three great powers were jolted awake from their various states. Holding the letters in hand, they urgently summoned their troops and woke up all of the soundly sleeping mercenaries. Everyone rushed at top speed to the mithril mine in the mountain valley.

After sending out three warning letters using his speedy hang gliding techniques, Han Shuo once again soundlessly returned to his hiding place near the mithril mine in the mountain valley. All of the explosives had been planted beforehand. Han Shuo quietly and coldly observed every change within the valley through his three yin demons, waiting for a tragic battle to break out.

There were more than a thousand mercenaries in the alliance stationed at the mithril mine. Once Laureton destroyed this army, the three powers would be hard pressed to save the day even if they joined hands together. Last time in the mountain valley, the three great powers had plotted against Laureton and earned his undying hatred. He would show them no mercy this time. It'd be their turn to bear brutal revenge once Laureton slaughtered the experts guarding the mithril mine.

As the three other leaders had a firm standing in the Valley of Sunshine, none of them were stupid. They naturally understood this truth and would rather believe the letters in their hands than not. The three sent out experts to contact each other, mobilizing most of their remaining forces at the bases to rush towards the mithril mine at top speed.

Time passed quietly at the mithril mine. The original alertness of the mercenary guards slowly drifted away. They began to yawn one by one,

their mental state reaching its lowest point.

Edwin was currently hiding outside the mountain valley with Laureton next to him. He observed the mountain valley with a sinister expression on his face. He suddenly threw a glance at Laureton and said, "We can make our move now."

His eyes flashed with killing intent and his bald head seemed to be emitting a cold light, Laureton nodded and said in a low tone, "Our brothers died in this mountain valley last time. This time, I intend to make them pay that back a dozen, a hundred times over. Chief Hagen, are your men ready?"

"Rest assured Chief Laureton. We have long since been ready for a split of this mithril mine." Knowing their power wasn't a match for any of the four great powers, the ten small forces had quickly gathered into an alliance. Hagen of the Raging Flame mercenary band was this alliance's spokesperson.

"Very good! Not just this mithril mine, even the territories of these three powers are yours to split among yourselves as long as you help me take them down. The Cairo mercenary band will still only occupy the Valley of Sunshine. I hope you guys won't disappoint me!" Laureton spoke out so readily while laughing coldly in his heart.

"Rest assured. We know what to do!" Hagen let out a cunning chuckle, expressing that he completely understood what Laureton meant.

"Alright, no need for nonsense. Just be careful. I will take advantage of the fog around the mountain valley to get in. Don't make any noise once you're inside. It's best to let them die in their sleep!" Edwin impatiently blurted out, not concealing the arrogance on his face.

The Calamity Church was a notoriously tough character to chew in the Profound Continent. Except for the Church of Light, very few powers could compete on even ground with them. Even Laureton wasn't anything much in Edwin's eyes. Of course, a chief of some small mercenary band wouldn't enter his eyes. That was why Edwin didn't show them sincerity and politeness like he had with Han Shuo.

The small forces naturally didn't dare to provoke Edwin upon learning of his identity. Just the sinister atmosphere from the three hundred Death Guards alone was enough to terrify them and send their hearts palpitating. They had long since heard that the Calamity Church was brutal and ruthless, treating lives like weeds. They all turned into yes-men in response to Edwin's words upon seeing his impatient expression.

Edwin was feeling a little bit smug upon seeing these peoples' fear. Extremely comfortable as he bathed in the feeling of superiority, Edwin softly humphed with arrogance before swinging his arm to order a tall, slim Death Guard at the front, "Forward, kill them all!"

The Death Guard was a group of people who worshipped the Evil God. They were the most extreme of fanatics who offered all of their beliefs and spirits to the Evil God. They carried with them the will of the Evil God and terrifying power as they slaughtered the enemies of the Calamity Church all over the Profound Continent. They were a group of inhuman executioners. Having been granted certain powers after their sacrifices to the Evil God, the Death Guards easily possessed the ability to dominate the life and death of others.

The gray pupils of this Death Guard filled with a fanatical excitement like Laureton going berserk thrice over after hearing Edwin's commands. His teeth tightly gritted, the Death Guard issued a horrifying sound like he was chewing on beast bones. His action was agile as he led the three hundred Death Guards rushing into the mountain valley under the cloak of mist.

Florida, Adam Menlo, and Katar were also leading the three great powers and hurrying to the mountain valley. A fire burning in their hearts, the three constantly issued orders to urge their men forward, afraid that they wouldn't arrive in time.

# Chapter 296: A tragic battle

In the mountain valley, members of the alliance were either lightly snoring, nodding off, or dead asleep. Very few were able to stay awake. The few solitary, cautious folk also gradually closed their heavy eyelids beneath the sleeping effect of the fog.

Everything seemed perfect. The outcome seemed predestined the moment the Death Guards started to advance into the mountain valley. This sneak attack could simply be considered a classic one for the books, if it hadn't been for a frightening, loud rumbling sound.

Rumble...

A surge of wind blew from who knew where, just as the Death Guards crossed the channel into the mountain valley. The power of it was violent. The wind first uproot a small tree on the mountain, creating a strange butterfly effect. One tree after another fell in bizarre succession. This finally caused the unbelievable collapse of the rocks on the mountain.

Moss-covered rocks, as large as a millstones, smashed straight down on the mountain valley. This kind of movement created earth-shattering sounds, waking up all of the mercenaries that were sound asleep. They abruptly jumped up, as if faced with the greatest enemy of their lives, grabbing their weapons before looking at the situation.

Edwin was also an accomplished alchemist on the side. He understood that only sleeping drugs with minor effects would be the kind not as easily discovered by experts. Edwin had been gloating over the victory within his grasp when the rumbling sound completely destroyed his wishful thinking. He looked at the mercenaries stationed in the valley all looking around with weapons in hand and then at the Death Guards entering the mountain valley. Edwin had to swallow back his curses and issued an order to attack, "Forward, kill!"

Both Edwin and Laureton understood that their ambush would no longer be perfect thanks to the rumbling avalanche. The two secretly cursed as they hastily issued orders to attack, while their eyes looked up and down at



the epicenter of that tumultuous incident. A strange suspicion filled their hearts.

Why had that avalanche happened? How could its force have been so large? How could it have generated such an astonishing effect? If it were man made, then who'd done it?

Doubt after doubt instantly piled up in their hearts, but only for a moment. The two couldn't think much as all of their attention was pulled back to the slaughter that was about to take place in the mountain valley.

"Enemy attack, enemy attack!"

The thousand mercenaries in the mountain valley were jolted awake by the rock avalanche. A small portion of the mercenaries near the edge of the valley constantly dodged the falling rocks. The mercenaries at the outermost region, who were responsible for night patrol, had now discovered the Death Guards by now. They immediately started yelling loudly.

The mercenaries of the alliance immediately reacted. They took out weapons, started to chant magic incantations, and notched their arrows. They all aimed at the entrance of the mountain valley.

The Calamity Church's three hundred Death Guards spread out like wraiths in the night, whizzing about like faint shadows under the moonlight. Evil, sinister air permeated their bodies, their eyes filled with frenzy and excitement. Exotic spiked weapons were grasped in their hands, they speedily glided across the ground into the mountain valley.

The ground trembled as a series of sharp earth spears pierced out of the ground. A blazing fire quickly gathered into a defensive firewall. Lightning bolts twisted and flashed across the sky above the mountain valley then smashed downward. Mermen and water dragons gradually materialized and rushed away from the zone of the firewall.

Whistling sounds accompanied arrows that fell endlessly upon the Death Guards. Mages and archers formed layer after layer of obstacles within the mountain valley. They instantly hindered the momentum of the rushing Death Guards, itching to kill the entire bunch of blatant invaders.

However, as the religious scourge, whose notoriety had spread all over the Profound Continent for so many years, the Calamity Church's Death Guard naturally weren't that easy to deal with.

The speed of the three hundred Death Guards didn't decrease, but instead spiked at an alarming rate. The blackish gray robes that they wore had a strong resistance to magic, the coming flames were snuffed with just a wave of their sleeves. Even the violent thunderbolts only made them pause a little without causing any fatal damage.

"Hmph! The Death Guard's armory is one of the secrets of our Calamity Church. How could normal magic attacks have any effect!" Dark grand magus Edwin landed behind and looked forward with a sinister face, speaking contemptuously. He could have soundlessly exterminated the majority of the force in the mountain valley. He naturally felt irritated now that this unexpected incident had thrown a wrench in his plans.

Laureton stood next to Edwin, clutching the divine artifact Berserker's War Axe. He let out a loud, malicious laugh and said, "It's also fine this way. We'll only waste a bit more time. It's more interesting to let them struggle in their death."

The Cairo mercenary band had expended all of their elite forces for this battle. Add to that the Calamity Church's three hundred Death Guards and the alliance of a dozen small forces, this was a proper amount of strength to annihilate the powers inside the mountain valley. Laureton was someone who thirsted for battle to begin with. This was why he'd been even more excited when the mercenaries of the alliance woke up, as the ambush had turned into open combat.

Curling his lip, Edwin didn't say a thing. He looked at the waves of mercenaries rushing into the mountain valley and secretly calculated how much more he should extort from Laureton. After all, the cost of dispatching three hundred Death Guards wasn't small. Even though their purpose had been to block the Church of Light, he'd also helped Laureton, hadn't he? Therefore, the latter should also pay up a little.

The Death Guards were definitely worthy of their reputation as forces of

the Evil God. They rushed forward with an unstoppable momentum, even when attacked by violent magic spells. The three hundred Death Guards scattered into groups of ghostly shadows, using sharp, spiked weapons to poke bloody holes into the mercenaries' bodies.

These Death Guards cultivated a strange type of fighting aura. They seemed able to borrow the Evil God's power in a fight. An evil presence naturally appeared on their bodies, and their eyes could attack the souls of their opponents. The strange fighting aura possessed an intense corrosion with it that could destroy the defense of the opponents, causing injuries to the body.

Han Shuo was sitting cross-legged on a cliff of the mountain valley. After secretly lending a hand to help kick start the dreadful battle, he silently circulated his magical yuan to absorb the power from the dead that had not yet dissipated. He also paid attention to the battle in the mountain valley at the same time.

The astonishing performance of the Death Guards shocked Han Shuo. He could even sense a bit of the Evil God's presence from their bodies.

Clarendon, who'd ultimately died a tragic death in Han Shuo's hand in Valen City, had used an altar to call upon the three-eyed demon god Ansidesi. The figure of an evil god, that was three hundred meters tall, once again appeared in Han Shuo's mind in the lower layers of the cemetery of death. Han Shuo could sense a bit of the presences of Ansidesi and the evil god from the Death Guards.

The Death Guards could obtain a bit of the strange force from the Evil God due to their fanatical belief. Perhaps they could only borrow one out of a hundred thousandth of the Evil God's power. However, that power released still couldn't be looked down upon, as evident in the tragic death of the mercenaries who faced them.

Three hundred Death Guards wasn't a big number, but the damage they caused was terrifying. Since the Temple Knights of the Church of Light possessed were at a similar level of strength as these Death Guards, Han Shuo could imagine that the former's power was certainly just as

impressive.

“Heh heh, it’s getting more and more interesting!” Han Shuo muttered to himself with a cold smile. He abruptly heaved a breath of relief, “What will come will come. Otherwise it would no longer be interesting!”

Dark grand magus Edwin also frowned when Han Shuo finished saying these words. He abruptly used the levitation skill to float up and out of the mountain valley. He carefully took note of his bearings before quickly returning to the mountain valley. He landed swiftly near the now twice berserk Laureton, “A large number of mercenaries are gathering here. How could this happen?”

“The Rainbow Sickle mercenary band isn’t far from here. They must have discovered something because we’ve caused such a big movement in this place. Heh heh, four to five hundred out of the one thousand mercenaries in the mountain valley have already died. Florida will only be coming to his death if we make good use of time and kill them all. Just his Rainbow Sickles alone simply can’t stop our momentum!”

Laureton randomly threw out an answer as he chopped a two meter tall orc warrior in half with a wave of his Berserker’s War Axe. He then rammed into the crowd in front, seemingly insane with happiness as he was able to indulge in battle.

“That’s not it. It isn’t just the Rainbow Sickles. There’s also a large group of orcs!” Edwin shouted to Laureton as if there was a fire was raging in his heart.

“Damn it! How can that be?” Laureton was startled. He abruptly jumped to Edwin and asked with horror.

“Kill them!” Adam Menlo was riding a ten meter long flaming bird in the air. He rushed forward with his family members, who were behind him, also riding various magic creatures.

The dull sounds of iron hooves pounding against the ground outside of the mountain valley were heavy, like a beating drum. The experts of the three great powers were gathering in the valley, tightly blocking Laureton’s group’s retreat.

“Shove it all and bring forth all your efforts to bear, or none of us will be able to escape!” Since the situation had become like this, Laureton naturally understood what was to follow. He let out a long howl to the heavens. His ferocity burst as he rushed straight forward to kill the remaining mercenaries in the mountain valley.

# Chapter 297: Explosion

It was a scene of three thousand, including three hundred notorious Death Guards from the Calamity Church, against six hundred people. The difference in power was completely disproportionate. The fate of the remaining six hundred people was destined to be death, just that the exact moment of their demise was dragged out for a few more minutes.

Life became cheap with every ear-piercing, miserable scream of the mercenaries that were from various races and of different skin colors. They slowly and listlessly fell in a pool of blood. Streams of air, barely visible to the human eye, drifted upwards from the dead bodies before gathering in a corner of the mountain valley.

Han Shuo was the hand in the shadows that'd pulled the strings of this battle. With the three yin demons observing the overall battle, he sat on the sidelines in a surreptitious corner, extremely comfortable as he absorbed each burst of scattered energy. The desires of the bloodlust realm were churning, wanting to explode out. However, his rational mind tightly forced the urge down.

Lives perished as time passed. The original group of six hundred mercenaries guarding the mine were now down to two hundred. The mages in this group were ceaselessly releasing various spells. Their targets were naturally the mercenaries with the vivid colored outfits. No one would waste their magic on the Death Guards.

Adam Menlo and the experts from his family were the first few to arrive. However, they could only used magic and arrows to attack Laureton's group in the mountain valley from a distance. They stood still as they watched their remaining family members in the valley get slaughtered.

It wasn't that they didn't want to, but rather that they just didn't dare!

Those elite members of the House of Menlo, who could fly in the air, were all magic creature riders. This elite army was the foundation of the family. It was a pity that their numbers were few, far fewer than the number of experts in Laureton's Cairo mercenary band. Adam Menlo's

heart bled as he watched his family members die one by one. However, he didn't dare to come in close to rescue them. He knew full well that once he landed, what awaited his group would be destructive blows.

He was waiting, waiting for Florida and Katar's groups to arrive. The new arrivals would be able to surround Laureton's group from outside the mountain valley. He was waiting for more members of the three forces to assemble and then vent their accumulated rage towards Laureton.

"Honorable father, save me!" A middle-aged man, with a face similar to Adam Menlo's, was riding an armored Black Buffalo in the middle of the valley. His eyes flooded with helplessness as he called out miserably to Adam Menlo, who hovered in the air on his fiery bird.

Laureton stood in front of this middle-aged man, holding his Berserker's War Axe, leering widely. Several berserkers were next to Laureton, also grinning maliciously as they coordinated to keep watch on the middle-aged man. Laureton wasn't in a hurry to kill him.

Instead, he lifted his head to look at to the sky, as if waiting for Adam Menlo to draw nearer.

However, he only saw Adam Menlo turn around with his shoulders trembling slightly after waiting for a while. It seemed that Adam had made the right decision despite the agony he felt in his heart.

"No!" The middle-aged man bitterly growled. Laureton approached and cleaved him in two. The echoing sound of his dying cry made the distant Adam Menlo falter on the back of his flaming bird.

The heavy sounds of dull hooves were finally heard. Florida and Katar were leading a large number of mercenaries to advance upon the mountain valley. Adam Menlo's eyes were bloodshot as he held up beneath the heart wrenching agony of the scenes displayed in front of him. He was the first to rush into the center of the valley. Fighting aura burst out from the spear in his hand and intersected with the blazing flames from the flaming bird's beak, instantly taking several lives.

The battle had become even more devastating, taking place in the mountain valley like a raging fire. Han Shuo absorbed the killing intent

quietly and indifferently. He coldly watched the battle that had turned the mountain valley into a level of hell and desperately suppressed his intense desire to join the fray.

The evenly matched forces fought each other until they became crazed with bloodlust as time went on. Ninety percent of the Valley of Sunshine's forces had become involved in this, either for the mithril mine, or to gain privilege in the Valley, or to vent their deep hatred accumulated over the many years.

The life force of the unyielding powerhouses was happily absorbed by an opportunist. Soon, the bodies piled up all over the whole mountain valley and began to hinder the battle itself. The races slaughtered each other to their heart's content out of interest and hatred.

Blood red mist began to materialize around Han Shuo from the large amount of energy he'd absorbed. The sky above the mountain valley was suddenly blotted out by a bloody red mist. This terrifying evil murderous intent brought along with it a nauseating, bloody smell as it enveloped the entire mountain valley.

However, the forces were all obsessed by battle and didn't notice this strange happening. All of their attention was focused on the enemy in front of them. Each and every individual had gone completely insane, using their weapons, bare hands and feet, or even their teeth to attack.

Han Shuo almost lost control of himself as he fought against his own bloodthirsty urges. He finally issued an order to the earth elite zombie lurking underground. Han Shuo understood that this wasn't the right time, since one side hadn't obtained victory yet. He could still wait a bit longer. Unfortunately, Han Shuo knew that he was in an extremely bad state. He'd absorbed far more killing intent than he could bear. He was afraid that he'd lose his rationality and miss his chance.

Ninety percent of the forces in the Valley of Sunshine was here, locked in battle. Of that, a fourth of this number had already perished. This battle was absolutely the most intense one that had ever occurred in the history of the Valley of Sunshine, with the greatest amount of participants as well.



Suddenly, the forces that had been fighting to the death, felt a violent tremor from the ground. Every corner of the entire mountain valley seemed to explode before they could react, the strong smell of explosives instantly spreading.

As every corner in the mountain valley had opponents fighting each other, the explosion caused massive damage. The mercenaries instantly exploded into clouds of blood mist. The earth was shaking and mountains cracked with the endlessly echoing series of explosions. More than half of the forces that had been lucky enough to survive until now died to the violent explosions.

The huge rocks above ground shattered into pieces due to the underground explosion. Each piece was bigger than a person, and tumbled down like a shower of rain. The impact from the momentum of rocks that were falling from an altitude of several hundred meters was extremely terrifying. Careless experts were smashed into meat paste by them.

The parties in the mountain valley were dumbfounded by this violent explosion. Ninety percent of the Valley of Sunshine's forces were located here, but this earth-shattering bombardment hadn't distinguished between friend nor enemy. The damage it caused was amplified even more. No matter how dimwitted Laureton's group was, they too could smell a conspiracy going on here.

Countless rocks were still falling, the entire mountain valley was sealed off. The startled experts were snapped out of their bloodlust by the sound of explosion and reacted abruptly. They looked up and cursed loudly before madly fleeing for their lives. The voices of Laureton's people were extremely resounding among the scene, each screaming and roaring before quickly evacuating.

Perhaps these people would have discovered Han Shuo existence if it weren't for the avalanche obscuring the bloody mist surrounding him. After all, the fiendish image that he'd established in people's hearts after using the blood mist to attack last time had left an unforgettable impact in their hearts.

However, the big rolling boulders had dispersed the barely noticeable mist. In addition, the downpour of rocks was so terrifying that no one had the heart to carefully watch the sky. Everyone put all their effort into fleeing, so Han Shuo's existence wasn't exposed.

The leader of the great powers could smell conspiracy, and so their resentment and hatred overflowed like rivers and seas. However, they knew full well this wasn't the time to pursue the matter. Like Laureton, all of the leaders ordered their subordinates to retreat from this place as quickly as possible.

Florida's group had already felt an ominous premonition when they received the arrows. The bloody battle had already started by the time that they had arrived at the mountain valley. The series of explosions constantly bombarded them before they could finish distinguishing between friend and foe. Florida immediately understood that the people in the mountain valley had been plotted against.

Florida's group was terrified. They even thought that this was an act from the three great empires surrounding the Valley of Sunshine, the purpose to eradicate all forces and take complete control of the Valley. Due to this, Florida naturally believed that this attack using explosives was just the beginning. Perhaps a great number of soldiers from some empire was baring their fangs at them already.

Therefore, when Laureton fled, they also chosen to flee in panic. No matter how they thought about it, they hadn't expected this to be orchestrated by a single person, and that an attack with such a massive impact was created by just the earth elite zombie alone. This sent all of the forces into complete disarray.

The leader of a force was naturally much more meticulous in his calculations. However, not all of his followers were as smart. The majority of these mercenaries, who lived by their blades, were simple-minded fellows. The disastrous battle in the mountain valley had taken the lives of their comrades, and their enemies were now running madly around them. They didn't think much and attacked immediately.

And just like that, the great powers still fought each other tooth and nail even as they tried to escape, due to the irreconcilable hatred between each other. The sounds of metal colliding with metal echoed outside the mountain valley, tragic dying screams resounding endlessly for a long time.

At this moment however, the culprit was shrouded in a thick, blood red mist

and was on the verge of breaking through. The Demonslayer Edge hovered in the sky above the mountain valley, absorbing the various energies in Han Shuo's stead.

# Chapter 298: Breakthrough

Corpses were scattered everywhere in the mountain valley after the tragedy. What was even more horrifying was that most of the corpses weren't complete. Broken off heads seemed to be leaking rubber balls as they had their own trail of blood. Fresh bloodstains stood out on the big and small rocks on the valley's bottom. Bodies with their limbs cut off lay quietly in the narrow gullies of the mountain valley like hacked off tree trunks.

The moon shone down serenely on this scene from hell. The souls that had yet to disperse upon death were pulled along the cliff of the mountain valley, gathering into a spiral that shimmered in and out of existence. This spiral was slowly and carefully absorbed by a sharp weapon sparkling with brown light.

The Demonslayer Edge currently lacked its dazzling luster as it hovered quietly over Han Shuo's head, like a loyal follower guarding its master. Its brown edge didn't shine beneath the moonlight. However, it emitted a strange combination of lights and killing intent around Han Shuo when the plumes of souls drifted over.

Spots of light shone like the stars within the blood red killing intent. The brilliant stars swayed and danced like little elves, slowly blossoming into a charmingly beautiful light for a moment before finally gathering in the dark brown Demonslayer Edge.

The strength of two thousand dead souls wasn't weak at all, their combined power was immense. Han Shuo was able to absorb sixty percent of this soul energy, and the Demonslayer Edge took in the remaining forty percent. As the main instigator behind the scenes, Han Shuo's random eavesdropping had caused the leaders of the various powers in the Valley of Sunshine to speculate widely in fright. It had also created a chance for Han Shuo to break through the bloodlust realm, and make the flames of battle dance along the length of the Demonslayer Edge.

There were clouds of red mist that were so dense they could not

disperse. They wrapped tightly Han Shuo, twisting into bizarre knotted strands. His skin glinted with a deep red light from within the mist, the bones all over his body constantly emitting crisp crackling sounds. A terrifying deathly air and killing aura alternated nonstop between a weak and strong state. Han Shuo's tough, handsome face trembled in an aberrant manner.

He maintained this state from night till sunrise. As the sun rose, it discovered a valley gradually blanketed in a crimson fog. Dense as only fog could be, it actually covered more than half of the skies above the mountain valley. Impervious to sunlight, the sun only made its crimson hue even more brilliant. The entire mountain valley looked as though it was relocated amidst a bloody hell. With the dead bodies scattered across the valley, this halo of blood mist made the scene even more desolate, evil, and terrifying.

The powers in the Valley of Sunshine were confused and fearful day and night for the next three days. Clouds of blood were still constantly shifting into different forms within the mountain valley. Faint shadows started drifting out from the back of Han Shuo's neck, gradually merging with the bloody clouds. Devil heads then slowly took on clearer form, their appearance abnormal, frightening, and ferocious.

Fog and clouds of blood all melded with the shadows. Twelve uniquely shaped, but equally creepy and ferocious monsters finally took shape after five days. Some came with a spiky head and sharp claws, others had thick row of fangs like a shark, and some even had thorny barbs all over their backs. These twelve grim demons were each different in appearance but possessed a similar presence, Han Shuo's unique presence.

They all possessed Han Shuo's unique presence as they were created from his body. The little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie hiding in a valley gully didn't make any unfriendly moves towards the grim demons thanks to this familiar presence.

Seven more days passed. The shapes of these twelve capering monsters constantly changed, there were times when they even took Han Shuo's appearance. The strangest thing was that, on the fifth day, Han Shuo was

surrounded by twelve exact copies of himself. On the last day, the twelve ever changing “things” returned to their original grim demon appearance before turning into red rays and hiding in Han Shuo’s body.

Exhaling a soft breath, Han Shuo finally opened his fey-like eyes after all of the grim demons had concealed themselves in his body. Sweeping a glance around the mountain valley that exuded a dank stench rising to the skies, he murmured, “Finally, the separate demon realm!”

The mountain valley had violently shook and collapsed under the massive explosion. All of the paths into the mountain valley were blocked. The only thing able to enter was the warm sunlight pouring down from the sky. During this period, the three dark creatures—the little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie, had dedicated their all to guarding Han Shuo.

The forces in the Valley of Sunshine had sent out people to spy shortly after the tragedy, but unfortunately, no one could leave the place alive after being ambushed by the three dark creatures. The spies all turned into mournful souls just like the mercenaries in the mountain valley. In the end, even their corpses quickly rotted away.

The stench in the mountain valley really was unpleasant. Han Shuo frowned as his mind spun. He reached out his hand to grab the hovering Demonslayer Edge next to him. The Demonslayer Edge instantly turned into brown spots of light and disappeared in a strange manner upon touching Han Shuo’s hand. Utilizing the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens, Han Shuo tore through the air, leaving the mountain valley in a blink of an eye.

On a low mountain top five miles to the north of the Valley of Sunshine.

Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band, Florida of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, chief Adam of the House of Menlo, Katar of the orc tribe, and leaders of various forces, including even Trunks who’d just returned from his mission, had been invited.

All of the major power holders in the Valley of Sunshine had gathered at this location today. Everyone had ugly expressions on their face, especially

those who'd fallen victim to the mithril mine's tragedy. They were all investigating the matter with the intent of visiting furious revenge on whoever was responsible. They were here today to brainstorm a strategy for the future of the Valley of Sunshine.

"Who did it?" Everyone shared the same question in their hearts.

With the exception of the great powers who'd suffered heavy damages, all those who hadn't participated in the battle were a suspect. Even those small forces who'd only come to watch and fled the quickest, thus suffering only small losses, were targets of suspicion.

"Trunks, your Soul Destroyers didn't participate in this battle. Your mercenary band is the strongest amongst those who didn't join. Currently, only your Soul Destroyer band is completely unharmed while we are all heavily damaged. Your strength isn't far off from ours now either. It seems like your group benefitted the most this time! I'm thinking, was it you who did this good deed?" Florida of the Rainbow Sickles stared at Trunks as he spoke in a sinister tone, his handsome face full of menace.

Trunks was secretly delighted and had no idea how to repay the person behind the scenes. However, he maintained an expression dripping with sorrow. Trunks had been faking long, heavy sighs when he heard Florida's words. Trunks abruptly stood up and violently slammed his hand on the stone table, breaking it into pieces.

Trunks didn't even spare a glance at the experts around him who were defending themselves against the stone fragments. He glared furiously at Florida and said, "If you want to slander us with unfounded accusations, then let's fight to the death! Our Soul Destroyer band accepted a mission half a month ago. All of the elite members, including me, had left the Valley of Sunshine to handle it. Chief Laureton is the one most clear about this. Florida, everyone is here today. If you want to kill me then do it fair and square, no need for plots and schemes!"

When Trunks shattered the stone table with one blow, the ray of silver aura emitting from his palm hadn't escape the eyes of those assembled. Everyone here was sharply intelligent, who didn't know what silver

fighting aura meant for a swordsman? Thanks to his own efforts and the Rebirth Pill, Trunks had advanced to the rank of great swordmaster. In addition to being a demonstration of his strength, the blow was warning the leaders here to think carefully.

The Soul Destroyer mercenary band had been able to openly recruit experts in recent times. Add that to the abundant funding it received, Trunks' fame, and the mercenaries' previous foundations as Rainbow Sickle members, the mercenary band had developed at an astonishing rate in just a short amount of time.

Perhaps the Soul Destroyers wouldn't have been noticed by Laureton and Florida if it weren't for the tragedy in the mountain valley. It was a pity that these forces had suffered a major blow in the valley, their accumulation of strength over many years destroyed in just the blink of an eye. Their power had dropped so drastically that they had no confidence that they could easily swallow Trunks. Moreover, the Soul Destroyers existed in the shadows. The various powers still didn't even know where the Soul Destroyer base was. This made them into a force that was truly on par with the four great powers.

By displaying his powerful strength at the great swordmaster rank in such a tough manner, Trunks was directly provoking Florida. This altitude was obviously far different from how he'd kept a low profile in the past.

Even though he practiced thunder magic along with light magic, light archmage Florida still hadn't fully recovered from the last time in which Han Shuo had wounded him. If he fought Trunks, whose strength had rapidly advanced to great swordmaster, with his current power, plus their previous bone deep hatred, Florida had no doubt that Trunk would take this chance to rip him to shreds.

Therefore, Florida's cheeks twitched in anger as he glared darkly at Trunks before he opened his mouth to speak in a stiff voice, "The most important thing now is to find out who was behind this. I have no time to fight you!"

When these words sounded, the leaders in the Valley of Sunshine all



understood one thing. Florida was afraid!

# Chapter 299: Ceasefire

Trunks didn't pursue things either. He said with a sigh, "As a member of the Valley of Sunshine, it saddens me greatly that such a tragedy has occurred, but the first and most important thing is to determine the truth of the matter. Otherwise, we'd suffer a series of assaults if our enemy attacks us again after this. It will be unbearable for any of us!"

None of the leaders present believed one iota of Trunks' lamentations. The huge happenings in the mountain valley hadn't affected the Soul Destroyers in the slightest. They didn't believe that Trunks wasn't laughing at their disaster. Of course, they wouldn't be so stupid as to provoke Trunks at the moment, especially when the latter had just shown that he had the strength of a great swordmaster.

After an awkward moment of silence, Laureton finally opened his mouth, "I think the goal of the perpetrator was all of the forces in the Valley of Sunshine. The Soul Destroyers were lucky enough to avoid disaster. None of the people I sent to the mountain valley returned. Perhaps our Valley of Sunshine is facing a great deal of trouble this time."

The forces had been locked in bloody battle just a few days before. They wouldn't be having such a friendly discussion if it hadn't been for mutual devastating damage. Florida stared discourteously at Laureton, his face clouded over with resentment, his voice cold and sinister, "What do you think we should do then?"

Taking a deep breath, Laureton seemed to have chosen his words carefully. His eyes, as large as bronze bells, swept in a circle across everyone's faces. He finally said in a low voice, "Let's temporarily set aside the grudges between us and find out who the hand in the darkness belong to. The power to control the Valley of Sunshine will be handed over to whoever figures out the truth first. What do you all think?"

As the person who'd always grasped the major power in the Valley of Sunshine, Laureton was absolutely not someone this generous. In fact, he was famous for being as stingy as he was berserk. Truthfully speaking,

these words shouldn't have come from his mouth at all.

However, the strength of the Cairo mercenary band was now far weaker than it had been due to the huge change of scenery in the mountain valley. On the other hand, although the other three great powers had also suffered heavy losses, the Cairo mercenaries still wouldn't be able to resist their combined might, even if they held the advantage of superior terrain in the Valley of Sunshine.

In that case, he'd rather happily and openly let go of the privilege that he would no longer be able to hold onto. The power over the Valley of Sunshine could be the bait to seduce the three great powers, causing the alliance to fracture because of this hard to grasp benefit. Laureton wasn't simple-minded, despite being brawny. This fellow was definitely a great schemer as he was able to sit on the highest position in the Cairo mercenary band.

The moment Laureton's words fell, the eyes of Adam Menlo and Katar, who'd been following Florida's lead, flashed with wild ambition. The two silently glanced at each other for a few seconds before agreeing readily, seemingly unaware of Florida's desperate eye signals.

The small forces, who'd cooperated with Laureton, hesitated for a moment before nodding their heads in consent. Trunks also readily agreed upon seeing the majority of the forces nod with agreement. Everyone's eyes then fell on Florida. Originally, Florida would likely have grasped this power as long as Adam Menlo and Katar supported him. He secretly cursed these two former allies and their families in his heart. Although Florida was extremely bitter inside, he could only nod and give his approval.

The big decision had been made. Even Florida couldn't go against it!

"Very good. Then we can discuss the details for a bit and even draft an agreement. All of the forces in the Valley of Sunshine will be the supervisors in case someone refuses to admit to this later!" Laureton grinned blandly as he made a serious proposal.

This agreement was as ridiculous as a prostitute claiming to be a virgin,

however, sometimes this was necessary. Although everyone knew full well that the agreement would be instantly torn apart if one side became powerful enough, there was still a need for rituals. This could offer a bit of psychological comfort, especially when everyone felt that a “secret enemy” existed in the shadows.

Therefore, even the great powers, with nefarious intentions, had to agree to these terms. The forces were temporarily agreeing to a truce as they put forth all of their effort to track down the the hand in the shadows!

When Han Shuo learned all of this from Trunks, he only chuckled blandly without offering any comments. He didn't explain anything to Trunks either and quietly left the Valley of Sunshine, a place where everyone was sucked into a huge whirlpool of conspiracies and suspicions.

Trunks' hairs stood on end as he was creeped out by Han Shuo's smile. He saw in Han Shuo's eyes a trace of pride that was deliberately revealed, yet hard to see. Trunks suddenly realized something.

However, Trunks didn't ask any questions. Upon Han Shuo's leave, he immediately led the Soul Destroyers to raise a great hue and cry in the form of a large manhunt for the perpetrator. They looked even more hardworking than Laureton's mercenary band.

In the process of this open and righteous search for the perpetrator, Trunks took the opportunity to conveniently carry out recruitment activities. The fame of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band gradually began to spread, attracting many fine experts to join them.

Han Shuo returned to the Ossen City seven days after he'd left the Valley of Sunshine. He gave some instructions to the steward in the mansion before secretly leaving through the transportation matrix in the Dark Mantle.

Brettel City wasn't a firm, stable city. As the former city lords had been habitually weak against the invasions of the seven grand duchies, the guards here had become a motley array of individuals. Whether it was the city lord or the soldiers, they'd save their strength to run and flee even faster than the civilians when faced with a real attack.

Since Brettel City was often assaulted, the Lancelot Empire hadn't wasted a great amount of money to build a transportation matrix here. After all, if a transportation matrix leading everywhere just so conveniently existed when the other grand duchies occupied Brettel City, no one could guarantee that the blatant invaders wouldn't just invade other cities of the Empire through the transportation matrices. While Brettel City was barren, the Lancelot Empire had many flourishing and rich cities. Theoretically, if the invaders really entered the Empire's other cities by using the transportation matrices, it'd bring about a danger no one would dare to imagine.

Therefore, building a transportation matrix in a place like this, that seemed to be an abandoned city, was a double-edged sword. This resulted in a never-ending situation of suspension.

"Spring is truly here. It's a pity that the scenery isn't very pleasing!" Sitting inside a carriage, Han Shuo lifted the curtain to look at the scenery along the way and muttered to himself.

Ever since arriving at the transportation matrix in Seamist City, neighbor to Brettel City, Han Shuo had been sitting in the carriage in a slow approach towards his destination. On the way, beggars wrapped in coarse clothes wandered all around. Flies flew back and forth over dead bodies on the two sides of the road. A thick stinking smell was always drifting about the place.

Seamist City was a rich city with strict defenses in the eastern part of the Lancelot Empire. However, when traveling to Brettel City from there, these desolate scenes were like heaven and earth compared to Seamist City. Han Shuo already discovered a dozen groups of bandits running rampant through the yin demons just three days into the trip.

These bandits were just regular robbers from the Lancelot Empire, and not the official armies of the seven grand duchies that disguised themselves as bandits. Even the steel-nerved Han Shuo was a little stunned at such a miserable situation. He personally killed no less than fifty of these beasts in human skin along the way.

“Bryan, I didn’t think your territory would be this kind of place. The tragic sights along the way are challenging enough for people’s nerves already. I think Brettel City will be almost unbearable for you.” Chester had disregarded life and death when he had begged to follow Han Shuo. He’d given up a good mission led by Emily and was even willing to be the coachman, so Han Shuo didn’t have to go to such a notoriously dirty, chaotic city by himself.

Han Shuo chuckled heartily as he thought about Chester’s somewhat insane courage, asking, “Chester, why did you follow me, even after I rejected you?”

Having focused wholeheartedly on being a coachman, Chester’s nerves had been toughened along the way. He suddenly whipped the handsome, uncommon warhorse to prevent its curiosity from being drawn towards a corpse in the bushes. He answered Han Shuo like a philosopher, “If you wish to gain more, not only does the will need perseverance, but the vision has to be far and wide.”

“Interesting thought.” Han Shuo smiled slightly at Chester’s answer. His elegant voice resounded softly and indifferently as he calmly watched the civilians struggle intensely for a loaf of bread.

The situation in Brettel City was incredibly bad. Except for a few who were reluctant to leave their ancestral homes, plus the nobles and soldiers who couldn’t leave due to their duties, the rest of the civilians tried to use every method to shake off the evil shackles here, desperately wanting to enter the rich and peaceful Seamist City.

However, the road to Seamist City wasn’t peaceful at all . Even if one risked their life to reach the gate, they’d be heartlessly refused without a huge entry fee. They would be left to fend for themselves even though they were also civilians of the Lancelot Empire. After all, the poor civilians coming to Seamist City could only be the lowest of unstable, petty beggars. Seamist City couldn’t accommodate too many of these beggars to prevent an adverse impact on the image of the city.

Therefore, noble merchants, who could enter the city, were those who

could prove their worth to live in Seamist City. Civilians from Brettel City were also allowed entry if they paid quite a hefty sum. Otherwise, the city guards would watch with cold eyes if anyone even died outside the city gates.

“My territory, I’ve finally arrived!” Han Shuo looked at the wide open Brettel City and murmured emotionally in front of the broken gates.

# Chapter 300: Broken city, broken soldiers

A humble looking carriage passed through the broken city gate that was riddled with holes. The streets were deserted, with an occasional sighting of one or two people. The eyes of those on the streets were filled with despair and resentment, a silent protest against their current tragic life.

Brettel City was as dirty as Han Shuo had expected, looking only a tad bit better than the sights he'd seen on the road. A few lazy soldiers indifferently watched the carriage enter the city without asking about his background or for an entry fee. It seemed that Brettel City was on the verge of death.

"Hey, can you please tell me where the city lord's mansion is?" Chester pulled on the reins and smiled at a civilian who looked like a beggar.

This person was lying lazily in the sunlight, focused on picking out the fleas from his body. He seemed not to have heard Chester's question. He didn't even lift his head.

"I'll give you one silver coin, where is the city lord's mansion?" Chester had been born poor so he knew quite well about the poor's temper. A smile on his face, he patiently asked again.

The mention of silver coin immediately showed its effectiveness. Sniffing the seductive aroma of money, the seemingly deaf beggar suddenly stared at Chester. He pointed in the direction of the street to the east, "Go straight for three hundred meters. The tallest, most broken down mansion is the city lord's mansion."

A silver coin shining in the sunlight spun through the air, rolling to a stop on the ground in front of the beggar. Chester whipped the horse and left without saying thanks, following the directions to the city lord's mansion.

The beggar hastily picked up the silver coin, clutching it tightly in his hand. He then looked towards the direction where the two left and murmured, "Some more people have come to Brettel City again. If it isn't some risk-taking merchant who'd come for profit, then it must be that



legendary unlucky count. Poor fellow.”

Whenever Brettel City was invaded, the city lord would be the loving focus of their attention. As such, the walls of the big tall building weren't too sturdy, and there were still several holes decorating the ground nearby, remnants of a previous bombing, that hadn't yet been repaired. When Han Shuo's carriage arrived, only a smattering of five maids and less than a dozen soldiers were present.

These maids and soldiers' attitude towards Han Shuo's arrival was quite indifferent. They weren't enthusiastic nor welcoming in the manner of a subordinate. Of course, a welcome banquet that would be normal in other areas was even more impossible.

The city lord's mansion was at least five times bigger than Han Shuo's mansion in Ossen City. However, it really had no other uses aside from being big. As the city lord was the first to flee upon every invasion, no soldiers had been stationed here. Therefore, the city lord's mansion was always the first place to be pillaged.

Even some things that were hard to take away were all gone after successive attacks. What was incredibly ludicrous was that Han Shuo actually saw a large, rectangular hole in the ground – the remnants of a white jade table that had been peeled away. This was enough for Han Shuo to imagine the real situation in Brettel City.

“Describe the current situation of Brettel City to me.” Han Shuo asked Dick whilst sitting in the tattered lobby of the city lord's mansion hall. Dick was the Dark Mantle liaison in this city, and had arrived after hearing of Han Shuo's posting.

Dick was a man who was roughly forty years old. He looked ordinary, with his nose placed high on his face. It was a feature unique to the mountain people of Brettel City. Dick paid his respects to Han Shuo and answered in a somewhat awkward version of imperial tongue, “The former city lord of Brettel took a total of five hundred family members with him upon his leave. The entire city currently only has over three thousand soldiers. The population in the city is less than fifty thousand. The three

thousand soldiers aren't enough to guard the city gates, not to mention they usually flee even faster than the civilians. The city's defenses have never been fixed after every attack due to the lack of funds, and now it's almost lost all defensive ability."

"The mountain folk are native to Brettel City, and the majority of them reside on several steep mountains in the area. These mountains produce valuable ores. The natives are very familiar with the terrain of the big mountains, and it's difficult to launch an attack at the mountains. This is why the mountain people can resist the invasions of the seven grand duchies."

"In fact, Brettel City has actually been relatively safe up until now. After dozens of large and small invasions, the seven grand duchies all know that there's nothing left to loot in this city anymore. Even if they spent the time and resources towards a raid, there's not enough to raid in the city to ensure a profit. That's why no further aggression has occurred in the past few months."

"It was rather the mines in the big mountains surrounding us that the natives protect and harvest from that have become the target for bandits and private armies. However, the mountain people there aren't as incompetent as the imperial soldiers. So far they've been able to barely resist the onslaught of attacks..."

Han Shuo gradually grew to understand the situation in Brettel City thanks to Dick's overview. When Dick finished speaking, Han Shuo looked at a soldier in the city lord's mansion and ordered, "Assemble all of the city's soldiers in front of the city lord's mansion. I want to see what they currently look like."

"Yes, Sir Count!" This soldier responded lazily and climbed unhurriedly onto a skinny horse before slowly moving out of the castle.

"My Lord, you will be disappointed." Dick shook his head with a long sigh as he spoke to Han Shuo.

"I know. But I think I won't be disappointed again in the future!" Han Shuo smiled blandly before sinking into silence with a frown.

The city's scattered soldiers finally assembled unhurriedly after almost two hours. They gathered at the front of the castle with no order or discipline. Their bodies didn't look very strong, and their complexions were sickly, probably due to issues with food. No one had any trace of the kind of attitude and spirit that a soldier should have. It was clear that they wouldn't be able to withstand even one blow with their current combat strength.

The swords, bows and spears in their hands were of inferior quality, with rust stains all over them. Han Shuo felt that just about any weapon forged by the dwarves could break apart all of their weapons. Only one-third of the soldiers were middle-aged men and strong youngsters. The rest were much older old men who moved much more slowly. Who could expect to rely on these folks' fighting capabilities?

Han Shuo stood on the high platform in front of the mansion, observing these soldiers for a while. He silently pondered before saying with a grin, "From today on, your happy days are over. Soldiers over fifty years old will be removed. For these people, I will guarantee you a normal life."

"As for the rest, not only will you have enough food to fill your stomachs, you'll also get new weapons and armor, plus strong warhorses. Of course, you'll also be trained in a cruel, torturous manner to wait for the next chance to wash away our previous shame with the blood of the invaders. With me here, Brettel City has to change, completely."

The elderly soldiers below broke out into an uproar. They were indifferent to Han Shuo's retirement order, but were doubtful of his guarantee for a life with enough food and clothing. The young people turned to look at each other as they processed his words, not knowing what he actually wanted to do.

"Sir Count, do you mean that?" Dick was standing next to Han Shuo and asked Han Shuo with shock.

"Your Lordship, even if the thousand of us gets new weapons and warhorses, do you think we'd be able to stand firmly against ten or twenty thousand bandits or tens of thousands of soldiers from the official armies

of the seven grand duchies with this broken city wall?" A crude looking, bearded soldier lifted his head and shouted towards Han Shuo.

"You don't need to worry about this. As a soldier, if you have no way to stop the enemy from invading, you should offer up your own head to wash off your failure and shame. I will personally cut off the heads of those who dares to escape in order to prolong their lives." Han Shuo looked coldly at this brawny guy and snapped.

"Your Lordship, I think you'd better leave while it's early. This place has been abandoned by the Empire. Do you think you alone can change the situation of Brettel City? Without a hundred thousand imperial elite soldiers to guard this city, it'll forever be unable to escape its fate of being invaded. If you want to seek death, can you please not drag us with you?" This stubborn soldier was extremely arrogant as he ignored Han Shuo's cold eyes and rebutted in a rebellious manner.

Whoosh!

A dark brown ray of light flashed. No one knew what had been launched as something shot towards that rebellious soldier. The next second, a head rolled off a pair of shoulders, fresh blood spraying out from the neck like a brush sketching a beautiful painting.

"From now on, what you need to do was listen and execute commands. You have no need for doubts, and even if you do, you must keep them to yourself!" Han Shuo looked murderous as he shouted, his face cruel and ruthless like a butcher. The soldiers below clamped their mouths shut one by one.

At this moment, a shining troop of over a hundred warhorses, their riders holding shiny weapons in their hands, slowly entered the castle. A man in a full-body, silver armor with a silver spear in his hand bent his body slightly on the warhorse to pay respects to Han Shuo, "Sir Count, earth rider Faulke will dedicate my all to serve you and heed your every command."

Han Shuo didn't need to think much at all to know that Faulke had been sent by Lawrence. Han Shuo felt an atmosphere of slaughter from this

man that only existed on true warriors who'd been through hundreds of battles. He immediately swept a glance filled with ill intent at Brettel City's soldiers and said with a sinister laugh, "Faulke, from today on, these ones are under your care. Use the most cruel method you have to train them. I won't blame you if someone dies during training."

# Chapter 301: Army of Undead

Brettel City had undergone a slight change. The civilians that dressed like beggars within the city often saw a different scene from what they usually saw. The soldiers of Brettel City that lived like cowardly borners had recently become energized. It was like they had been possessed by something. They would actually form a tidy troop and run while carrying weights; or practice their swordsmanship within the city lord's mansion that was undergoing steady repair.

The originally cowardly and useless soldiers who'd worn fearful expressions on their faces gradually toughened up beneath the harsh training from the knights in silver armor. Their previously wax colored, thin looks also hardened and had unknowingly become more defined.

It wasn't just the soldiers in Brettel City, but some other areas also underwent significant changes. An example would include the pitted city wall that was now repaired by some old and retired soldiers. The changes were especially apparent at the city lord's mansion. It had suddenly become filled with life. The large numbers of people visiting and leaving it had even caused it to become a bit disorderly.

For the civilians of Brettel City, who'd already given up hope, they weren't too affected by these changes. They were used to the city lord being the first to escape and didn't think that these changes would have any effect. Instead, some of them even maliciously speculated about the harm these actions might bring to them.

They didn't know if the changes in the city would cause the bandits and soldiers of the seven duchies, who hadn't visited in several months, to think that there was loot worth pillaging in the city once again. It would be another terrible experience if they became interested and came back to rob the city once again.

Han Shuo slowly walked out of the secret chamber within the city lord's mansion very early in the morning, to find Faulke and Dick Chester already waiting in the living room. When he saw the three of them, the

three people saw Han Shuo move his storage ring, dumping weapons as well of bags full of provisions onto the floor. Han Shuo looked towards Faulke and said, "Use these weapons and chariots properly. You also have to control the provisions properly. Furthermore, start recruiting today. Civilians can enter the troops as long as they are young and strong. For now, promise them one gold coin aside from their meals."

As an earth knight sent over by Lawrence, Faulke naturally possessed uncommon strength. Several soldiers had already died from the intense training under Faulke. However, the death of these soldiers had actually served as examples, causing all of the soldiers to truly realize the harshness of their training, meaning that none of them dared to be there just to make up the numbers.

Faulke would maniacally train these soldiers in the morning and then discuss military tactics with the high-ranking soldiers at night in the city lord's mansion. Han Shuo also felt that he learnt a lot after listening in on the side for a few days, and felt that Faulke was indeed an officer that he could place his trust in.

"Understood," Faulke wasn't a man of many words. He normally had on a stern face and exuded the righteousness and bloodlust of a soldier.

"Dick, have there been any unusual events in the surroundings recently?" Han Shuo smiled at Dick, who was in charge of the Dark Mantle operations in the area, "Sir Count, apart from some of the civilians not understanding your actions, nothing special has occurred recently around Brettel City. However, according to Dark Mantle reports, I believe a wave of bandits will pay a visit in a few days. Of course, their targets should only be the mountain people in Mount Tali near Brettel City," Dick replied respectfully. Although the soldiers in Brettel City were cowardly and useless, the local Dark Mantle branch still operated normally with Dark Star spies concealed in the surrounding mountains.

Han Shuo nodded and then said with interest, "Very good. Keep your eye on this, figure out when the bandits will strike, along with their numbers and path. Faulke, perhaps it's time we test these soldiers. If we don't stir them up a bit, I think it would be hard for them to truly grow."

“My Lord, you are very right about this. I will make them look more lively,” Faulke replied.

Three days later, a battle that often occurred happened intensely yet again on Mount Tali, the mountain southwest of Brettel City. Redbeard Troda led four thousand savage bandits and rushed up Mount Tali, disregarding his losses. On the other side, the mountain people hid in large bushes and behind large boulders beside the meandering paths of the mountain, using bows to stop the bandits from climbing the mountain.

The mountain people had already become used to these sort of attacks. They naturally had their own way of handling it. Large rolling boulders and arrows caused quite a bit of damage to the bandit horde. The mountain people that hid behind the boulders on the mountain were much braver than the soldiers within Brettel City. They were not afraid of the bandits' attack at all, using a variety of tactics to harass and repel the invaders.

“Faulke, do you think those bandits can emerge victorious?” Han Shuo, a bit of distance away from the bandits, turned his head towards Faulke at the foot of the mountain.

Faulke shook his head and answered bluntly, “It's impossible, although Redbeard Troda's bandits number plenty, the mountain people of Mount Tali have the geographical advantage. Furthermore, they are already used to the mountain battles. It's impossible for war horses to walk the meandering mountain paths, yet Troda does not have the determination to fight to the death, so he's destined to not gain any loot from these attacks.”

“Only a hundred something bandits are dead from four thousand savage bandits. Hehe, Faulke, do you think that we have a chance of doing them in?” Han Shuo asked once again.

“That's also impossible. The road at the foot of Mount Tali is flat, so we have no geographical advantage to make use of. What's more, these soldiers haven't been trained for that long, I don't think that their courage



can immediately face the savagery of the Redbeard bandits. What's more, we merely have a thousand three hundred people. Sire, this is not a good idea," Faulke was shocked after hearing Han Shuo's words, causing him to immediately advise otherwise to Han Shuo.

Sadly, Han Shuo didn't listen to Faulke's suggestion. He chuckled and said, "Faulke, you forget that I'm a necromancer. Necromancers specialize in this sort of large-scale battles. What's more, these bandits don't have any outstanding light archmages. I think we can give it a try."

Before Faulke could speak again, Han Shuo had already walked towards the Redbeard bandits with a smile, while saying, "Attack with me. I think you should know what to do."

Han Shuo took out the skeletal wand from his spatial ring. With a low chant, dark beings began to appear one by one. Due to the existence of the skeletal wand, the power of the summoning magic was doubled. Fifty warriors, two hundred something zombies, seven hundred something skeletal warriors and three hundred gargoyles led by ten evil knights were summoned by Han Shuo as he used the skeletal wand and poured in a huge amount of mental power.

A thousand two hundred something dark beings, including powerful evil knights and hatred warriors, along with soaring gargoyles, stood in an organized fashion and marched towards the bandits under the direction of Han Shuo's skeletal wand.

After seeing so many dark creatures appear with Han Shuo's chant, Faulke felt his life suddenly turn bit surreal. Only when Han Shuo's figure had nearly disappeared from sight did he finally react and quickly roar towards the soldiers behind him, those ones that were terrified of him, "Today is the day to test your training! You have already seen the city lord's prowess. I don't doubt that he has the strength to kill all of you just by himself. The results of being a coward will definitely be quite pitiful, that's why your only choice is to listen to my orders and attack!"

The soldiers who were already frightened felt a chill grip their hearts after hearing Faulke's roar. They glanced at Han Shuo waving the skeletal

wand with a sinister expression. As courage and cowardliness warred against each other, all of them surprisingly found the courage to fight. They grasped their weapons with a determined gaze, and made the preparation to die in an effort to avoid falling at the city lord's hands.

The little skeleton with glittering white bones rode a special undead creature full of spikes that was five meters long and three meters tall. This creature seemed to be a hedgehog that had been magnified a thousand times. It carried a tail full of spikes and had only a single grey eye that was suffused with the aura of death.

The earth elite zombie and the wood elite zombie each rode on a fire-breathing black armored warhorse. These were usually only owned by an evil knight. They stayed at the little skeleton's sides. These three little things were actually more cocky than the ten evil knights and showed up at the very front of the troops. What was weird was that the ten evil knights wasn't dissatisfied by this apparent assertion of the pecking order and followed docilely behind them.

"What-What was that?" A cowardly bandit at the rear screamed shrilly after turning around to see what the dull roar behind him was. He was completely flabbergasted at the sight that greeted him.

Focused on the battle in front of him, Redbeard Troda was annoyed and had a sullen expression on his face as he roared on top of a boulder. When he heard the clamor from his subordinates, he immediately cursed, "Stupid pigs, charge!"

"Boss, behind. Look behind!" The bandit was terrified as he anxiously pointed behind him and continued to shriek.

When Troda raised his head, he was met with a dark aura of death. He found that a horde of undead creatures emanating an icy air not of this world was marching inexorably towards them.

# Chapter 302: Charge

“Why are there dark creatures here?” Redbeard Troda was shocked. He couldn’t help but stop barking orders to his subordinates to charge up Mount Tali as he gazed, baffled, at the dense army of undead creatures that were advancing on him.

“Boss, I think-I think that the target of those damned dark creatures is us!” When the shimmering purple eye of the little skeleton focused into a glare at the cowardly bandit, the bandit suddenly felt that the warm spring air had plummeted into the depths of mid-winter. A bone-deep chill crept into his body.

“Light mages, kill those filthy dark creatures!” Troda noticed the disadvantageous situation by now as well, so he hurriedly roared at the mages ahead on Mount Tali.

There weren’t as many mages as there were swordsmen and knights in the Profound Continent. The fact that this bandit group could field a few mages was a clear demonstration of their strength. The journeyman mage as well as the light adept mage clearly realized that it would be up to them handle these dark creatures, so the two of them had already started their incantations the moment Troda finished speaking.

Rays of light-shaped swords and balls of light shimmered in the air as they slowly barrelled towards the undead creatures. Seeing the light magic descend, the earth elite zombie, who had been standing on the front lines, scratched his head ingenuously and suddenly sank into the earth from the body of the fire-breathing warhorse. Right after that, a barrier formed from dust suddenly appeared, blocking most of the light swords and balls of light.

Although several light swords and balls of light managed to land on the dark creatures and purify a few skeletal warriors, they barely made a dent in the horde of dark creatures.

These two light mages were not light archmages like Ferguson, who was able to cast a damaging area of effect spell such as “Radiant Glory”. Mere

sparkles of light were snuffed out like candles in the wake of the inexorable advance of more than a thousand undead creatures, especially since the undead army also boasted the little skeleton and elite zombie warriors who were not afraid of light magic in their ranks.

Of course, the black armor of the high ranked evil knights also gave them very good resistance to light magic. Thus, the army composed of dark creatures did not waver at all under the attacks from light swords and balls of light. They continued to rush vigorously towards the bandits led by Redbeard Troda.

“Foolish pigs, feeding you guys was truly useless!” Troda swore loudly and pulled out a bright dual edged broadsword from his storage ring. He then roared towards the subordinate behind him, “Come, smash these dirty bones!”

Troda immediately charged out in the lead, three thousand bandits by his side. The bandits, who didn’t understand things like battle formations at all, only followed behind Troda like a crowd and charged towards the dark creatures with savage expressions.

Faulke led the group of terrified soldiers in another direction, different from the dark creatures’ path. The soldiers from Brettel City looked fearfully at their city lord, not daring to retreat in the face of Han Shuo’s ruthlessness. “Prepare the crossbows and bows, shoot until you see them fall. You gutless idiots, focus!” Faulke couldn’t help but swear when he saw the soldiers actually daring to crane their necks around on the battlefield.

The soldiers who were used to being scolded all raised the bows and crossbows in their hands and shot wildly at the Redbeard bandits running down the hill. Although these soldiers were far from accurate, the bandits were too densely packed together. Every arrow drew blood in the crowd as long as enough strength had been applied behind the shot.

On one side stood soldiers that hadn’t been trained for long and had worked up their courage for the first time to resist the bandits. On the other side were fiery bandits who didn’t understand battle techniques and

used brute force. As defenders, the bows and crossbows in the soldiers' hands were quite vicious. Three hundred something bandits were killed and five to six hundred others were injured in the blink of an eye as a dense rain of arrows hurtled down.

After the bandits had paid the price in three hundred lives, they finally reached the foot of the mountain. They had two options now. They could either charge towards the Brettel City soldiers on their flank, or charge forward to meet the slowly advancing undead army.

Troda was furious. He'd finally recognized the ones who'd dared to attack him were the cowardly soldiers of Brettel City. The same soldiers who would run away like cowardly dogs every single battle, and were a laughingstock for the seven dukedoms and the bandits.

Yet at this moment, these soldiers had actually dared to pick up their weapons and attack his men, inflicting quite a bit of damage. This was an unforgivable insult for Redbeard Troda. Thus, Troda roared maniacally when he'd reached the foot of the mountains, "Brothers, destroy these pieces of crap!"

Troda once again lead the charge as he rushed the soldiers led by Faulke with a roar. He didn't bother attacking the undead creatures in front as per his previous plan. However, even though he didn't attack the undead creatures, these creatures of darkness controlled by Han Shuo and the little skeleton would not let them go peacefully.

When the dark green from the Canopy of Necromancy crept over the ruby hue of dusk, a dense aura of death slowly spread out under the cover of the Canopy. All of the bones of the undead creatures shimmered with evil light as they bathed in the undead atmosphere. Their slow marching immediately suddenly tripled in speed, and even the hate warriors that moved slowly became as fast as flying gargoyles.

With a series of deep and archaic chants, rays of rippling grey liquid poured down from the sky. As the grey liquid poured down, patches of acidic swamps with azure smoke appeared in the middle of the path that bandits were taking towards Faulke and the soldiers.

The bandits that carelessly set foot in the acidic swamps all suddenly howled in pain. Due the corrosion of the acidic swamp, their skin and muscles quickly separated from their bones. Fifty to sixty living skeletons suddenly appeared in the acidic swamps in the blink of an eye.

“Damnit, avoid those pools emitting azure smoke!” Troda yelled then furiously glared at Han Shuo, who was elegantly releasing necromantic spells. Troda roared. “Evil necromancer, why are you opposing us? I shouldn’t have wronged you before!”

Han Shuo temporarily stopped chanting and looked at Troda with interest. He said softly with a charming smile, “Brettel City is my territory, wouldn’t killing and robbing in my territory count as offending me?”

“Haha, so you are that unlucky new city lord. Do you think that Brettel City is Seamist City? Do you think that you, a necromancer, can change the situation of such an abandoned place?” Troda mocked Han Shuo after the latter revealed his identity.

“How would I know if I don’t try!” Han Shuo chuckled lightly in response. He then pointed the skeleton staff towards Troda’s direction and ordered, “Children, tear them apart!”

The purple eye of the little skeleton riding on top of a giant undead creature shone with a ferocious light. He looked towards the undead creatures that were rushing towards Troda, and suddenly patted the undead creature underneath him. This undead creature, that looked like a supersized hedgehog, extended three pairs of five meter long wings that seemed to be made of azure colored rotted meat. With a flap of its azure wings, the giant undead creature brought the little skeleton into the sky towards Troda.

This seemed to be the signal for a charge. The moment the little skeleton and the undead creature took off, the gargoyles that had been circling above quickly flapped their bat-like wings and followed closely behind the enormous undead creature and attacked Redbeard Troda’s bandits.

Han Shuo floated in the air and observed the spiky undead creature through a yin demon. He didn’t know why, but the dense white bones

sticking out of its body actually seemed rather familiar. After a period of detailed observation through the yin demon, Han Shuo suddenly remembered that the little skeleton and earth elite zombie had collected a lot of super ranked magical beasts' bones spikes. Those bone spikes had shimmered with a strange energy that was actually surprisingly similar to the energy coursing through the spikes on the undead creature.

“Can it be that this undead creature that I’ve never been seen before was actually refined by the little skeleton?” This thought randomly popped up in Han Shuo’s mind, but he quickly dismissed it as too fanciful. A little skeleton that he’d personally refined shouldn’t have this kind of special ability.

“Don’t kill him, I want that leader alive!” Han Shuo suddenly yelled when he saw the little skeleton and the undead creature dive down at Troda.

Han Shuo had found out from Dick that the bandit named Troda often robbed Brettel City in recent years. He was a bandit leader who’d amassed an unknown amount of wealth. Han Shuo was going to make him spit out all of the riches that his group had looted. Brettel City currently needed a large amount of gold coins and the two hundred thousand gold coins Han Shuo had brought with him was not enough to continue supporting everything.

# Chapter 303: Must confess even unto death

The undead creature that had been rushing at Troda suddenly changed direction to attack the bandits in Troda's group in accordance with Han Shuo's shout and the little skeleton follow up pat.

Troda roared as he shot out a series of arrows at the undead creature. A random few connected, but unfortunately didn't hinder it at all. This hedgehog-shaped undead creature rammed right into the middle of the dense group of bandits under the little skeleton's guidance.

Pfft pfft...

The enormous body of this undead creature barged into the center of the bandits. Its sharp spikes pierced through five bandits, three of which were torn apart while two of them flew through the air, impaled on the spikes.

Three hundred gargoyles roared as they flew over, flapping their bat-like wings as they shot forward. Roughly a dozen bandits didn't even have time to resist before iron hook-like claws mangled their flesh and blood. The dark creatures that couldn't fly united with the ten evil knights charging down Troda's bandits under the leadership of the earth and wood elite zombie.

Over a thousand undead creatures of various kinds crashed directly into the middle of the bandits. These creatures didn't fear death or felt any pain. They used either sharp weapons or claws to crazily assault the bandits.

The skeletal warriors were the weakest among the troop. Their bones often shattered upon impact of a strong collision, except for those whose bodies were at a higher level of defense. The power from the iron bars in their hands was very ferocious, able to create great trouble for the bandits.

The huge hate warriors were even more difficult to deal with. It would take four or five bandits to barely handle one hate warrior. Only fire and lightning magic, in addition to light magic, could deal major damage to



these powerful undead creatures. Even though normal physical attacks could cut off the hate warriors' limbs, they still couldn't stop the latter from attacking.

The ten evil knights were the fiercest as together they raised huge, sharp white bone spikes with great lethality. A swing of a huge bone spike would sweep five or six bandits to death. The black armor formed from the exotic ore native to the abyss of death was even more resistant to magic, compared to normal armor, while the undead creatures themselves weren't easily injured by physical attacks. Therefore, the ten evil knights were a nightmare for the bandits. The bandits seemed unable to find a suitable, timely method to deal with them.

Han Shuo stood in the air, activating the bone staff and chanting some obscure magic incantation. Under the thick veil of the Canopy of Necromancy's green-black fog, water ripples descended from the sky to create puddles of acid bog. The acid bog was harmless towards the undead creatures. But when living people without the the aura of death around them entered, they would be dissolved to the bone.

"Damned stupid pigs you, do you only know to stand there and watch?" Faulke let out a loud curse. He clutched his silver spear and turned to the bandits, shouting, "Aim at them!"

The brutal bandit group of four thousand members really couldn't be underestimated. Han Shuo had only summoned over a thousand undead creatures, the majority of which were the lowest level of zombie warriors. The power of these zombie warriors was too weak to pose a true threat to the bandits.

Therefore, the amount of undead creatures were too few compared to the bandits. It was simply impossible to exterminate a large amount of these four thousand bandits by relying on few hate warriors and evil knights. Amidst Faulke's screams and shouts, series of arrows landed amongst the bandits and even the undead creatures. The arrows were basically harmless to the high level hate warriors and evil knights, so most of these arrow attacks didn't even cause any damage to them.

Seeing the hate warriors have no problem attacking the bandits even when stuck with arrows, the greenhorn archers heaved a visible sigh of relief and unleashed their skills even more fiercely. Now that they had nothing to worry about, the archers became better at deploying the shooting skills learned from their training. The attacks were becoming increasingly accurate. More and more bandits were hit and died from the arrows.

Observing the situation with cold eyes, Han Shuo was startled and suddenly paused the Acid Bog magic. A narrow, twisting path that led to Faulke's group had appeared next to Troda. The narrow path was enough for only three or four people to enter, but it gave rise to an opportunity to attack Faulke's group.

"Attack! Kill those damned cowardly soldiers of Brettel City!" Troda pointed towards Faulke. The layers bandits around him rushed straight at Faulke with Troda beneath the rain of arrows.

The soldiers were becoming used to the fight. They mercilessly shot even more arrows at Troda's group as they faced the latter's incoming attack. The charging bandits fell one by one and rolled onto the ground like porcupines with arrows, spears and lances extending out of their bodies, their dying poses varied and exotic.

Halfway up Mount Tali, the leader of the mountain people, tall Fulkin with a high nose bridge was wearing not quite precious armor and at a loss as he watched the chaotic battle at the mountain foot, saying, "What's going on?"

Fulkin was the leader of the mountain people on Mount Tali. They lived on Mount Tali by mining to trade for living necessities. The group of roughly a thousand mountain people had dropped continuously to less than six hundred throughout endless conflicts. They would have already long been destroyed by the bandits if it hadn't been for the terrain of Mount Tali.

"I don't know who that necromancer is, but those soldiers should belong to Brettel City. Hmm, those Brettel bugs actually dare to wield weapons in

their hands, I must be seeing things!” Veteran miner Turiaf was tiptoeing on a tall stone, speaking with suspicion as he looked down below.

“I heard that Brettel City got a new city lord. Could it be this is the new city lord really wants to change the whole city?” Fulkin exclaimed involuntarily, a hint of shock appearing in his eyes.

“It’s said that the new city lord is Bryan. He seems to be a necromancer who killed the great swordmaster of the Brut Merchant Alliance. He’s an evil man who’s challenged many powerhouses of the Empire. No one could escape his palm of his hands. He’s never spared a single life in any fight.” Turiaf had recently heard some information from Brettel City thanks to the fairweather merchants. He couldn’t help but speak up now.

Fulkin, the chief of the mountain people on Mount Tali, pondered silently for a bit before opening his mouth to say, “That damnable bandit Troda has killed many of our people. Even my little brother died to his hands. Whatever it might be, Troda’s situation doesn’t look very good now. It seems we won’t have to stay and defend ourselves on the mountain anymore.”

“Fulkin, do you mean to descend down the mountain and fight to the death with Troda?” Turiaf asked, startled.

Nodding his head, Fulkin harrumphed coldly and shouted loudly, “Perhaps today is the time for our revenge. These damnable Troda bandits have killed too many of our people. We must not let him leave Mount Tali alive!”

As his words sounded, Fulkin stepped out from a mountain rock and sprinted downwards at the battle at the mountain foot. The mountain people who’d been hiding behinds rocks and shrubs, all followed Fulkin to charge the area where Faulke’s group was stationed, all of their long accumulated hatred abruptly exploding.

For the Fulkin’s people, the undead creatures were strange existences from another world. It was best not to come in contact with them. These creatures didn’t belong to this world after all, so it’d be a shame if the creatures turned to attack them.

Moreover, there were acid puddles of various sizes on the ground beneath those undead creatures. There were dozens of stark white skeletons freshly denuded of their flesh that were still lying in the acid puddles. The creepy scene was too shocking for them. They naturally wouldn't be willing to enter such a dangerous place.

Whoosh whoosh!

Two bone spears shot out from an unknown position. Troda suddenly felt pain on his two legs. Dozens of gargoyles abruptly swamped over him. Without waiting for him to react, they grabbed him with their claws, spiraling up with him into the sky.

"My name is Bryan, I'm the new city lord of Brettel City. Very pleased to meet you, Troda!" Han Shuo's voice rang out elegantly. When Troda finally reacted, he saw Han Shuo's smiling face looking down at him, while the claws from four gargoyles pierced through his back. These four creatures flapped their wings, not letting him fall to his death.

"What do you want?" Troda was indeed a leader in the bandit world. His face was still vicious and furious as he roared at Han Shuo despite the agony on his bloody back.

"I don't want anything, only all of your wealth. Spit back everything you've pillaged from Brettel City in the past several years!" Han Shuo was in a good mood as he spoke with a soft, happy laugh.

"Kill me! I won't give you anything even if I die! Haha, you won't get your hands on this wealth!" Troda let out a crazy laugh, seemingly not knowing how to spell the word "death".

Pfft! Three bone spears nailed Troda's chest and lower abdomen. Han Shuo said smilingly,

"You seem to have forgotten that I'm a necromancer. In addition to the power ability to control dark creatures, necromancers are very familiar with the soul. Even if you die, I can still extract everything from your soul."

# Chapter 304: Memory search

“The boss, the boss is dead!” A bandit screamed when he saw the three bone spears penetrate through Troda.

When they saw Troda killed in addition from the undead creatures and Brettel soldiers, the bandits lost their fighting spirit. They were no longer fearless of death, and instead, suddenly felt an ardent desire to live. No one thought of getting revenge for Troda, they all fled in panic.

Using the bone staff to cast a necromancy magic spell that wrapped around the hazy green of the souls, Han Shuo solemnly chanted obscure incantations to collect the memories of these souls. He flourished the bone staff awhile later. The souls turned into green smoke and drifted away.

The gargoyles dragged Troda’s body over to Han Shuo. He relieved Troda’s corpse of his space ring before promptly throwing the corpse away. Han Shuo let out a light breath of satisfaction after collecting Troda’s wealth and memory. He looked to the distance to see that the chaotic battle still going on.

A portion of the heavily injured Redbeard bandits rushed towards Faulke. The soldiers who’d been shooting arrows from a safe distance were shocked and frightened as they switched gingerly from bows to broadswords and spears under Faulke’s orders. Faulke arranged for the hundred plus experienced knights to be out in front and started attacking the incoming bandits along with the soldiers.

Fulkin and the mountain people of Mount Tali had also sprinted down from the mountain. They cooperated with Brettel soldiers to surround and exterminate the Red Beard bandits, who’d were all dejected due to the death of their leader.

Han Shuo firmly grasped the situation through the three yin demons. He knew for sure that the bandits were doomed for defeat this time. The undead creatures were still slaughtering the bandits as per his orders. Having reached the separate demon realm, Han Shuo no longer needed

the power from these souls. However, the Demonslayer Edge on his chest still silently absorbed this energy that was difficult to observe by the naked eyes.

Standing on a high altitude, Han Shuo discovered the little skeleton riding a huge, bizarre roaring porcupine and running all the escaped bandits down. The earth elite zombie, wood elite zombie, and ten evil knights were fighting together as they scurried around, hunting down bandits.

Han Shuo issued an order, and the little skeleton and zombie warriors in this area squatted down to collect the spoils of war from the bandits' bodies. The undead creatures diligently searched out every weapon, leather jacket, and even some fine clothes before piling them up according to Han Shuo's instructions.

Han Shuo stopped supplying mental strength for the Canopy of Necromancy after the bandits had fled, letting it gradually scatter to the wind. The earth gradually absorbed the Acid Bog puddles under the sunlight. The skeletons in various weird postures suddenly let out cracking sounds and collapsed.

There were no surprises now that the big picture had been set in stone. In this battle, more than twenty seven hundred out of four thousand bandits had died, the rest had fled in a bedraggled fashion. All spoils of war had been collected from the corpses, which Han Shuo ultimately handed over to Faulke's management.

Nearly two hundred of Brettel City's new soldiers died from the bandits' savage attacks in this battle, while Fulkin had only lost only fifty of his people who'd rushed down from the mountain. This showed the weak power and incompetent abilities of the soldiers in the battlefield.

"Noble Sir Count, thank you for your help." When the battle was settled, Fulkin went over to Han Shuo and bowed to pay his respects and gratitude.

"No need to stand on ceremony. Mount Tali is part of Brettel City territory. It's my responsibility as the city lord to ensure the safety of your

lives.” Han Shuo responded with a smile before adding, “I hope this is a good start. Brettel City is also your hometown, I don’t think you must continue staying on Mount Tali if you don’t want to.”

“Perhaps one day we’ll return to Brettel City, but it’s not yet the best time. Sir Count should understand our concerns.” One battle wasn’t enough to assure Fulkin. He wouldn’t dare to take the risk before Brettel City could display powerful military strength.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo said smilingly, “You will see Brettel City change. Alright, we can stop here today. I still have other things to handle.”

Paying no more attention to Fulkin, Han Shuo went over to Faulke and told him to clean up the battlefield. He then left for direction of the Helon Duchy by himself. Han Shuo had received the information about Redbeard Troda’s hidden location from the latter’s mouth. In addition to some miscellaneous crystal cards inside the space ring, the jewelry and ores that Troda had pillaged over years hadn’t been sold, but hidden within a mountain with a bald top instead.

Troda had originally been a criminal in the Helon duchy. He was released thanks to general amnesty when Helen Tina succeeded the position. Troda left the prison and returned to his long lost freedom, becoming a bandit. Even though he’d been making a mess everywhere over the past several years, he was still obsessed with his hometown. He’d hidden the wealth at a mountain not far from his hometown.

The current grand duke of Helon Duchy was Helen Tina, rumored to be an extremely charming woman. This woman had obtained with finesse the grand duke position that her uncles had coveted, becoming the true power holder of Helon Duchy. None of the uncles who fought for the throne had escaped from her hands. She’d killed them all when she’d succeeded the seat.

“Helon Duchy, humph!” Han Shuo snorted coldly. He traversed the dim sky while secretly thinking about when to make a move on this duchy.

Even though Helen Tina was a woman, the army there had no hearts for

mercy in her hands. Her Helon Duchy was the most frequent invader out of the seven grand duchies that invaded Brettel City.

Helon Duchy was seven hundred li to the northeast of Brettel City. It'd take a day to travel by a fast galloping horse, but Han Shuo only needed an hour using the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens.

Upon his arrival at that bald-headed mountain, Han Shuo saw a large scale battle campaign that involved four grand duchies in full swing on that precise mountain. The person who Han Shuo had been secretly cursing, Helen Tina, was valiantly sitting on a fiery red phoenix, calm and at ease as she commanded the troops in an attack.



# Chapter 305: Hiding

The seven grand duchies included the Helon Duchy of Helen Tina, Bavenden Duchy of Alec Ambridge, Boulet Duchy of Burt Zili, Bonton Duchy of Randy Allard, Narsen Duchy of Benedict Sackville, Etman Duchy of Argi Gilles, and Bisli Duchy of Nehem Beige.

The combined size of the seven grand duchies wasn't much smaller than the Lancelot Empire, but the seven grand duchies fought all year round and never seemed to stop. This battle was being conducted right outside of the Helon Duchy, the current participants being the Helon, the Narsen, the Etman and the Bonton duchies.

Grand duke Benedict of Narsen Duchy was in the prime of his life. He coveted Helen Tina's beauty, hence his cooperation with Helon Duchy against the invasion of Etman and Bonton duchies to win the beauty's heart.

Benedict desired Helen for her beauty as well as her duchy. However, Helen had always maintained a tepid attitude towards his aggressive pursuit. This tickled his heart, making him even more eager to please her. Benedict often accepted Helen's invitation to personally led the army of Narsen Duchy in skirmishes.

Helen wore a bright red magic robe, a mysterious magic pattern on her high, protruding chest, and her long red hair elegantly flying in the wind above the mountain. Helen looked like a dazzling goddess of fire as she rode the red-feathered fire phoenix.

On the cliff beneath her was grand duke Benedict of Narsen Duchy in clean, exquisite formal attire. He stood next to a luxurious carriage, a calm and confident smile on his face. His eyes were watching the soldiers of Etman and Bonton duchies advance deep into the mountain.

Han Shuo arrived in the sky above the mountain valley. Glancing down on the raging battle, he recalled Troda's wealth being buried hidden here and momentarily zoned out.

This place was completely different from the mountain valley with the

mithril mine. The mountain was formed purely from the deposits of type of very durable rock. The darling of the earth—the earth elite zombie, could move unimpeded within the soft soil, but he couldn't do so at will with this rock solid mountain.

If the metal elite zombie could be refined in the place of extreme metal, its ability to destroy stones and drill through mountains would enable it to enter easily. Unfortunately, the metal elite zombie was currently unobtainable, since the location of the place of extreme metal was still unknown. Han Shuo could only helplessly watch the grand battle occur on the mountain while thinking of another way.

Han Shuo stood on the sky, his vision scanning the entire mountain valley. He frowned, wondering if he should make use of this chance to enter. Troda's wealth was hidden at the spot beneath the carriage where Benedict was standing next to. Troda hadn't placed all of his wealth into the space ring, likely because he was scared that someone would assassinate him to seize his ring.

Troda had also been quite a player. He'd had three lovers and two sons in the Helon Duchy. He'd already made the appropriate arrangements for his most trusted mistress. Once she learned of his death, the wealth in his mountain would become the pillar of support for this mistress and his sons.

Therefore, Han Shuo needed to quickly clean out the four hundred thousand gold coins worth of treasures when the news had yet to reach her ears.

As Han Shuo raptly watched the scene below and tried to think of a way, Helen Tina below suddenly discovered his gaze. She frowned, a magic staff embedded with an enormous flame stone abruptly appearing in her hand.

This magic staff had the ability to increase the effectiveness of fire magic. Helen raised it and pointed at Han Shuo. A blazing fire coalesced into five human-sized fireballs, flying straight towards him on the sky.

"Hateful woman!" Han Shuo softly cursed. The fingers on his left hand danced adroitly, shooting out rays of faint purple flame. The rays wove

into a glacial net, tightly enveloping the five huge fireballs.

Sizzling sounds and faint smoke instantly appeared when the magic net, woven from the purple spellfire of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, wrapped around the five fireballs. The cold air instantly snuffed out the fire elements within the fireballs. The fire remnants shimmered as they slowly scattered down, forcing Helen to pull on the hood of her magic robe.

“Who is it?” Helen Tina looked up only to see a small black spot under the sunlight. She withdrew her contemptuous attitude and asked cautiously upon seeing her fireballs easily destroyed.

Han Shuo paid no heed to Helen Tina and snorted before flying off towards the back of the mountain. He intended to temporarily depart this troublesome area and think of other methods later. At the back of the mountain, he saw Helon soldiers hauling enormous war equipment to the top. Han Shuo intended to kill a soldier and changed outfits in order to enter the main battlefield.

Helen Tina started panicking upon seeing Han Shuo fly to the back without any words but a snort. She looked down and shouted to Benedict, “You take care of matters here. The magic cannons are being delivered to the back of the mountain, but a dangerous character has appeared. I need to immediately go and take a look.”

Helen Tina patted the fire phoenix without waiting for Benedict Sackville to reply. The super rank magic creature had brilliant, fiery red feathers that swayed and sashayed as the phoenix flapped its wings and flew up, bringing the bright red robed woman to the back like a gout of blazing flame.

The magic cannons contained a strange kind of magic element. This element seemed to repulse the space rings. The cannons couldn't be placed directly into space rings and could only be pushed up slowly via human power.

Helen Tina had crafted the strategy for this grand battle for a long time, the killing blow being precisely the bombardment of magic cannons from the high attitude of this mountain. She had been planning this for far too

long, using enormous effort to lure two grand duchies to the same place. She absolutely would not let anyone destroy her plan. Therefore, she expended full force in stopping Han Shuo when she saw him fly to the back.

Han Shuo had yet to apply his plan when a red silhouette quickly flew over. In the sky, five huge but slender, vivid fire snakes twisted their roughly seven meter long bodies before shooting at Han Shuo from five different directions.

The fire magic “Mad Dance of Fire Snakes” could only be casted when a fire mage advanced to the rank of archmage. The ring that Helen Tina wore on her left hand enhanced mental strength. Add to that the magic staff embedded with the flame stone, she was able to release five fire snakes instead of three that an ordinary archmage could summon.

The five fire snakes meandered in the sky, the extremely high temperature creating sizzling sounds in the air. The fire was so violent that it seemed that it would only need a short while to burn Han Shuo to ashes.

Han Shuo was stunned. He had originally looked down on Helen Tina, thinking she was only a woman with wild ambitions who only knew to use schemes and beauty to gain power. He hadn’t expected her to have real strength. This terrifying strength coupled with her extraordinary beauty surprised Han Shuo greatly.

Snow white bones shot out like flowers in full bloom, becoming as soft as silk threads. They were woven into a massive white bone shield under Han Shuo’s manipulations. Endless darkness blotted out the dazzling sunlight. The dark fog completely shrouded this space while the white bone shield materialized in front of Helen Tina.

The fiery red halo of the five fire snakes wasn’t enough to light up the surroundings. As the sunlight was blotted out, the snakes lost their targets and turned to entangle the white bone shield instead, burning it to crisp. Helen Tina suddenly couldn’t feel a hint of Han Shuo’s presence anymore.

The dark fog disappeared as quickly as it came, dispersing upon just a

breeze. When the sunlight returned to scatter upon the hill, Han Shuo had already vanished from the air without a trace, leaving behind only the burned bone shield that was cut off from its supply of magical energy. The shield shattered into small, inky black pieces and scattered down.

Taking out a pair of snow white gloves with silver embroidery, Helen Tina promptly caught a falling piece of bone. She was shocked upon looking at the pitch black piece in her hand, her eyes vigilant as she swept a glance around and murmured, "Turns out he's a damnable necromancer. Just who is this person?"

Mumbling to herself for a bit, Helen Tina still had no clues. She naturally thought that Han Shuo had taken advantage of the dark fog to escape. Turning to look at the soldiers busily pushing the cannons, she ordered, "Hurry up, move all of these cannons to the top of the mountain."

The bare chested soldiers were hard at work and all shouted "Yes!" upon hearing the order. Everyone snuck a glance at the goddess of their heart and felt themselves full of an inexplicable energy, their strength suddenly spiking up.

On a huge rock, a soldier lightly rested his hands on the carriage containing the cannons. A trace of ridicule flashing in his eyes, he glanced at Helen Tina in the sky like a vicious beast lurking in the dark looking at its prey. He whispered with a chuckle, "Helen Duchy, Helen Tina. You pillaged Brettel City to fatten yourselves, now it's time for you people to spill some blood."

# Chapter 306: Magic crystal cannons

As soon as the grand duchess of Helon Duchy had departed, the previously dispersing fog slowly gathered once again. The sunny sky was shrouded by an inky cloak so black that one couldn't see their own fingers. The Helon soldiers who'd been rigorously pushing the cannons, were so scared that they couldn't help but shriek.

A shadow dashed erratically back and forth within the pitch black darkness. Terrifying, desolate screams echoed from the places where the shadow had glided past. These shrill screams would start up briefly before being abruptly cut off. The soldiers had been fought on the edge of death many times in their lives, so they quickly understood what it meant for the sounds to come to an abrupt end.

The screams of those not reconciled to their fate were isolated by the darkness. The thick dark fog hid the brutal slaughter that was happening. When it completely dispersed, more than forty bodies lay on the ground. Each had died with their neck pierced through by a sharp weapon.

Six crystal cannons, each five meters tall and six meters long, displayed vivid colors after the fog had cleared. The crystal cannons were refined from magic silver and a variety of other exotic metals. Their barrels were engraved with obscure, microscopic magical arrays. The silver-gray crystal cannons were so heavy that they couldn't be moved easily.

Black glossy spots sparkled like stars that were appearing together with the sunlight. Along with the glossy ephemeral sheen, stiff and heavy bodies appeared one by one out of thin air next to the crystal cannons. Sixty some zombie warriors took careful control of the crystal cannons. Divided into six teams, they began to push the cannons down the bald mountain.

The magic crystal cannons had been created in an ancient style, making them sturdy and heavy. Hauling them up the mountain was quite difficult, so it naturally didn't take much effort to push them down. The six magic crystal cannons were now pushed back down to the mountain's foot using

less than a tenth of the time through the combined efforts of sixty zombie warriors.

Of course, these extremely large and expensive magic crystal cannons weren't protected only by those dozens of toiling soldiers. The guards who protected them from a further distance were still trapped within the dark fog. When the thousand plus Helon soldiers at the mountain's foot saw the magic crystal cannons that they'd just pushed up with much effort quickly roll downwards with the help of their adversaries, they immediately knew that there was a problem.

Not waiting for the thousand plus soldiers to react, the ground at the mountain's foot suddenly split open, forming a gully with a large rumbling sound. The six expensive magic crystal cannons rolled downwards one by one. The gully was very deep and narrow. Even after waiting some time, no sounds of the heavy cannons hitting the bottom could be heard from the gully.

Mission accomplished, the sixty zombie warriors vanished one by one amidst a black shimmer under the dumbfounded gazes of the soldiers at the mountain's foot. Only the deep tracks left by the rolling of the magic crystal cannons proved that they had indeed existed.

"Sir lieutenant, what... what do we do?" A captain looked helplessly at his lieutenant, asking helplessly as he glanced at the gully that was quickly closing up.

"Inform Her Lordship the Duke! The six magic crystal cannons are worth six hundred thousand gold coins. Our lives are finished if we can't find it!" The lieutenant looked terrified. He had initially planned on ignoring everything to run away. However, thinking of the cruelty that the grand duke was capable of as well as his parents in Helon City, he secretly prepared for his death instead.

As the two talked, the gully on the ground miraculously closed up after swallowing the six hundred thousand gold coins worth of magic crystal cannon. This incredible scene happening right before their eyes, as if everything was returning to normal, was both shocking and slightly

calming, actually dissolving some of their inner fear.

In the sky above the mountain, Helen Tina returned to Benedict Sackville's side with empty hands. The feathers of the Fire Phoenix danced, offsetting Helen's dazzling beauty even more as she rode in on the phoenix.

"What happened? Nothing out of your expectations, right?" Benedict asked indulgently as he gazed at perhaps the most difficult prey he'd encountered in his life. Even though Benedict was already middle aged, his elegant and noble intellectual temperament, coupled with the charisma of a mature man, were a fatal attraction for countless normal women.

"He ran away. It was an evil necromancer." Helen Tina relaxed her face into a subtle smile. She didn't hold back her smiling countenance, her tone slow and gentle.

"So it was just a cowardly necromancer. Hehe, a minor character unrelated to the big picture, he shouldn't have any impact to our plan." Benedict secretly weighed the information and didn't comment much on the matter. He casually asked, "When will the magic crystal cannons arrive? I really want to see these despicable invaders blown to bits under their bombardment."

"They are halfway up the mountain and will soon appear. I've spent a lot of money to buy these six magic crystal cannons from the Brut Merchant Alliance thousands of miles away. Their power has been tested, you'll definitely see blood blooming like roses." Having destroyed an entire small forest in one test shot, Helen Tina could imagine the scene of her enemies' flesh and blood spewing messily in her head. She was so full of expectations after having gone through all this fire and blood to reach this point.

"Lord, Lord Duke, it's bad, things are very bad!" The captain from the mountain's foot hurriedly scrambled over and shouted his report loudly with a terrified face.

"What happened?" Helen Tina frowned, extremely displeased in her heart. She shouted at the lesser captain who'd disturbed her good mood.



“The six magic crystal cannons have all disappeared!” The captain was extremely horrified but had resigned himself to articulating the truth in fear.

“Wha... what?” Helen Tina was momentarily stunned as her spirits tumbled from the peak of satisfaction to the bottom of a deep abyss. She couldn’t adapt to this kind of sudden reversal in fortune. As a result, she didn’t realize that her usual graceful voice had become shrill.

“Some zombies pushed the six cannons down from the hillside, then a crack appeared on the ground and swallowed them all. The crack then closed up and the ground returned to normal. This is the truth!” The captain hung his head as he quickly described the sequence of events. He didn’t even dare lift his head to look at Helen Tina’s eyes right now.

An enormous fireball shot out, violently consuming the captain. Helen Tina’s face was covered in a layer of frost as she screamed tragically. She rode the fire phoenix to the back of the mountain, her fury billowing to the skies. The phoenix flew quickly, surrounded by dancing embers. Benedict was certain that the soldiers responsible for transportation would face great suffering.

“Lord Duke, what should we do now? Do we still need to defend this small mountain?” After Helen Tina left the bald mountain, a soldier standing tall next to Benedict with a straight posture and darkened face asked in a low voice.

Shaking his head, the elegant and relaxed expression on Benedict Sackville’s face vanished. His face turned stern as he barked, “This battle is purely a waste of troops without the magic crystal cannons. With no rewards to speak of, we naturally won’t be engaging in this confrontation anymore. Let’s go, we will immediately withdraw from this mountain. You only need to inform Kabbah of Helon Duchy, I think he’ll know what to do.”

Nodding, the soldier took his leave without another word and issued orders to retreat to high ranked officers.

While Benedict Sackville was certainly pursuing Helen Tina, he was also

scheming to swallow the Helon Duchy at the same time. By nature, Benedict Sackville was a duke interested in nothing but profit. He wouldn't expend his own power solely in the pursuit of romance.

With the withdrawal of Narsen Duchyl in addition to Helen Tina's departure, the Helon soldiers also seemed to realize that the situation wasn't looking good. After some parlaying, the commander of the Helon army decisively issued a retreat order. The soldiers from the two duchies defending the mountain valley withdrew as quickly as they could under a rain of arrows.

The blazing fight had fizzled out as quickly as it'd been ignited. Three thousand corpses had remained behind on the bald mountain after the battle stopped. The two enemy duchies who had painstakingly waited for the Helon army to emerge from their city, now saw their chance as the soldiers cleanly withdrew. Their leaders instantly commanded the troops to go around the mountain and chase down the armies of the Narsen and Helon duchies.

There were only three hundred soldiers from the Edmond and Bonton duchies left to clean up and scavenge the remnants of the battlefield on the mountain.

The majority of troops had withdrawn after half an hour. The three hundred soldiers cleaning the battlefield suddenly felt day turn into night as the sky was gradually covered by a thick layer of black clouds. As they gathered items off the corpses, the soldiers looked up at the green-black cloud layer in the sky with a head full of befuddlement.

The three hundred soldiers had only just completed the cleanup and collected all of the weapons and armor into five big piles when, much to their terror, the previously dead soldiers started to slowly writhe and stand up in grotesque postures.

Three thousand corpses all over the place stood up and immediately surrounded the three hundred soldiers cleaning up the battlefield. Under the Canopy of Necromancy, the three thousand corpses didn't spend too much time to turn the three hundred soldiers into more of their own.

With now over three thousand stiff, resurrected corpses properly lined up in formation under Han Shuo's evil manipulations, the undead army advanced towards Helon Duchy. Han Shuo arrived at the exact place where Benedict Sackville had been standing. According to Troda's memories, Han Shuo successfully dug his way underground and found the wealth that Troda had prepared for his children and mistress.

# Chapter 307: Divine power

Han Shuo conveniently shoved all five piles of collected items from the mountain into his space ring. Suddenly, he saw an enormous halo of holy light shining upon the earth in a distance. He instinctively felt a disgust towards that sacred, pure light. Strand of faint smoke drifted up in the light and dispersed into heaven and earth.

Having collected all of the valuables in the bald mountain, Han Shuo looked up to see the three thousand plus zombies that had been walking towards the Helon Duchy turned to ashes upon being bathed in the holy light. None was left after a short span of a few minutes.

Through the yin demons, Han Shuo saw a group of four gracefully drifting over on the back of warhorses. Three of them wore silver-gray armor with the Church of Light's cross engraved on the chest. The fourth was a light mage in white robe, a thick book of scriptures in his hand. A vast holy force overflowed with each page of the book being flipped.

Helen Tina was advancing by their side on the back of the fire phoenix. Her beautiful face full of fury and cold killing intent, she quickly approached the bald-peaked mountain.

A yin demon was surveilling and about to close in on these people for close detail when the white robed mage with the scriptures in hand seemed to discover it. His bright and wise eyes staring right at in the yin demon's direction, he paged through the scriptures in his hand. A bundle of white light abruptly shot out from a page and hit the invisible yin demon in a second.

The yin demon that Han Shuo had spent a great deal of resources to refine was enveloped in a strange force upon being hit by the white beam. It turned instantly to ashes. Even Han Shuo's soul brand on it had vanished.

A pair of thin eyes opened in the skies above Han Shuo. The white robed light mage abruptly closed the scriptures, his eyes as if piercing through layers and layers of obstacles to nail down Han Shuo's body. The mage's

peaceful voice resounded quietly, "He's on the bald mountain."

The three silver armored Temple Knights urged their warhorses forward at the same time. The warhorses moved like whirlwinds, galloping swiftly towards the mountain. The white clad mage leisurely abandoned his warhorse and floated up, his speed even faster than that of the three Temple Knights riding warhorses.

Helen Tina, gliding on the fire phoenix at a low altitude, cried out softly in anger after hearing the mage's words. The fire phoenix instantly shot in the air, tearing a blazing red across the sky and reaching the mountain in the span of a few breaths.

Han Shuo's anger had been ignited when the yin demon was turned to ashes. He also became aware of the Church of Light's terrifying power at the same time. That light mage holding the scriptures in particular could easily kill a yin demon with a simple gesture. Han Shuo was instantly on his guard against this mysterious person and his scriptures.

With the high speed of Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens in addition to the earth elite zombie becoming invisible within the earth, Han Shuo wasn't worried about escaping. Therefore, he didn't choose to retreat upon seeing the Sky's Eyes above his head. He'd wanted to at least face the light mage who'd destroyed his yin demon and suss out the situation before deciding whether or not to temporarily retreat.

The Sky's Eye formed over his head needed a constant supply of mental strength from the caster. When the light mage realized that Han Shuo was remaining in the same place, he no longer provided supplied the Sky's Eye with mental strength and immediately withdrew it.

Helen Tina landed in front of Han Shuo like a flame under the brilliant sunlight in her fiery-red magic robes. She was approximately twenty-eight years old. Her soft expression covered in a layer of frost, she stared coldly at him from the super rank magic creature and shouted, "The six magic crystal cannons, hand them back over to me now!"

Han Shuo looked up at her with a calm and natural expression. He pouted before saying with a bland smile, "This is but some interest from

your Helon Duchy. Remember this well, these six magic crystal cannons is only the beginning. I will make you spit back out everything you people have robbed of us these past several years.”

“Who are you?” Helen Tina burned with rage upon hearing his words. However, she seemed to remember something and inquired him about his identity.

“Heh heh, you will know.” Han Shuo replied casually. He then stopped caring about her and focused all of his attention on the light mage who’d arrived by now.

“Please come with us to the Church of Light for a visit. As long as you confess your sins, the God of Light will forgive your reckless arrogance.” The Red Archbishop Kosse looked peaceful, as if he was the host inviting his guest.

Kosse and Ferguson were both grand magi. However Kosse was also a wind mage in addition to being a light mage. Moreover, he held the divine artifact “Revelation” of the Church of Light. He could borrow divine power from it, so his strength was much higher than the light grand magus Ferguson.

Kosse was only forty-five years old, but had the honor of serving as the acclaimed Red Archbishop. This indicated that he was no simple character. The only person above the rank of Red Archbishop was the God of Light’s messenger, the Pope. As the youngest Red Archbishop ever, he was the most promising candidate for the seat of the next Pope.

“Sorry, I have no time.” Han Shuo looked remotely at Kosse, refusing outright.

The three galloping Temple Knights had finally caught up. They’d come on the back of their warhorses since the road on the bald mountain wasn’t too windy. Standing on the mountain, Han Shuo looked into the far distance and discovered that a team of a dozen silver armored knights was gradually materializing. They seemed to be left behind by the four in Kosse’s group.

“My Lord, we don’t have to waste words on this heretic. He brutally

killed Lord Ferguson. He should be burned for this sin.” A Temple Knight glanced coldly at Han Shuo and suggested to Kosse.

The Temple Knights were a group of dedicated fanatics completely faithful to the God of Light. They themselves possessed extraordinary strength. Only when the God of Light recognized their existence and bestowed a blessing upon them, could they be qualified as Temple Knights. The favor each Temple Knight earned was different in accordance to their strength of their faith as well as their own efforts.

The strength of the Temple Knights could be distinguished based on the amount of the God’s favor bestowed upon them. The Temple Knights who only received a hint of favor would have the insignia of the Holy Grail on the armor’s chest. Those who received a lesser amount would have the olive branch insignia, those with a lot of favor had the cross insignia.

The Temple Knights who earned the blessing of a miracle could display their power to the highest possible extent. This type of Temple Knights was extremely rare and few, their insignia on the armor’s chest being an angel statue, their strength comparable to a sacred knight. If a Temple Knight of this kind was a sacred knight himself, then his strength would be even more terrifying.

However, these Temple Knights were simply too rare in the Church of Light. They wouldn’t randomly leave the Temple of Light under normal circumstances, so those with the cross insignia on their chests were already the most powerful outside. Currently, three of these Temple Knights with the cross insignia was staring raptly at Han Shuo with fervent, frenzied eyes. Han Shuo became cautious upon seeing this kind of stubborn madness that belonged only to stubborn religious followers.

“Bryan, please come to the Church of Light with us to give a clear explanation. I guarantee that the God of Light will forgive your recklessness no matter how grave your sins are. At most you’ll only be imprisoned within the Church, we won’t take your life.” The Red Archbishop secretly recalled the warning of the Lancelot Empire and tried his best to sound polite.

“Bryan? So you are indeed that unlucky new city lord of Brettel City. I finally know the meaning in your words just now. Hmph, daring to grab my magic crystal cannons, you simply don’t care about the lives of your people!” Helen Tina had completely understood by nail. Her pretty eyes drilled into Han Shuo’s body as she snorted.

“You can try. Any duchy that dares try to pillage Brettel City will have to pay the price.” Han Shuo remained unmoved, only throwing Helen Tina a glance along with a cold warning. He then slowly took out the Demonslayer Edge and nodded towards the Temple Knight who’d first spoken, “Come on, brave Temple Knight. As long as you win against me, I’ll consider following you guys to the Church of Light. I think your Church of Light won’t gang up on me, will you?”

“But a despicable necromancer, it simply won’t need a second person from us to make a move.” The Temple Knight swung his silver spear to point at Han Shuo and spoke in a righteous, awe-inspiring manner.

The silver spear shone with a brilliant silver light. Han Shuo was long since been familiar with this kind of silver fighting aura. However, the silver spear also contained a pure divine power in addition to the energy of the silver fighting aura. When the strange divine power merged with the fighting aura, the combination was much more powerful than the simple silver fighting aura.

The Temple Knights had exchanged their faithful, steadfast beliefs for blessings from the God of Light, earning a strange power in addition to the fighting aura they bitterly cultivated. Not only did strange power protect them from the erosion of evil force, it also gave them the ability to purify the evil in this world.

Normally, the damage caused by dark and necromancy spells to Temple Knights was extremely limited. The Temple Knights possessed a very strong defense even against high rank dark and necromancy spells with terrifying lethality. On the other hand, the Temple Knights’ weapons, combined with the power bestowed by their God, was terribly fatal to mages of the two aforementioned majors. Any undead creature touched by the silver spear would be unable to withstand it and be immediately



turned to ashes.

# Chapter 308: Divine weapon versus divine weapon

Han Shuo's mind was calm, his expression ruthless as he watched the high ranked Temple Knight of the Church of Light slowly approaching on the warhorse. He held the Demonslayer Edge in his right hand. As the space ring flashed, a tri-colored bone staff appeared in his previously empty left hand.

Han Shuo was about to chant a high level undead summoning spell when he saw "Revelation" on the hand of Red Archbishop Kosse burst out with a vast, brilliant holy light. This divine artifact flipped through its pages quickly without any wind, shocking even its owner.

The tri-colored bone staff of unknown material suddenly shone out brilliant yellow, blue and purple lights at the same time, the dark, evil power crazily circulating. The lights of the three colors converged before shooting towards "Revelation" on Kosse's hand.

Continuous flapping sounds traveled out as "Revelation" flipped rapidly. A beam of light drifted out with every page flipped, each light forming a miraculous word and joining a river of words flowing in front of Kosse. As soon as the marvelous words came into contact with the light from the tri-colored bone staff, holy power along with evil power exploded at the same time. Violent air surged and rushed in all directions between Han Shuo and Kosse.

The incoming Temple Knight who was challenging Han Shuo was pushed back by that terrifying power, along with the other two Knights. Helen Tina was also overwhelmed by the pressure on the back of the phoenix. She immediately struggled up to higher skies, horrified as she looked down at the happenings below.

The previously refined and commanding posture of Red Archbishop Kosse had disappeared without a trace. He stood there trembling slightly, cold sweat flowing down his body as he looked at Han Shuo, dumbfounded. He could feel the power all over his body pour crazily into

the “Revelation” in his hand. This situation had never happened before.

“Revelation” was a book of scriptures in the Church of Light that had been left behind after Kosse’s master had passed away. His luck had been excellent, he’d received this divine artifact after receiving the God of Light’s recognition in a baptism in the Temple of Light. The artifact had been in his hands for merely three years, but everything had gone smoothly for Kosse with his identity as a light and wind grand magus. The situation had always gone favorably every time he’d used “Revelation” against evil powers. He had never encountered this situation at hand.

Han Shuo held the bone staff, the mental strength in his entire being also madly attracted to it. The bone staff was rapidly absorbing his mental strength like a big sponge. When the mental strength poured into the staff, it seemed to resonate with the magic force of the bone staff itself, ultimately forming a strange tri-colored light that all converged towards the “Revelation”.

Although he was at the rank of grand magus, Han Shuo still felt slightly woozy when his mental strength was crazily sucked by the bone staff. However, his mind was much more resolute than ordinary people’s, in addition to his astoundingly strong body. This was why he wasn’t trembling like Kosse with cold sweat flowing down his body.

As the evil and holy powers intertwined, the terrifying impact swept away all of the obstacles between Han Shuo and Kosse. Rocks shattered wherever this force passed through, the bald mountain shuddering violently exploding where this impact spread through. Huge rumbling sounds echoed nonstop in the area between the two people.

“This evil force is so enormous that I’m sure that only the artifact of the Calamity Church’s Evil God can possess such power. Kill this ignorant heretic!” The Temple Knight had been swept head over heels by the forces ricocheting between Han Shuo and Kosse. After standing up with much effort, he was inwardly terrified of Han Shuo’s power upon seeing Kosse’s body trembling. He immediately suggested taking advantage of this opportunity to kill Han Shuo.

How would the Temple Knights not know how powerful Red Archbishop Kosse was? The divine artifact of “Revelation” in his hands had always been a nightmare for evil forces for many years. He hadn’t expected that today, a weak petty heretic such as the one they were facing would be able measure up to the Red Archbishop Kosse. He was afraid of Han Shuo’s immense power, so he proposed the idea of killing the latter.

The remaining two Temple Knights were watching the scene develop in front of them as they stood on the sides. As soon as they heard their brethren’s proposal, they immediately turned their warhorses towards Han Shuo without another word.

The three Temple Knights carefully avoided the center part of the still rumbling explosion, approaching Han Shuo from the rear and two sides. In the holy light flashing out from “Revelation”, they started singing praises about the glory of the God of Light. Streams of fighting aura filled with divine power flared out from their spears and attacked Han Shuo.

Seeing the Church of Light’s despicable act, Helen Tina, overhead, curled up her lips with a trace of contempt. However, Han Shuo was her enemy, while the Church of Light wasn’t an entity a small duchess could offend. She just there silently and observed happily.

Han Shuo’s mental strength infused the bone staff at a high speed. Coldly facing Kosse in a difficult struggle, he also had to guard against the three Temple Knights quickly drawing close. He could neither move his body nor make use of his mental strength. However, his demonic magic was still available. A stream of magical yuan flowed into the Demonslayer Edge in his right hand under the control of his mind.

After having absorbed a massive amount of the souls recently, the Demonslayer Edge now had a faint trace of terrifying killing intent that belonged to an unparalleled weapon. Upon being infused with magical yuan, it was akin to a murderous magic beast who’d caught the delicious smell of blood after being trapped for tens of thousand years. The Demonslayer Edge suddenly moved of its own accord and left Han Shuo’s hand with a loud howl.

A dense mass of star-like spots gathered into blood clouds. An endless resentment from the Demonslayer Edge, along with tyrannical murderous intent, had formed a massive layer of blood red clouds. The blood clouds blotted out over half of the sky above the bald mountain.

The thick blood smell seemed to contain an attack on the soul. The three Temple Knights weren't the only ones to feel that the situation had taken a bad turn. Even Helen Tina, who'd soon flown up high, was also surrounded by the vicious, terrifying air of endless fear. Her head dizzy and her chest heavy with the urge to vomit, a crazy obsession gradually surged within her heart.

Helen Tina knew that things were very bad. She hurriedly chanted an incantation to form a fiery red magic cage, enveloping both herself and the phoenix. The phoenix's wings were like a colorful ribbon, fire sparkles flashing each time they flapped. Fiery light shot out in all directions from the fire magic cage.

She finally managed to suppress the nauseous feeling of wanting to vomit. She urged the phoenix away from Han Shuo, angry and somewhat scared as she watched the battle of the two weapons above the mountain valley.

The murderous intent reaching the sky from the Demonslayer Edge had even formed an attack on the soul. Its target wasn't Helen Tina in the sky, which was why she could defend herself, albeit with some difficulties by resorting to the fire magic cage and the purifying fire of the phoenix. On the other hand, the Church of Light's three Temple Knights weren't so comfortable like her.

The Demonslayer Edge danced wildly above Han Shuo's head. The murderous intent of this peerless weapon wasn't weak at all against the other divine artifact. With the Demonslayer Edge as the center, layers and layers of thick clouds dyed the entire sky a blood red above the mountain. The three Temple Knights, who'd tried to take the opportunity to attack Han Shuo, was violently shaken by the soul attack. Their warhorses let out a scream and fell down down. The three Knights jumped down with stumbling steps, their bodies shaking. Blood flowed from their nostrils,

streaming down their necks and chests like two wiggling worms.

The three Temple Knights temporarily didn't know what to do in the face of this unfamiliar evil force. This evil force wasn't like the quiet, mysterious darkness of the Calamity Church. It was a mad, furious bloodlust with the cruelty and arrogant desire for the destruction of everything.

The three Temple Knights had to raise their spears and sing loud praises in order to obtain even more holy force whilst suffering through soul piercing agony. Brilliant halos flashed on their bodies, constantly resisting against the force that was invading their flesh.

The Demonslayer Edge had mobilized every ounce of its stored deathly soul force after having absorbed ninety percent of Han Shuo's magical yuan. It formed an evil magnetic field that also possessed the ability of attacking the soul and started eroding the essence of every living being that were enveloped within.

"Revelation" was already struggling against the invasion of the tri-colored bone staff. Kosse couldn't help but almost groan audibly when he saw Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge display an unfamiliar terrifying force.

The Demonslayer Edge spun in a circle around Han Shuo's head and slowly gathered a beam of bloody light to shoot at Kosse. Kosse desperately controlled his mental force to chant an incantation after biting the tip of his tongue. A flower of blood bloomed on one of the pages on "Revelation". The divine artifact immediately stopped turning its pages and was quickly put away by Kosse.

The bone staff that seemed to be struggling with its rival also immediately dulled and stopped absorbing Han Shuo's mental strength when Kosse speedily withdrew "Revelation". Only the Demonslayer Edge's beam of bloody light still shot insistently towards Kosse.

# Chapter 309: The mighty

Kosse himself had suffered internal injuries, he instantly panicked upon facing this murderous intent from the Demonslayer Edge's attack. He hastily took out a magic scroll from the space ring and released the magic within. A silver halo wrapped around his entire body, as he also hurriedly chanted a magic incantation at the same time.

Cold winds whistled as sharply as knives, forming an enormous tornado that roiled up to block the Demonslayer Edge's swift attack. The descending Demonslayer Edge fell into the big tornado, its speed slowed by the cold winds. In addition, the raging murderous intent was also somewhat scattered.

The Demonslayer Edge destroyed the obstacles posed by the whirlwind and immediately shot towards the silver halo released from Kosse's magic scroll. It was once again blocked by the strange energy in this silver halo. The Demonslayer Edge was now at the end of its strength. It could only make Kosse spit out a mouthful of blood, but couldn't threaten his life.

"Protect the lord!" The three Temple Knights couldn't help but cry out in panic upon seeing Kosse's misery as well as Han Shuo's ferocity. Blood dripping out of their mouths, they staggered in a charge towards Han Shuo and Kosse.

Han Shuo's body was also currently in a very bad state. The bone staff had suddenly gone out of control and absorbed nine out of ten parts of his mental force. The three Temple Knights had then come attack him. Then, the Demonslayer Edge had absorbed more than half of his magical yuan. His current strength was now far less than normal.

Han Shuo was now unable to release another equally powerful attack after the Demonslayer Edge returned after injuring Kosse. He immediately chanted an incantation upon seeing the three Temple Knights approach. The little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie suddenly appeared afterwards.

The little skeleton was still riding the undead creature that looked like a

giant, undead porcupine. The earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie each rode a fire-spitting warhorse. The three fellows immediately caught the smell of something disgusting as soon as they appeared in this dimension. They were instinctively irritated at the smell of the three Temple Knights who were loudly singing praises for the God of Light.

The three strange dark creatures charged out without needing for Han Shuo's instructions. They flew straight at the three Temple Knights, seemingly wanting to destroy these hateful Knights immediately.

"Humph! Lowly dark creatures, suffer the anger of the God of Light!" The Temple Knights raised their voice, waving their silver spears with the intention to send off these reckless dark creatures back to the dust.

Unfortunately, these three undead creatures had been refined using the secret method of demonic magic. They were fearless towards the purification ability of the God of Light. The silver spears didn't disperse their souls, turning them to ashes upon contact like the Temple Knights had expected. Among these three undead creatures, the little skeleton was first to attack. The bone knife in his hand swayed unhesitatingly to block the silver spear.

During this process, the bone knife that the little skeleton was holding abruptly went through a some weird changes. The solid bone knife suddenly wriggled madly like a living creature. The bone knife that originally possessed the length of only a dagger, grew at a very fast pace and turned into a three meters long glade in just a second.

The long knife had yet to stop its peristalsis, a million of insects now seemed to be wiggling on its blade. It gave one a scalp tingling feeling just by looking at it. Sharp little spikes slowly appeared on the knife's blade, covering it in sharp little spikes and making it look eerily ferocious.

This process had taken a long time to describe, but had actually happened in just the blink of an eye. It'd finished transforming to a three meter long sword in the instant that the little skeleton swung it up at the silver spear. The little skeleton himself was only one meter thirty centimeters tall, looking comical as he held the long blade.



However, deathly aura filled the sky with a swing of the long sword in the little skeleton's hand. The dense sinister air encompassed tens of thousand years accumulation of desolation. This despairing atmosphere revealed a taste of endless death in which the godly power within the Temple Knights' silver spears was simply unable to purify.

Riding the massive porcupine-like undead creature, the little skeleton dove down from high above with an enormous rumbling sound. The long sword brought with it a deathly air that filled the skies, hammering straight down on a Temple Knight and forcing him to his knees.

This Temple Knight had previously suffered serious internal injuries from the corrosion of the Demonslayer Edge. Now that he took a violent blow from the little skeleton, his knees couldn't withstand the pressure and shattered with cracking sounds. Not waiting for the Knight to react, the little skeleton's long sword pierced through his silver armor. The little skeleton lifted up the Temple Knight on the tip of the blade and flew over to Han Shuo in a triumphant manner.

Han Shuo didn't need to take a look to know that this Temple Knight was already done for. Otherwise, the latter wouldn't be lying still without any resistance. When the little skeleton neared, the hideous three meter long sword flicked. The Temple Knight spun and flew with the wind before crashing down right at Han Shuo's feet, his body completely devoid of life.

Temple Knights who could release silver fighting aura were naturally sky riders. It was a pity that Temple Knight had already been heavy injured and had somewhat underestimated the little skeleton. Therefore, the terrifying powerful little skeleton had easily slain him. As for the remaining two knights, they had stood quite a distance from Han Shuo, so they wasn't much affected by the Demonslayer Edge's corrosion. Moreover, the earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie weren't as horrifying as the little skeleton. The two Temple Knights didn't fall in defeat as fast even though they had difficulties defending against the two zombie's endless skillsets.

Helen Tina was still hovering on the phoenix, shocked as she looked at the happenings below. She originally intended to take advantage of the

situation whilst the two sides battled, but now could only stared dumbly at the situation of the Red Archbishop Kosse and the three Temple Knights. Not only were they unable to kill Han Shuo, one of them was dead while the other three suffered serious injuries. Her heart fell into disarray with panic.

Han Shuo stood arrogantly below, his eyes coldly watching the surroundings. Helen Tina constantly weighed up the gains and losses. On one hand, she was scared of Han Shuo's astonishing strength. On the other, she was heartbroken over the six magic crystal cannons.

After a while of hesitation, the magic crystal cannons worth six hundred thousand gold coins washed away some of her fear for Han Shuo. Helen Tina saw Kosse fleeing in a panic towards the foot of the mountain, the little skeleton astride the skeletal undead creature in hot pursuit with a three meter long blade in his hand. Helen Tina had no time to debate any longer.

She released a mass of flames that burned the clouds along with the phoenix. Her staff embedded with a fire stone and her ring that enhanced mental strength further spread out the flames to cover half the sky. The sea of fire churned and spread to envelop Red Archbishop Kosse.

Kosse, who was escaping in panic, soon sensed the strangeness over his head. He didn't forget to release a wind magic despite his trepidation. The wind magic blew the blazing flames towards the little skeleton and earth elite zombie, forcing them to suspend their chase.

Undead creatures were born and lived in a gloomy and humid strange world – an endless realm of desolation that was forever unable to witness the sunlight. Therefore, they felt an instinctive disgust towards the light and high temperatures. When the raging flames shrouded over Kosse, the three undead creatures little skeleton, earth elite zombie, and wood elite zombie didn't immediately charge at him.

"Lord Kosse, Lord Kosse!" The distant group of Temple Knights had finally caught up with a great deal of road dust. These Temple Knights mostly had olive branches or holy grail insignias on their chests, which

corresponded with the power of senior knight and earth rider. They were obviously weaker than the previous three experts, whose insignia was the cross.

However, their numbers were numerous. Moreover, they all had the ability of purification towards undead creatures thanks to the God of Light's blessing. It was indeed unrealistic for Han Shuo to attempt to drown them in a grand army of undead creatures, particularly when considering the presence of the light grand magus Kosse.

Kosse was now seriously injured and had expended a great deal of spirit power. He immediately shouted upon seeing the Temple Knights finally arrive, "Kill this heretic, his dark heart should not exist in this world of light!"

Kosse previously had wanted to persuade Han Shuo with kind words, but he'd had experienced the latter's power and even taken serious damage. Therefore, Kosse no longer had benevolence or mercy heart. Absolutely frightened of Han Shuo's evil power, Kosse immediately ordered everyone to kill him.

The Temple Knights who'd just arrived saw Kosse's group in their miserable state. They instantly followed Kosse's order to charge at Han Shuo, standing on the mountain in a terrain full of holes and pockmarks. The two Temple Knights, who were out of breath in a struggle under the attacks of the earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie, tried to shout a warning=, "Be careful of his dark creatures! They don't fear the holy power, they even have mysterious skills. Be very careful!"

As the Temple Knights chatted, a team of the Calamity Church's Death Guards in pitch black armor appeared in another corner of the mountain. A necromancer in black magic robes was amongst the Death Guards troop. All them ran desperately in the mountain. The necromancer spoke in a lowered, worried voice, "Hurry! Bryan cannot die no matter what! Ehh, even though he accidentally hurt some of our people, you absolutely shouldn't harbor any dissatisfaction."

Many people among the Death Guards had bleeding noses and mouths.

It seemed the Demonslayer Edge's murderous intent had also hurt them.

The eyes of the black robed necromancer shone with excitement. He murmured, "Why is the divine artifact of the bone staff blessed by the Evil God in his hands?"

# Chapter 310: Captured alive

Han Shuo stood tall on the bald mountain, looking without fear or anxiety at the incoming Temple Knights. His mental force and magical yuan had been restored somewhat. Although he'd be hard pressed to win against the Temple Knights, it wouldn't be difficult if he wanted to leave leisurely.

Han Shuo hadn't released the other two yin demons since "Revelation" had destroyed one of them. Thus, he didn't know that aid from the Calamity Church had appeared near bald mountain. He was about to leave when his consciousness sensed another presence.

When Han Shuo's soul had formed a consciousness at the separate demon realm, his senses had become much more sensitive. When he'd sensed that sinister presence, a thought struck him. Last time in the Valley of Sunshine, Edwin had once said that the Calamity Church would appear when Han Shuo needed them the most. It seemed Edwin hadn't lied.

Han Shuo had been standing on the mountain but immediately soared high with a thought. He saw a necromancer leading a group of Death Guards and Death Knights rushing over. The mountain had become riddled with potholes under the bombardment of the divine artifacts. However, these Death Guards and Death Knights were sprinting over as if they were on flat ground.

Within the Temple Knights' thick layer of protection, Red Archbishop Kosse was thinking to himself on a warhorse. He looked up at Han Shuo, not knowing what to do.

These Temple Knights had extraordinary power and were high in number, but it was a pity that they didn't have flying magic beasts. They had no other way but to look helplessly at facing Han Shuo high in the sky. Red Archbishop Kosse could use magic to fly, but didn't dare to pursue due to his grave injuries.

Helen Tina looked indecisively at Han Shuo from the back of her phoenix, her pretty face darkened calculatingly. She hesitated, not

knowing if she should take this opportunity to chase after Han Shuo.

If Helen Tina hadn't seen the great battle between Han Shuo and the Church of Light, she certainly wouldn't have hesitated to charge at him right now and wrest back the six magic crystal cannons that he'd taken. Unfortunately, the battle right before her eyes just now had given her a clear understanding about Han Shuo's terrifying power.

Pointing at Helen Tina, Han Shuo said with a jeering smile, "You still want the magic crystal cannons?"

Upon Han Shuo's disdainful glance, the originally hesitant Helen Tina couldn't suppress the anger that instantly ignited throughout her body. It pushed aside the fear of Han Shuo from her heart. She patted the phoenix and dived towards him.

The Temple Knights were standing on one side of the mountain valley, and Han Shuo could clearly see the reinforcements from the Calamity Church also arrive in the mountain valley. A malicious idea suddenly struck Han Shuo. He immediately chanted an incantation to send the little skeleton, the earth elite zombie, and the wood elite zombie back to the strange dimension, before flying out of the mountain valley with a long string of laughter.

"Damn it. He's leaving just like that!" The leading necromancer of the Calamity Church started to pause when he saw Han Shuo fly away from the mountain.

"It's the Calamity Church, they must be with that heretic!" The Temple Knights had discovered the Calamity Church's people climbing up from the foot of the mountain at this moment. The feud between the two had lasted for hundreds of years. The accumulated hatred between the two sides was definitely bigger than the one building for Han Shuo.

Therefore, the Church of Light's Temple Knights had almost no hesitation at all when they heard this shout. They started attacking the Calamity Church's forces as soon as they appeared. The moment the battle broke out, both sides slaughtered each other until their eyes were shot with blood. Everyone prayed to their respective god as the battle grew

into full swing.

The necromancer leading the Calamity Church's group intended to rescue Han Shuo from the Church of Light and grow closer to him that way. Unfortunately, his calculations had gone down the drain. Han Shuo had quickly left this chaotic land with the fast speed of the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens, leaving a bunch of sworn enemies to fight each other.

"This despicable fellow is even more despicable than us!" The necromancer grumbled. It was unknown whether he was praising Han Shuo or cursing him. Either way, after he finished voicing those words, he immediately focused on directing the Death Guards to battle the Temple Knights.

"Shameless necromancer, return my magic crystal cannons!" Helen Tina rode the wind on the back of her phoenix and chased after Han Shuo, her soft lips crying out nonstop.

Han Shuo used the speedy Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to quickly leave the area and landed on a lush mountain valley. Now that he was out of the reach of Kosse's "Revelation" artifact, Han Shuo immediately released the remaining two yin demons. Although the yin demons seemed to be flying disorderly, they could actually observe Helen Tina's every movement.

Upon arriving at the mountain valley, Helen Tina finally saw Han Shuo slow to a stop, with the little skeleton on the strange undead creature appearing next to him. Rage having overwhelmed her rational thought, Helen Tina urged the phoenix to shoot straight towards Han Shuo. The phoenix emitted a melodic sound before spraying out a blazing hot flame.

Helen Tina waved her fire stone embedded magic staff. Bowl-sized fireballs one by one appeared, blasting towards Han Shuo and the little skeleton in a dense rain.

The little skeleton grasped the three meters long knife and tapped on the undead creature he was riding with the handle. The undead creature opened a huge mouth full of sharp fangs and howled at the sky. Green

glowing wraiths floated out from its mouth, their green sheen glimmering as they brought with them the thick presence of death from the other dimension. The wraiths started to madly absorb the deathly air floating around mountain valley as soon as they appeared in this world.

The wraiths' bodies had originally appeared with barely a glimmer of light. Their bodies slowly expanded and condensed into the appearance of green liquid under the pressure blowing from the undead creature's mouth. They rammed violently towards the densely packed fireballs.

The wraiths had absorbed energy from dead souls and rapidly swelled up to the point they couldn't hold their shapes anymore. They exploded in mid-air, deathly air covered the sky in gray-green mist. Ice cold breaths beat at the pack of fireballs, slowly dissipating the brilliant light of the fireballs.

Upon seeing the light from the fireballs dissipate, the little skeleton urged his huge undead mount to dash towards Helen Tina.

Undead creatures bore a natural hatred for the light of fire. However, the glossy bones of the little skeleton were highly resistant to fire magic despite his hatred. He wasn't truly afraid of fire. As soon as the deathly air destroyed the dense fireballs, the little skeleton held his long blade and charged ferociously to face Helen Tina as per Han Shuo's command.

When the little skeleton neared, the Helen Tina's phoenix emitted a massive flame, the high temperature causing every green plant around the mountain valley to wilt and die. Only several towering big old trees held up thanks to their firm roots.

At this time, the Demonslayer Edge howled as it drew across the sky with the speed of a meteor crossing the horizon, dragging a long purple tail behind it. It instantly arrived by the side of Helen Tina and the Fire Phoenix before circling upwards. Purple, dancing spellfire suddenly appeared like a star and sprinkled down on the flaming body of the Fire Phoenix.

The Fire Phoenix suddenly issued a sharp cry. The super rank magic creature then opened its beak to speak in human language, its girly, sweet



voice resounding, "What is this? It's so cold."

A bone-chilling cold spread as the purple spellfire descended. Sizzling sounds crackled all over the fire phoenix's body, it suddenly felt its steely bones stiffen up, the flapping of its wings becoming increasingly heavy. The phoenix lost altitude and began to slowly fall down to the depths of the mountain valley with Helen Tina on it.

"Big sister Fire Phoenix, what's wrong?" Helen Tina hastily called out in panic.

"I don't know, my body feels really uncomfortable!" The phoenix also cried out, not knowing what to do or how to stop the descent. She was also very afraid of this unknown cold invading her body.

The two female creatures fell down, about to hit the ground when the branches of the nearby towering old trees suddenly twisted tightly like an octopus' tentacles around them, not letting them move one bit.

"Damnable necromancer, how are you able to use the natural ability of the druids!?" The phoenix's crisp and clear voice constantly complained after she was tied up by the branches.

Helen Tina struggled with the fire stone embedded magic staff in her hand. She tried to chanted a fire magic incantation. At this moment, a vicious, long, and sharp knife kissed her white, slender neck at this moment.

Helen Tina lifted her head to see the odd little skeleton. The seven wing bones behind his back were fluttering gently. The lengths of his body and the long knife in his hand were completely at disproportionate odds with each other. An eyeball sparkling with a purple light was staring straight at Helen Tina, making all the hairs on her body stand on end.

"What do you want?" Helen Tina looked coldly down at Han Shuo below and asked vengefully. Someone like her who'd been through the baptism of blood and fire to reach her current position actually restored her calm bearing at a time like this.

# Chapter 311: Rejuvenation

“What do you think, hehe!” Han Shuo intentionally laughed lewdly, his face sporting a lecherous look. When he looked at Helen Tina, he deliberately stared at her busty curves.

Branches had entwined tightly around Helen Tina, who was wearing a fiery red robe, alongside the phoenix. The wood elite zombie had commanded the huge branches to become as soft as snakes, but no matter how soft the branches were, there would be some sharp edges. Helen Tona’s magic robe had been sliced through in several places the branches wrapped around her, revealing her snow white skin at several places.

When Helen Tina was restrained hand and foot, she immediately had the wrong idea. The moment she saw Han Shuo reveal such a lecherous gaze, her heart was immediately plunged into chaos. She glared angrily and anxiously at Han Shuo before attempting to commit suicide.

“Helen, no!” The phoenix was able to sense Helen Tina’s thoughts, so she quickly called out to stop the woman. Unfortunately, the phoenix was wrapped so tight that it couldn’t move at all, so she was unable to reach Helen Tina.

Helen Tina, who was trying to commit suicide by biting her own tongue, suddenly felt her entire body drain of strength. She didn’t even have the strength to hurt herself. Right after that, she saw Han Shuo walk over, reaching out with his large hands and touching her white and long neck. When that happened, a wave of strange power flowed into her body from Han Shuo’s coarse hands, causing her to gradually lose strength completely.

“Hmph, I have no interest in your body for now, you don’t need to be so anxious to commit suicide!” Han Shuo snorted coldly, then slapped Helen Tina unconscious with one hand before grabbing her and flying into the sky.

Han Shuo’s voice rang out from afar when the branches restraining the phoenix slowly fell onto the ground, “Tell the Helon Dukedom to prepare

a million gold coins. I'll return her only after that. Otherwise, prepare to receive her corpse."

The phoenix felt the branches around her slowly loosen. She watched Han Shuo as he flew further and further away while carrying Helen Tina. She spoke in a wry, crisp tone. "A million gold coins? If her people knew that she was captured, they would only think about how to revolt! What should I do!?"

Han Shuo was already far in the distance and didn't hear the phoenix's words. After capturing Helen Tina alive, he rested a bit at the depths of the valley in order to replenish his mental energy and magical yuan.

When Han Shuo returned to the mountain with the bald top once again after half a day, he could tell from the shattered rocks on the mountain that another intense battle had occurred after he'd left. Han Shuo naturally was unaware of the final result of the battle between the Calamity Church and the Church of Light. When he arrived at the foot of the mountain, Han Shuo used the earth elite zombie to use the strength of the earth to summon the six magic crystal cannons once again.

Han Shuo summoned several zombie warriors to push the six magic crystal cannons forward, then used two yin demons to survey the surroundings before slowly started walking in the direction of Brettel City.

If Han Shuo flew, he naturally could return to Brettel City in a matter of minutes. However, he was transporting six magic crystal cannons right now, so he had to avoid the soldiers of other dukedoms during the journey as well and couldn't fly at full speed.

On the night of the second day, Han Shuo commanded the zombie warriors to take the magical crystal cannons to a hidden forest. As he slowly advanced with the zombie warriors, Han Shuo placed the two yin demons at his side to cover his flanks.

Suddenly, Han Shuo summoned the earth elite zombie and hid the six magical crystal cannons into the earth. He then gazed at the depths of the darkness of the hidden woods with a cold expression, and said with a sinister voice, "Come out."

The strand of a silhouette slowly appeared from the depths of the darkness. It was the necromancer that Han Shuo had met the previous day. As his figure slowly materialized, the necromancer gradually revealed his originally appearance like a lich that had crawled out of a tomb. This necromancer exuded a dense aura of rotten corpses. His grey and white pupils were like a zombie and had no focus, causing people to instinctively fear him under the creepy darkness of the light.

Han Shuo was a necromancer himself and naturally wouldn't fear the newcomer's terrifying image. Han Shuo had his left arm around Helen Tina and frowned as he looked at the necromancer who'd appeared. Han Shuo remarked, "It seems like your physical body is no longer here. You're held together from souls and undead creatures now. Just how many years have you existed for?"

Others called necromancers the observers of the soul. Aside from the gods that were rumored to exist, necromancers were the people who understood the soul the most in this dimension. Powerful necromancers were able to cause their soul to live permanently through their understanding of the basic fundamentals of the soul.

Of course, necromancers with an immortal soul could not likewise make their physical bodies immortal. Normal necromancers that had survived for a long time in the form of a soul would have to use the physical bodies of various powerful undead creatures and mix it with their own body. This was how their physical bodies would be filled with the chilly aura of death and not rot.

The body of this necromancer who had appeared before Han Shuo was clearly combined with a lich, a dark creature ranked even higher than evil knights. His pale face was filled with the sickly aura of death, while the hard to conceal smell of rotten flesh proved that his body was no longer pure.

"I'm called Wolf. I'm a hundred and seventy years old this year, and am a grand magus necromancer in the Calamity Church. Hehe, since we both practice necromancy, of course you would know that it isn't a very difficult thing to prolong our life using our knowledge of souls, as long as we aren't

killed,” Wolf looked at Han Shuo with a smile and calmly talked about immortality.

Han Shuo nodded and said with a smile, “Of course. You only want to talk about immortality with me after following me for so long?”

“Bryan, you’re a special talent. Your existence is a rare miracle for the Calamity Church. Previously, we thought of lots of ways to recruit you for the Calamity Church, but it seems like we were all wrong. You were always one of ours. Hehe!” Grand magus Wolf said to Han Shuo with a sinister smile.

The moment he said this, Han Shuo was shocked, and gazed towards Wolf with a gaze full of confusion. He frowned and said, “I never joined the Calamity Church, when did I become of your Calamity Church?”

“Hehe, it seems that you don’t even realize what you own,” Wolf shook his head and exclaimed, then spoke with a smile. “You will know sooner or later. My reason for coming over here is to tell you that although the Church of Light lost quite a lot of Templars, Red Archbishop Kosse was still able to bring a group of Templars and walk out of the mountain alive.”

“From now on, I think that the Church of Light is already viewing you as someone part of our Church. It will be hard to avoid the endless threats of death coming from the Church of Light since you reside so openly in Brettel City. Regardless of whether you are willing or not, we will protect you from the shadows, but I hope that you will also be more vigilant.”

Han Shuo was initially still very confused when he heard Wolf’s words, but he was suddenly struck with brilliance after thinking for a moment. He took the tri-colored bone staff out and looked meaningfully at the hundred and seventy years old Wolf, asking,, “Is this bone staff a divine artifact belonging to your Calamity Church?”

The dark smile on Wolf’s face vanished as he immediately knelt before the staff, trembling as he chanted a series of names. His unfocused eyes suddenly released a pale green light as he bowed deeply. Meanwhile, he also raised his hands high to form some odd gestures, as if he was

prostrating himself before an evil god.

The tri-colored skeletal staff suddenly shot out three rays of faint yellow, blue and purple light. The three rays of light instantly landed on this ancient necromancer, causing Wolf to continuously kowtow shakingly as he writhed like a worm, bathed in the three faint rays of light.

When the light of the tri-colored skeletal staff shone down on Wolf, Han Shuo's completely drained mental energy actually miraculously recovered. On the other hand, the necromancer that was writhing on the ground had slowly begun to weaken. Han Shuo could clearly feel the bone staff soak up the mental energy of the necromancer like a sponge.

This process continued for a short while until the bone staff stopped shimmering. When the shimmer died, Han Shuo's mental energy had actually been fully replenished. However, the body of the necromancer continued to writhe underneath the black robe at Han Shuo's feet, like a huge living tumor that kept on moving.

Wolf's body shook uncontrollably as he continued the ancient chant. After draining quite a bit of his mental energy, the writhing of his body actually become more and more intense. After a final terrible howl, Wolf suddenly stood up from his prostrate position.

The formerly ancient and pale appearance of Wolf had suddenly transformed to become an elegant young man full of a soft noble aura with sword-like brows and star-like eyes. The dense aura of rotten corpses that surrounded him had completely disappeared, his skin filled with a soft light similar to white jade. Wolf's originally sinister voice also became soft and tender as he exclaimed, "The feeling of youth is so wonderful!"

As Han Shuo watched this transformation of Wolf in front of him, his surprise only grew. He looked at the rejuvenated Wolf in disbelief, then at the bone staff in his hands with bright eyes and murmured, "Miraculous, too miraculous!"

# Chapter 312: Conditions

“Isn’t it unbelievable? Only the bone staff’s divinity can allow us to obtain immortality while enjoying the wonders of youth!” Grand magus Wolf, alive for a hundred and seventy years now, said proudly to Han Shuo after taking a deep breath of fresh air.

Han Shuo’s eyes sparkled with light as he looked greedily at the bonestaff in his hands. His heart was filled with surprise and joy as he muttered, “No wonder, no wonder I kept on feeling that the bone staff would have other fantastic uses, I never would have thought that it would actually have such a miraculous effect!”

Wolf seemed to be very satisfied with Han Shuo’s surprise. Wolf looked only twenty something years old now and was filled with the elegance of a noble. He started carefully trimming his knife-like nails with a sharp knife that had suddenly appeared in his right hand.

As Han Shuo was still caught in the depths of his shock, Wolf had already finished trimming his nails and was joyously examining his white hands beneath the moonlight. He exclaimed, “How many years has it been? Even since I merged with the lich, my long and beautiful hands had disappeared. What replaced it were a pair of blade-like claws. Mhmm, my wonderful hands have finally appeared once again! I no longer need to hide in endless darkness and use a black robe to cover a body that can’t be seen!”

After his body had merged with the old lich, not only had it became full of the smell of rotten corpses, it also caused his body to resemble a cross between a human and a monster. Although Wolf had gained eternal life, he no longer dared to openly walk under public gaze. Otherwise, even if the Church of Light doesn’t do anything, some adventurers who didn’t know the truth would attack him after thinking him an undead creature.

Han Shuo was just as happy as Wolf. He studied the bone staff in his hands with interest, but was unable to find the source of the mysterious power of rejuvenation. He didn’t know how to cast it either. After

hesitating for a while, Han Shuo looked at Wolf with a smile, "Perhaps you can tell me the secret of rejuvenation from this staff?"

Wolf smirked with his youthful face, shaking his head at Han Shuo, "If you admit that you belong to our Calamity Church, and come back to the sacred grounds with me. I will help you obtain the true secrets of the divine bone staff."

Han Shuo snorted derisively, then placed the bone staff back into his space ring and said coldly, "I'm so young, so I don't need this sort of mysterious power for now. If you have nothing else, then don't continue to disturb my journey."

"Then alright, please take care of yourself. I need to immediately return to the sacred grounds and report about what has happened over these few days," Wolf smiled with a nod, then looked at Han Shuo a final time. He made a slight bow that was befitting standard ancient nobility etiquette and expressed his thanks, "Thank you, Bryan. You are an unbelievable person, I think that you must have received the favor of our god. We will have a lots of chance to meet in the future."

Wolf tarried no longer after saying that. He slowly walked into the darkness with a joyous mood. After a while, when Han Shuo couldn't even detect a sliver of Wolf's aura, did he summon the earth elite zombie, and had it spit out the six magic crystal cannons. Han Shuo continued to travel towards Brettel City while using the yin demons to survey his surroundings.

On midday of the second day, Han Shuo and a group of zombie warriors was walking on a shady and meandering path under the scorching sun. When he passed by a clear river, Han Shuo couldn't help but temporarily stop as he gazed at the small river that blocked his way.

There wasn't this sort of clean and clear river in the wet and dark other dimensions. Although undead creatures like the zombie warriors were not afraid of the corrosion of running water, this river didn't seem shallow. It wouldn't be an easy task for the zombie warriors to cross the river while pushing six magic crystal cannons.



Magic crystal cannons were built using many valuable magical materials, and there were a few that would react very easily with water. Although Han Shuo did not know the theory behind the magic crystal cannon operations, he did have some common sense. He couldn't be sure that whether some bad reactions would happen when these six magic crystal cannons were placed into water.

The sunlight over his head was a bit bright, and since the shade was blocking some of it, long weird shadows were drawn on the ground. Han Shuo hesitated as he gazed at the river that had appeared in front of him, then finally woke the Helen Tina who'd been sleeping for quite some while.

It had been nearly two days from the time when Han Shuo had knocked Helen Tina unconscious. In order to avoid the trouble that would arise after Helen Tina woke up, Han Shuo had just ignored her. Her stomach reacted before she was even conscious, after the restrictive magical yuan had been withdrawn from her body.

Gurgle...

Helen Tina's flat stomach suddenly let out a hungry moan. At the start, the sound was still very small, but as Helen Tina's bodily functions gradually recovered, the objection from her stomach became louder and louder.

It was at that moment that Helen Tina slowly awoke. When she raised her head and saw Han Shuo smiling terribly, Helen Tina instinctively protected her body. She calmed herself a bit and stared at Han Shuo coldly, "What else do you want to do?"

"I'm already done everything that can be done, what's the use of guarding yourself right now? I already tasted the miraculousness of your body when you were unconscious. My my, it really made me mesmerized!" Han Shuo smiled lecherously with an evil intent as he thought about Helen Tina's neverending fierceness earlier, then about the harm the Helon Dukedom had caused for the people of Brettel City.

As he expected, the moment Han Shuo's lecherous laughter sounded

out, Helen Tina reacted like she'd been struck by lightning. She completely blanked out there with a pitiful look. However, her pitiful and despairing look only lasted for a moment before she focused her hateful gaze onto Han Shuo.

After being stared at by Helen Tina's cold eyes full of endless hatred, even someone with as strong of a will as Han Shuo couldn't help but feel a chill down his spine. It was as if a poisonous snake had silently neared the back of his neck, and was planning to give him the fatal strike at any moment.

After that, Helen Tina remained silent no matter what Han Shuo said. She ignored the objections of her stomach and continued to gaze at Han Shuo using such a cold, vengeful stare that made Han Shuo feel extremely uncomfortable.

Han Shuo was finally defeated after a while. He waved his head while feeling his scalp prickle with numbness, "Damn it, I have no interest in a woman like you. I need you to exchange for a ransom of million gold coins, I won't easily do anything to you. Okay now, I admit that I was just lying to you just now. Look, your six magic crystal cannons are right there. Now, tell me, are the magic crystal cannons afraid of water?"

Helen Tina's expression of endless hatred softened slightly when Han Shuo finished speaking, but she still glared at him with suspicion. She finally let out a sigh and asked, "You really did nothing to me?"

"No shit, you have hands and feet now, I'm not tying you up, don't you know how to check yourself!" Han Shuo swore, then said quietly, "However, with your slutty name out there, you probably aren't a virgin anymore. You really might not be able to find anything."

Whap!

Helen Tina casually grabbed a handful of shattered rocks and threw it on Han Shuo. She glared at Han Shuo in anger and roared, "All you shitty men are the same!"

The moment she said that, Helen Tina squeezed her legs with a bit of embarrassment. After checking with an unknown method, she actually

displayed a bit of happiness. When she saw Han Shuo turn around remotely, a thought struck her and she quickly took out her magical staff to chant a high ranked fire spell “Flame Catastrophe”.

Unfortunately for Helen Tina, she didn’t find any mental energy that she could use when she chanted the incantation and waved the magical staff. She immediately looked at Han Shuo in shock, while her inner self was filled with terror. She yelled in frantic panic, “Evil filthy necromancer, what did you do to me?! Why don’t I have a hint of mental strength left?!”

Han Shuo saw all of Helen Tina’s actions behind his back through a yin demon. He turned around as if nothing happened and smiled brilliantly], “Don’t waste your strength. Don’t think about chanting a single spell before I release you. Hehe, but you don’t need to worry. As long as your phoenix sister brings a million gold coins over, I will let you go completely unharmed, and you will also be able to use your mental strength again.”

Helen Tina was shocked the moment he said that. She was surprised about Han Shuo’s all-encompassing ability. Helen Tina was a fire mage who wasn’t weak at all. According to what she knew, restraining mental strength wasn’t something that normal people could do. Even mages at the level of grand magus would need the aid of some magical scrolls or formations in order to constrain a archmage’s mental strength.

She found it unbelievable that Han Shuo could have the amazing power to constrain mental strength at such a young age.

However, after her surprise, Helen Tina very quickly thought of some of the people who had ulterior motives in her Helon Empire. She understood that once those people find out that she was captured alive, they would just take the chance to control the Helon Duchy. They absolutely would not take out a million gold coins to get her back. Even Duke Benedict from the Benson Dukedom, that seemed to be madly pursuing her, would probably only consider sending his army out to the Helon Empire and use this chance to make it his own.

“Just kill me, no one will come for me. Not a single person!” Helen Tina shook her head pitifully and replied while looking at Han Shuo with

despair.

# Chapter 313: Returning to the city

“Humph, don’t try that on me. I won’t let you go unless I receive a million gold coins!” Helen Tina was notorious throughout the seven grand duchies for her insidious schemes. Han Shuo’s naturally wouldn’t believe the words randomly spewing from her mouth. He looked coldly at Helen Tina and said, “The magic crystal cannons are made of many rare magic materials. I want to know if they are afraid of water.”

The first thing Helen Tina did upon waking up was look around, her eyes had taking notes of the group of zombie warriors surrounding the six magic crystal cannons at the river’s bank. She was only distracted because Han Shuo had postured he’d tainted her body. It angered her now that Han Shuo mentioned the magic crystal cannons again. She looked at him and shouted in fury, “Don’t expect to get any useful information from my mouth, you damnable bandit!”

“Bandit? Haha, your Helon Duchy is the true bandit. You’ve pillaged the Brettel City day and night for years. From a big city with hundreds of thousand people, it’s now a deserted city with dozens of thousand people. The people in the city have long since lost their hopes and dreams in life. It’s all thanks to you people. Yet you still have the face to say that I’m the bandit, haha!” Han Shuo recalled the miserable sight of people who lacked the clothes to cover their bodies and the food to fill their stomachs on his way to the Brettel City. His heart ached with grievances.

Helen Tina laughed heartily upon hearing his words. She coldly said, “Such is war. When your Lancelot Empire invaded us seven grand duchies in the past, didn’t you also burn and pillage us? If we hadn’t allied to resist and drive you back, I’m afraid that all of our people would have become slaves already.”

Helen Tina’s words also made sense. Han Shuo pondered for a bit and figured that he shouldn’t sink in further in this matter. Seeing Helen Tina unwilling to say anymore, he said in a cold voice, “It’s not like I can’t do anything just because you don’t say anything, just that I will waste a little more time. To a necromancer, costly manpower is never a problem.”

Han Shuo no longer cared about Helen Tina after speaking. He started to chant the incantation to summon the wood elite zombie.

Han Shuo issued a command when the wood elite zombie appeared. The latter uprooted the big trees one by one like he was the lord of this forest. The Demonslayer Edge then cut them into sections, with the wood elite zombie tying them together by soft branches. Han Shuo and the wood elite zombie had built six huge rafts after half an hour.

During this process, Helen Tina watched Han Shuo and the wood elite zombie closely while sneaking bread from her space ring. Perhaps she'd been hungry for too long as she swallowed the bread very quickly.

Upon completion, the zombie warriors pushed the rafts towards the river. Helen Tina finally couldn't help but lamented, "No wonder the Church of Light wants to kill you. You can actually summon such miraculous undead creatures!"

Helen Tina didn't know that the wood elite zombie had in fact been refined from the most ordinary of zombie warrior. As the zombie warrior pushed the six rafts onto the river and placed the six magic crystal cannons on the rafts, Han Shuo breathed a soft sigh of relief. He sent the wood elite zombie and the zombie warriors return to the strange dimension.

Four zombie warriors paddled one raft. When the zombie warriors mobilized their force, the six loaded rafts began to slowly move to the other side of the banks.

Han Shuo once again went over behind Helen Tina at this moment and gently tapped the back of her neck. He said softly and lowly, "You should rest."

Han Shuo easily lifted Helen Tina up after knocking her unconscious. He then slowly flew over onto a raft and commanded the zombie warriors to cross the river.

Han Shuo avoided some scattered bandit groups along the way, as well as some mercenary bands who'd made a living in the near vicinity. After a trip without any surprise, he finally arrived at Brettel City.

In the spring night, the temperature was just right. The bright moonlight shone gently upon the earth. This could have been a truly warm, peaceful night if it weren't for the zombie warriors pushing the magic crystal cannons, exuding the sense of death.

When they approached the Brettel City's gates, the soldiers on the city wall were startled by the moonlight reflecting from the magic crystal cannons. Seeing six huge cannons pointing towards the city's fortress with some stiff moving figures behind, the soldiers immediately paled in horror.

"Who is it?" The soldiers manning the cannons at the city's gates shouted to the distance before Han Shuo drew near.

Compared to previously, the various potholes and pockmarks that had dotted Brettel City had all been perfectly patched up, the gates changed to enormous ones of dark steel. Having experienced the last crusade against the bandits, the initially cowardly soldiers now possessed somewhat strong and calm bearings.

The armor of the soldiers reflected the moon's radiance in a strange manner on the city walls. The soldiers were stirring to action, hurriedly applying the arrows and raising their bows to aim at the zombie warriors. Warning calls echoed and more soldiers gathered on the fortress, all of them aiming their bows below.

After his last experience when he'd entered the city without meeting any defenses, Han Shuo understood that the Brettel City was no longer the same in the face of these soldiers' vigilance. The soldiers couldn't see Han Shuo's face clearly because of the long distance, but he could clearly see their figures above the fortress.

"Open the gates for me, you bastards! You don't recognize even me!" Han Shuo's voice suddenly rang out and spread throughout the city.

The city lord, it's the city lord! The city lord has returned!" The soldiers on the fortress couldn't see Han Shuo clearly but could still recognize his voice. Everyone cheered with pleasant surprise, opening the city's gates slowly.

After the gates opened wide, the zombie warriors finally transported the heavy magic crystal cannons into the Brettel City. Even though it was evening, Faulke immediately rushed to meet Han Shuo upon receiving the news.

“Ahh, this is, this is...” Faulke bowed to pay respects to Han Shuo upon arriving. When he swept a glance to see the zombie warriors pushing the six magic crystal cannons, Faulke couldn’t help exclaim with surprise and excitement.

“These are magic crystal cannons, also called the powerful Lightning God. The cheapest one costs at least a hundred thousand gold coins for this type of magic crystal cannons. They can release terrifying offensive power through magic crystal ores. These magic crystal cannons are simply great, invincible weapons in the battlefield. Your Lordship, where did you get these from?” Faulke was indeed worthy of being a veteran who’d been through the baptism of years in the battlefield. He actually recognized the six magic crystal cannons and even knew of their name, “Lightning God”.

Han Shuo only knew that they were magic crystal cannons. As for what type and what size, he was clueless. Hearing Faulke so knowledgeable about magic crystal cannons, Han Shuo responded delightedly, “Is that so? Then you must know how to use these magic crystal cannons?”

“Of course. This type of magic crystal cannon is extremely easy to use as long as we have enough magic crystal ores. Each shot of this “Lightning God” is equivalent to an extremely powerful attack of an archmage if there is enough power. These magic crystal cannons can maintain continuous discharges without running out if given enough power.” Faulke said with a confident smile, as he walked towards a magic crystal cannon. It was unclear what he did when the cannon suddenly shook a little and a small box cracked out from its bottom.

“Mm, the magic crystal ores available here are enough for five, six shots. Heh heh, a bandit group has been wandering around the vicinity of Brettel City recently. It seems they intended to make a move again. I was worried about how to deal with them. Now with the six magic crystal cannons here, I’ll make them regret their foolish thoughts.” Faulke had a cold smile



on his face as he looked at the six magic crystal cannons and gritted his teeth. It looked like he intended to use these six magic crystal cannons to carry out a grand deed.

“Alright then, these six magic crystal cannons are under your care.” Han Shuo instantly issued this order before walking straight towards the city lord’s mansion.

Faulke and the soldiers had noticed the stunning, unconscious Helen Tina under Han Shuo’s arm from the start. Of course, they wouldn’t ask about the city lord’s private affairs. When they saw Han Shuo walked to the direction of the city lord’s mansion, these people’s thieving eyes ran over Helen Tina’s charming body several times over while chuckling wickedly in their hearts.

Therefore, after Han Shui had returned with Helen Tina back to the Brettel City that night, some rumors and gossip spread throughout the city. The people didn’t know of Helen Tina’s identity, but her beauty had made a deep impression on the soldiers. They were either admiring or jealous of Han Shuo, and so various rumors and evil speculations appeared.

Upon bringing Helen Tina to the city lord’s mansion, Han Shuo impatiently went straight to the secret chamber. He had sensed a distant call just a short while after he’d returned to the Brettel City. This call was weak and fragile as if it was a thousand mountains and seas away. However, Han Shuo’s consciousness at the separate demon realm could naturally perceive it.

It seemed that the fire elite zombie had finally emerged!

## Chapter 314: A strong emergence

The call from the depths of his soul grew five times more urgent once Han Shuo entered the cemetery of death. It seemed that the fire elite zombie had also felt his presence because of the shortened distance.

Without delaying for a second, Han Shuo utilized the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to fly straight to the depths of the Dark Forest. Since he was familiar with the way, it didn't take long to reach the place of extreme fire.

Han Shuo's currently strength had far exceeded the time he'd last been here. He immediately felt the enormous presence of the Lord of the Flames once he arrived at the area. The fire elite zombie was currently within its blazing kingdom. Han Shuo would face a headache of a problem if he wanted to enter the place of extreme fire and sneakily lift the magic matrix binding the fire elite zombie.

The elite zombies of five elements could only be formed through the interconnecting matrices through a secret method, using the matrices to gather the elements of heavens and earth in an entire region. However, when an elite zombie took shape, it could only officially emerge when the matrix shackling it was lifted. Otherwise, the fire elite zombie wouldn't have had to call out to Han Shuo so urgently.

The rocks in this mountain valley had been scarred a brown-red after the great battle last time. There were even some bubbling hot springs in the vast, warm mountain valley now.

Han Shuo stood blankly in the mountain valley, frowning as he thought of a way to enter the place of extreme fire and lift the matrix binding the fire elite zombie. It was simply impossible to advance safely and soundly with the Lord of the Flames in the area.

Therefore, Han Shuo just remained there frowning and thinking, but couldn't think of a good way. The call from the fire elite zombie was becoming increasingly stronger since he'd felt Han Shuo's presence. The zombie was anxiously conveying his urgent desire to break free of his

restraints.

Han Shuo's heart was on fire with anxiety as well. He finally decided to take a risk and ventured into the place of extreme fire after some hesitation. Han Shuo slowly dove down into one of the numerous hot springs. The warm water enveloped his body, dispelling all of the exhaustion from his trip. However, the pressure from the Lord of the Flames wasn't something so easily dissolved.

Han Shuo tapped around with the Demonslayer Edge at the bottom of the spring, trying to find a crack to enter the place of extreme fire. It took some time before Han Shuo finally pried open two huge rocks and found a way in.

A green-black veil shrouded his body as soon as he entered the crack. He slowly made his way down the crack into the place of extreme fire. The deeper he went, the higher the temperature spiked. Firelight danced around him as brilliant as beautiful flame flowers.

Han Shuo had wrapped himself in a protective shield and could clearly observe all of the events around him. The two cliffs on either side were burning red as he passed by them. Some flexible creatures that looked like fire snakes hid themselves in the cracks of the cliff, surrounded by several scorching demons lying dormant. It seemed that they didn't notice Han Shuo's existence and let him proceed all the way into the underground.

A scorching demon general within another crack discovered him when he was almost at his destination. The scorching demon general rose and waved his arm once, sending a flame shooting straight at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo raised his hand slightly and sent out a cloud of purple light. The flame shot by the scorching demon general had yet to draw close when it disappeared into faint smoke in mid-air. As the cold breath from the light touched the flame, the two turned into a bright array of flame stars that slowly scattered down onto the place of extreme fire.

The inside of the place of extreme fire was an enormous area of magma. The flame stars which had fallen caused the calmly bubbling lava to boil, as if it'd felt the presence of the scorching demon general. The air bubbles

floated up and became as big as a cup, the already blazing temperature getting even hotter.

A huge skull slowly emerged from the middle of the melting hot lava. The more than ten meter long body of the Lord of the Flames was next to arrive, spraying the flames in the place of extreme fire in all directions. He was instantly furious upon sensing the presence of a human.

“Haowuu!!”

A terrifying howl pierced the sky, the entire place of extreme fire seemingly trembling in terror. The burning red lava rocks on two sides shuddered as they broke loose. Amidst the falling rocks, the enormous head of the Lord of the Flames scanned its surroundings.

The ear-splitting sounds of the crumbling cliffs rang out, accompanied by the billowing flames that instantly spread throughout the place of extreme fire. Within the flames, Han Shuo’s azure shield became a particularly conspicuous existence. His misery couldn’t be described by words in the face of the anger from this super rank magic creature – the Lord of the Flames. Han Shuo continuously increased his output of magical yuan to firmly protect the area where he was standing.

Han Shuo’s power had indeed soared after reaching the separate demon realm. Otherwise, his shield would have long since shattered from the violent attacks of the flames from all sides.

Han Shuo’s face flushed blood red, his shield crackling and popping. However, he could still resist the surging temperature, albeit with a few drops of sweat slowly dripping from his forehead.

The Lord of the Flames’ body emerged from the middle of the melting hot magma with his terrifying roar, surrounded by raging, churning flames. Some of the flames were more than ten meters in length, like soaring fire dragons. The power of Helen Tina’s “Dance of the Fire Snakes” couldn’t even compare to this awe-inspiring spectacle.

Seeing that his omnidirectional attack wasn’t working, the Lord of the Flames screamed his fury to the sky. Three fire dragons of over ten meters in length drew a twisted path towards Han Shuo. They greedily absorbed

the sky high flames along their way, leaving the place of extreme fire almost barren by the time they'd reached Han Shuo.

The length of the three fire dragons had remained unchanged, but their width had quintupled. They'd turned into three enormous dragons, their bodies emitting raging, fiery flames destructive enough to burn the entire mountain valley to ashes.

Han Shuo could keep his cool in the face of the omnidirectional attack from the Lord of the Flames. But when the attacks were concentrated on him, the pressure of the flames seemed to increase ten times over. Han Shuo was constantly communicating with the fire elite zombie deep in the magma while trying to craft a defense with all of his energy.

The Demonslayer Edge had swallowed a great deal of souls. Now that it was filled with a massive reservoir of magical yuan, the weapon instantly releasing a terrifyingly evil air upon being activated. The purple flame of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire had ultimately transformed into Purple Spellfire of Extreme Cold. Purple flowers of spellfire blossomed from the Demonslayer Edge. They floated elegantly around Han Shuo and the blade, as if the two were delicate flower stamens.

Extreme Cold Purple Flame was the culmination of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire. Catalyzed from an enormous amount of magical yuan, it was so terrifyingly cold that it could freeze everything in the world. When the flakes of purple spellfire drifted gracefully out of the blade, the surroundings actually started to snow. Each petal of the snow flowers blended with the purple flames, forming a large block of solid purple ice that tightly enveloped Han Shuo and the Demonslayer Edge.

Han Shuo seemed to have turned into a translucent crystal block of ice. The flames in the place of extreme fire now shone with a brilliant purple-red luster. The beautiful solid block of ice became increasingly larger as Han Shuo poured more magical yuan into it, until it finally covered a width of more than ten meters. Han Shuo continued to circulate magical yuan from within, making even more cold smoke rise from the ice.

The three massive fire dragons had yet to reach the solid block of ice

when thick mist blew up from the high temperature coming in contact with the icy cold. The entire place of extreme fire was shrouded quickly in mist. The three fire dragons assaulted the square, ten meters wide solid ice block in accordance with the roar from the Lord of the Flames.

Crack... Rumble...

As the terrifying sounds of battle echoed, radiant purple and red lights constantly flashing in the smoke, a testament to the ferocity of the fire dragons' assault. Large chunks of ice fell into the place of extreme fire, sending gigantic spouts of lava splashing upwards. The Lord of the Flames growled as it imposed its will over the place of extreme fire, causing more burning lava to spew out towards the center of the smoke.

Han Shuo pushed his magical yuan to the extreme, but was still unable to stop the flames' encroachment. Under the multi-layered assault, the ten meters wide solid ice block melted rapidly, and was reduced to a quarter of its size after just a moment.

Flames covered the sky as fiery magma surged and boiled. Han Shuo's magical yuan wasn't endless, and he was slowly exhausted.

Han Shuo urgently contacted the fire elite zombie while starting to chant a long magic incantation. Suddenly, a thick layer of black clouds appeared on the ice block that was three meters long. Amidst the thick clouds, glossy white bones entangled with each other to form a huge bone cage, enclosing the solid ice block.

"Pth! Break!"

Han Shuo abruptly shouted out two words that echoed in the place of extreme fire. The bone cage suddenly transformed from translucent to pitch black, emitting dark smoke.

Suddenly, the walls around the matrix Han Shuo had arranged several months ago burst open with a series of cracks. At this moment, the fire element that'd been pouring towards the center of the place of extreme fire suddenly halted.

As the walls crumbled into pieces, a gorgeous lotus slowly rose up from

the bubbling magma!

# Chapter 315: Imprint

The fire lotus rotated as it sprouted, accompanied by bright red, scathing bubbles. When the rhizomes emerged from the magma. The petals quickly unfolded, revealing the fire elite zombie at the center.

The fire elite zombie had a big head and ruddy skin that was the color of blood. Everything below its waist was still wrapped in the flower. The armor on its body seemed to have been formed from deep red flowers, covering its entire body except for its face.

The exposed body of the fire elite zombie twisted quickly within the flower. The petals on its waist slowly peeled backwards. The pretty, dazzling, red petals of the fire lotus contracted, condensing into an armor on the lower body and legs of the fire elite zombie.

The enormous amount of fire element force in the surroundings gathered agitatedly towards the fire elite zombie during this process after the crazy explosion around the formation. The fire element force condensed into fire stars that filled the sky and flowed towards the fire elite zombie like a flaming Milky Way.

The blazing temperature emitted from the fire elite zombie's body and slowly formed a lotus pattern in the spot between its eyebrows. The pattern was blurred at first, gradually becoming clearer and clearer. Ultimately, it shrank into a small fire lotus that was a hundred times smaller than the one that had nurtured it and engraved itself on the fire elite zombie's glabella.

The huge fire lotus, that enveloped the fire elite zombie, slowly shrank and disappeared. When the lotus imprint on his glabella appeared, the fire lotus beneath its feet had also vanished without a trace.

The body of the fire elite zombie was thoroughly red. When its deep red eyes turned to look at Han Shuo's body, its big head shook slightly. It opened his mouth wide to take in a deep breath.

The flames were still surging around Han Shuo's body and frantically eroding his shield. As the fire elite zombie inhaled deeply, beams of red



light flew into his mouth, entering his belly through his throat.

The surging flames vanished, but the ice block wrapped around Han Shuo was still standing strong. When he saw the fire elite zombie emerge, Han Shuo stopped circulating his magical yuan and slowly walked towards the crack.

The Lord of the Flames, who'd been constantly howling, immediately stopped his ruckus upon seeing the fire elite zombie appear from within the lotus. It focused all of his attention on the latter.

When the lotus imprint formed between its eyebrows, the fire elite zombie directed its gaze at the Lord of the Flames, as if exchanging some conversation with him. The furious Lord of the Flames gradually calmed down.

As Han Shuo slowly floated up towards the crack, he felt a deep maternal love permeating throughout the extreme place of fire. The Lord of the Flames had completely relaxed. Its huge palm lifted the fire elite zombie up as they used a mysterious method to communicate.

Since the fire elite zombie had emerged, Han Shuo knew that the former would find him through the connection established by his blood essence due to the constraints of the demonic magic. Not to mention that the little skeleton had been the one to bring the fire elite zombie over from the other dimension. Even though the fire elite zombie possessed consciousness and high intelligence after being refined by the demonic method, the soul brand in the depths of his soul hadn't changed much. Han Shuo wasn't worried that he wouldn't be able to recognize his master.

Han Shuo departed easily as the Lord of the Flames had stopped trying to kill him. Shooting back up to the surface, he didn't encounter any obstacles before finally arriving at the center of the mountain valley.

When he returned to the mountain valley, Han Shuo immediately ordered the fire elite zombie to collect various strange ores from the extreme place of fire. Then, he stayed in the mountain valley to wait for the fire elite zombie's task to be completed.

The fire elite zombie and the Lord of the Flames had spent several

months together in the extreme place of fire for months. During this time, the latter had considered the fire elite zombie to be his own child. Since both of them had absorbed the fire element force in the surroundings, they naturally had the same presence that made them feel even more intimate towards each other. Therefore, Han Shuo understood that these two, originally different beings, had certainly developed deep feelings towards each other.

When the fire elite zombie left the fire lotus, it meant that he'd no longer continue to stay in the extreme place of fire. Since he had to leave, the two different beings would obviously have to part ways, so Han Shuo didn't disturb them.

As Han Shuo was comfortably lying around and enjoying a hot spring in the mountain valley, a string of raging flames appeared from an unknown position and instantly drowned Han Shuo in heat. The hot spring boiled and bubbled. Han Shuo immediately jumped out, hot mist emitting from his body.

"Who dares?!" Han Shuo leapt into the air and let out a loud shout. He released purple spellfire from his two hands and extinguished all the flames on his body, then coldly observed his surroundings.

The two yin demons drifted around the mountain valley after being released, paying attention to every change. Han Shuo also sent out his consciousness to survey the area. He harbored a strong killing intent towards the ambushers.

Seven or eight red magic bullets shot towards Han Shuo from the fiery red cliffs around the outskirts of the mountain valley. He wasn't an easy target now that his guard was up. A purple light quickly and cleanly knocked the magic bullets out of the air.

As soon as the magic bullets were flung back, fireballs, fire walls, and fire snakes continuously appeared from all directions and hurtled towards Han Shuo. The two yin demons couldn't find any traces of the attackers after searching for a short time period. Only when Han Shuo destroyed two fire snakes did his consciousness felt a faint magic fluctuation. The

two yin demons immediately drew close to see a fiery globe high on a rock wall.

That fiery globe was a magic shield cast by fire mages. A blurry shadow inside was waving a magic staff to fire out attack after attack. The incantations were blocked out since the mage was within the cover of magic, so Han Shuo couldn't hear any sounds.

"Humph! No need to hide, fire grand magus Marceau!" Han Shuo snorted derisively and quickly drifted over, a series of popping and banging sounds ringing on his way there. He deflected all of the fire magic attacks fired at him.

The original still fire shield suddenly shot into the sky, the blurry shadow slowly becoming clearer amidst the random sparks. It was indeed fire grand magus Marceau of the Brut Merchant Alliance who'd appeared last time at the battle in the mountain valley. Han Shuo and her had been allies. However, they had parted ways on not so pleasant terms after the unhappy predicament in the place of extreme fire.

It was unexpected that Marceau was still probing the place of extreme fire and had run into Han Shuo by coincidence. Marceau had been inwardly suspicious of Han Shuo about the sudden disappearance of the fire lotus. Now that she saw Han Shuo appear here again, she was certain in her heart that he'd tricked her last time.

Moreover, she had already harbored resentment towards Han Shuo in her heart, but couldn't make a move as her mental strength had been exhausted. Meeting him here this time, in addition to the temptation of the fire attribute treasure, had given her the courage to take a risk and attack Han Shuo.

Seeing that she'd been identified and that Han Shuo could calmly deal with her various fire magic attacks, Marceau immediately realized that Han Shuo's strength had made terrifying progress. Therefore, she needed to leave as quickly as possible.

"Heh heh. Running so soon? Where do you think you're going?" Han Shuo coldly mocked as he rapidly shot towards Marceau. The

Demonlayer Edge had appeared in his hand at an unknown time.

The scenery of the mountain valley quickly fell behind in their speed. Marceau still had the spare power to release fire walls to obstruct Han Shuo as she ran. However, the latter just simply ignored the blockades and rampaged forward. Han Shuo's body became charred in large patches as he did so, the burned skin scattering with the wind, and new skin appeared underneath, still as clean and glossy as before.

Even though his eyebrows had been burned to a crisp, they regrew after just a moment. Han Shuo had gone from looking extremely bedraggled to restoring his carefree and dashing manner during the pursuit.

Not far behind Han Shuo, a fiery red shadow bolted madly like a raging flame. Dried plants immediately erupted into flames in every place it passed through in the mountain valley. All things that could burn went up in intense flames.

Fire grand magus Marceau used the levitation skill to flee in a hurry, her heart filled with horror. She hadn't expected Han Shuo's strength to be so terrifying that her deliberate ambush couldn't even injure him. Han Shuo's flight speed was too fast too, as the distance between them became increasingly smaller. Marceau was greatly anxious upon seeing that Han Shuo would catch up with her very soon.

"Ah! If it isn't grand magus Marceau?" A surprised cry suddenly rang out from the depths of the forest as Marceau was flying by. A beautifully dressed group of adventurers looked up at Marceau inside the fire globe.

The escaping Marceau looked down to see the team of adventurers and heaved a sigh of relief. She landed beside them and hastily said to them, "There's a killer from an enemy empire chasing me. Everyone get ready for a fight."

Marceau and this team of adventurers must have been acquaintances. They immediately looked furious upon hearing her words, each readying their weapons and arrows. They aimed directly at Han Shuo in the air, only waiting for him to draw nearer to instantly make a move.

# Chapter 316: Teamwork

Aside from fire grand magus Marceau, the group included one thief, one priest, two mages and three swordsmen. The strength of these adventurers weren't weak. Their average age was around forty and they were all experienced fighters.

Marceau seemed to be the leader among these adventurers. Therefore, they immediately readied their weapons to attack Han Shuo as soon as her words sounded.

The two mages below were a lightning adept mage and a water archmage. They were the first to make a move. The opening salvo was several sizzling lightning and thunder balls, their electric sparks bursting out to smash into Han Shuo. The water archmage waved his magic staff around to release some sharp, cold shiny icicles that hurtled fiercely at Han Shuo from below.

The priest chanted a magic restoration spell, after which a silver halo enveloped Marceau's body. Her mental strength had previously been overspent, but the effect of the silver halo restored it from depletion. Shimmering light circles sparkled on her old, wrinkled face.

One of the two senior swordsmen instantly stepped over to protect Marceau. Two huge iron shields were erected at the front. The shifty eyed thief slipped through the thick forest like a racoon, setting up traps and readying them.

Han Shuo was still advancing straight towards Marceau. He had already taken note of this group's appearances and various strength thanks to the two yin demons. As he flew, he took out the bone staff, spreading out a thick mass of black fog around himself. Han Shuo vanished in the midst of the thick smoke.

The lightning balls and icicles all collided into the thick black fog. However, as Han Shuo's body had suddenly disappeared, these attacks could no longer find their target. They turned to crash into each other instead, creating huge explosions.

When the lightning balls and icicles dissipated into nothingness, the thick black fog also gradually spread out as well. The team of adventurers led by Marceau had also finished their preparations and were staring at the center of the fog. The three swordsmen had temporarily switched to being three archers as they raised their bows, waiting only for Han Shuo to show himself.

However, there was no trace of Han Shuo in the clear blue sky when the thick black fog dissipated. He had vanished without a sound or a shadow. The adventurers who were ready to attack him head-on could only look at the sky in puzzlement.

Rumble...

Dirt mounds suddenly emerged from the ground without a warning. The adventurers had been paying attention to the sky were caught off guards by the movements underneath. Grand magus Marceau and the water archmage were the first to fly up.

The three swordsmen reacted swiftly. They grabbed the iron shields to block the earth from attacking the lightning mage and the priest. The attacks threw the swordsmen up into the air, but most of the impact was lessened by the shields. The swordsmen were meant to be meat shields in battles, so they weren't injured much.

The thief had extraordinary sensitivities. Leaping with the tips of his feet like a monkey swinging on the trees, he used prearranged silver silk threads to swing to a towering tree and avoided all of the attacks from the mounds.

He landed on a big tree before using a dagger to cut off some rope. A tree trunk whittle sharp suddenly flew out straight towards Han Shuo, who was hiding behind a tree.

Upon seeing the thief's action, the rest of the adventurers immediately aimed their attacks at that tree. In a blink of an eye, dozens of attacks rained down in all directions. Han Shuo, who'd originally thought that they wouldn't be able to find him, could only awkwardly jump out from behind the tree.

As he defended against the various attacks, an ice arrow nailed his thigh, a lightning ball exploded and hit him with its flying sparks. Han Shuo's whole body became numb, his hair that'd just grown out all stood erectly upright.

"Kill him, he's been hit!" The thief shouted loudly.

The priest chanted a long incantation, and three dizzying beams of radiance shone upon the three swordsmen. Now that the spells of "Strengthen Armor," "God's Blessing," and "Brute Strength" had been cast, the light churned in gorgeous fashions in their chest as they ferociously rushed Han Shuo.

What a horrifying combination of adventurers! Han Shuo's heart jumped with fright for a moment before he rapidly retreated into the woods. His speed was very fast as he quickly left the three reinforced swordsmen in the dust and waited for an opportunity to make a move.

This adventurer team obviously had practical battle experience. Otherwise, it couldn't have been possible for them to coordinate so tacitly. They had great trust for each other, and when the priest, the mages, the swordsmen and the thief united, they created enormous offensive power. Han Shuo had initially thought he could easily deal with them, but his head now ached with the conundrum of dealing with them.

The power of the three swordsmen had been increased a level thanks to the priest's magic, but Han Shuo was confident he could neatly kill them in a few minutes even if he faced all three of them at the same time. However, the mages who were staring at him as if looking at prey certainly wouldn't let him succeed. The priest was hard at work casting magic at the three swordsmen, constantly supplying them with energy. This wasn't something Han Shuo could hold up against.

Han Shuo pondered as he remained concealed before finally realizing that this team didn't have a light mage. He immediately took this opportunity to summon a great deal of dark creatures in secret, while casting the Canopy of Necromancy at the same time. When the wood elite zombie appeared, he hid at a big tree the thief was standing on, and

utilized his control over plants to order the tree to wrap around the thief as per Han Shuo's command. The soft tree branches turned into deadly weapons, instantly drilling through the thief's body.

"Cadi!"

The adventurer team was forming a firm, defensive formation. When the tree branches penetrated the thief, the priest let out a big, shrill scream in agony. The thirty-odd years old woman seemed to be the wife of the thief. His death dealt her a great blow.

"There's a druid here, be careful everyone!" Marceau hastily shouted out a reminder.

The three swordsmen on the ground immediately waved their broadswords to clear away all of the plants around them. As for the priest, she still looked around in caution despite the fury in her heart. Not finding her target, she stepped into Marceau's shield. She started cursing crazily with grief, releasing spell after spell to probe where the enemy was.

"So, so many people!" Probing with her magic, the priest sensed the sudden presence of many people in all directions. This awoke her from the blindness of her fury, she mumbled as she looked around.

"How many? How many people?" Marceau asked urgently with great anxiety.

"A lot, too many!" The priest answered. She glanced at the thief's body and pleaded to Marceau, "Get his body first, hurry!"

"Take Cadi's body, leave this place! Damn it, now that I think about it, he's also a necromancer!" Marceau shouted out loudly. The three swordsmen risked their lives to rush towards the thief's body.

It was too late. Accompanied by rustling sounds from the thick forest, a great horde of undead creatures slowly appeared. There were amongst them an evil knight on a fire-spitting skeletal warhorse with his two meter long bone lance raised high, his ice cold, emotionless eyes nailing the three swordsmen.

Ten enormous hate warriors with rotting bodies were behind the hate



knights, each holding either a big mace or a long spiked pole. Under the deathly aura's manipulation, they slowly flocked towards the adventurer team standing in the middle of the scene.

The hearts of Marceau's group became increasingly heavier upon the appearance of the undead creatures. When a swordsman brought back the thief's body, Marceau immediately ordered, "I'll open up a path. You guys leave this place now."

Six fire snakes flew up, their raging flames bringing about a burning high temperature. This was something extremely horrifying that also upset the undead creatures. The high temperature would burn their cold bodies uncontrollably, with the fiery red flames sweeping away the thick smell of death. Their souls would then fall into an endless abyss.

Therefore, the undead creatures instinctively retreated when the five fire snakes flew out to hinder the two hate warriors, not wanting to suffer any agony from the flames. The two hate warriors only drew near after Han Shuo gave them orders again. As for the evil knight of a higher rank, he moved firmly towards the flames to attack the adventurers.

Undead creatures were born afraid of fire. However, the higher their level, the less their fear of flames. The hate warriors could just manage to hold on, while the evil knight wasn't afraid at all. He charged forward in accordance to Han Shuo's commands.

A gout of flame came crashing in from not too far away. The few low rank creatures such as skeletal and zombie warriors were immediately charred to cinders. Even the hate warriors constantly retreated backward, not daring to be near to those flames.

The big headed fire elite zombie was within the light of the flames. He'd yet to be able to exercise control over the flames on his body, so he'd actually accidentally burned his own kind. Still, he heeded Han Shuo's order like it was an imperial edict and opened his mouth wide to swallow the fire snakes released by Marceau, not letting her take advantage of the flames to flee from the undead creatures.

# Chapter 317: Complete Annihilation

“What-What is it?!” Fire grand magus Marceau exclaimed when she was shocked by the sudden appearance of the fire elite zombie.

After the big-headed fire elite zombie swallowed the flames, he grinned at Marceau, then opened his mouth and spat them all back out. The fire snakes were now no longer under Marceau’s control, and actually churned back over to attack the adventurers.

The low level undead creatures in the surroundings all instinctively retreated in the face of the intense heat. Jumping flames in the shape of lotus flower petals seem to burn continuously on the fire elite zombie’s frame. His deep red armor shot out red light everywhere. When skeletal warriors were hit by even a little spark from it, they were immediately destroyed and turned into dust.

The fire snakes that the fire elite zombie spat out was even more powerful. Not only did it force the adventurers to continuously duck and weave, even the undead creatures needed to retreat. Out of them, the evil knights and hatred knights also sensed a threat, causing them to quickly leave retreat from the incineration of the flames.

“Idiot, you can’t even tell our people apart from enemies!” Han Shuo scolded quietly, then gave another order to the earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie.

The earth trembled and rumbled beneath three swordsmen, with sharp earthen spikes shooting out again. The large tree branches danced crazily in the distance, while the branches became life-reaping arrows that shot towards the team of adventurers.

The fire elite zombie charged towards the three swordsmen like an enormous fire brand, creating waves of intense flames in front of them. The swordsmen’s bodies quickly started burning when even a spark stuck to their bodies.

The evil knight held a large bone spike in its hand and flung it towards the sky. The priest and mages were busy with dealing with the attacks

from the branches and thus were unable to avoid the path of the evil knight's huge bone spike. Han Shuo also released the Demonslayer Edge as arrows filled the sky.

Pitiful howls suddenly sounded through the sky, then instantly stopped. The lives of all of the adventurers, except Marceau's, had been ended in a few breaths.

Marceau glared at Han Shuo with hatred as she panted. When she noticed that all of her companions had died, she took out a magic scroll and started to chant a long spell.

Intense magical pulses traveled out from the scroll. The space in front of Marceau started to distort until a long and sharp blade formed in the sky. The terrifying spatial movement gathered up a dense amount of magical element, causing rays of blinding light to shoot everywhere.

"Not good, this is the 'Spatial Edge!'" A thought flashed across Han Shuo's mind, causing him to suddenly remember the terrifying and forbidden spatial spell "Spatial Edge". He was astounded, and immediately chanted out spells in order to send the undead creatures back to the other dimension as he tried to escape the area of effect of the spell.

"Spatial Edge" was a forbidden spell within the area of space. Legend said that it could cut through anything, no matter how durable. Han Shuo never would have thought that Marceau would own a valuable scroll of such a forbidden spell. The moment he felt a long giant blade twist out of space, he immediately retreated at all costs.

A flash of white light around twenty meters long chopped down from the sky. All hard boulders that it passed through, including the black armor of the evil knights that were comparable to metal ores, were cut neatly into two like a piece of tofu. Even towering trees over ten meters tall were snapped after the white light blazed past. A bottomless abyss also opened up in the ground.

Almost a hundred undead creatures were sliced and diced by the light, and completely shattered whenever the light passed over them.

Marceau still held the magic scroll in her hands and was continuing to

chant the long incantation. She once again released three rays of white light that were more than ten meters long using the extremely valuable forbidden scroll. More undead creatures were destroyed wherever the white light passed through.

Out of them, one of the flashes of white light instantly sliced towards Han Shuo when it locked onto him from the air. This spatial edge was as fast as lightning, and was on top of Han Shuo in an instant. Marceau was determined to eliminate Han Shuo, so she focused all her attention onto that spatial edge. Due to this, this spatial edge was not only fast, but also accurate, as if it wasn't going to give Han Shuo a chance to escape.

Using the speed of the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heaven, Han Shuo retreated towards the dense forest behind. During so, he continuously changed directions in an attempt to avoid the spatial edge. However, this spatial edge was actually following him like a shadow beneath Marceau's commands, and chased Han Shuo no matter how he moved. It seemed like she wouldn't stop if she didn't slice Han Shuo apart.

Han Shuo swore silently in his heart, then headed into a swamp. He flew back out as a muddy man with a waver of his body, venturing even further into the depths.

Pfft!

The spatial edge sliced downwards, slicing the muddy Han Shuo in half, then entered deeper into the ground without any decrease in power. It once again create an enormous, bottomless trench.

"Mhmm, he finally died!" Marceau let out a sigh as she panted heavily, then looked at the magic scroll that had expended all of its magic. She murmured with heartbreak, "Ai, he truly is someone hard to deal with, making me waste such a valuable magic scroll!"

Just as Marceau moved her attention to the magic scroll in her hands, a figure covered in mud in the deep trench of sludge and water, moved.

A cold light suddenly flashed past and pierced through Marceau's body. The huge pain caused Marceau to be a bit confused, but she then saw a figure within the mud move in front of her, revealing Han Shuo as the

mud was shook off.

“I wasted another yin demon. This spatial edge is so powerful. It even ripped apart the invisible and formless yin demon!” Han Shuo also said heartbrokenly, then flew towards Marceau. He looted her and the adventurers of all equipment and rings, placing them in his own space ring.

When he arrived in front of Marceau, Han Shuo put away her staff and took away her space ring without hesitation. The fact that Marceau had a forbidden magic scroll meant that she must have been a filthy rich person. A fire grand magus could easily gain prestige and wealth, alongside a noble rank in any country. Marceau was naturally not an exception in the Brut Merchant Alliance.

The entire ground was filled with shattered bones and flesh. A large majority of the undead creatures that Han Shuo summoned had been sliced apart by the spatial edges. On the other hand, the fire, earth, and wood elite zombie had been the first sent to the other dimension, protecting them all timing from the spatial edge's attacks.

The undead creatures knew no fear. Those that were still alive still stood there, awaiting Han Shuo's next order. Han Shuo gazed at the scene beneath him as he held Marceau's space ring. He then took out his skeletal staff to send the undead creatures back to the other dimension.

After doing all that, Han Shuo raised his head and gazed around. He discovered that thanks to the forbidden spell spatial edge, there were enormous trenches in a radius of one thousand and five hundred meters. Towering trees and boulders had all been hacked to pieces. It really was a complete mess.

It was unknown whether it was due to the lack of Marceau's mental power or the lack of stored magic within the magic scroll, that spatial edge spell had only released thirty percent of its true power. If the complete power had been released, there would have been at least more than twenty flashes of light, and the number might even increase according to the caster's mental power strength.

If it was casted by a powerful sacred space magus, pretty much all of the living creatures and plants in a small city would be torn to shreds by the spell, as it had a terrifyingly wide area of effect.

As Han Shuo held the space ring that Marceau left behind after her death, he wondered about the method of opening it as he flew casually towards the Cemetery of Death.

During this process, Han Shuo used his remaining yin demon to find that a team of roughly five thousand was stationed outside the Dark Forest. Han Shuo surveyed this team of five thousand and realized out that they were actually a proper troop of knights that had come from the Brut Merchant Alliance. Some of the tents were blocked by magical boundaries as they faintly radiated a powerful aura.

Han Shuo frowned slightly. After surveying them for a while, he thought of Marceau and those adventurers that died in his hand, and suddenly felt that they were with these people.

Marceau was someone of the Brut Merchant Alliance. The three swordsman within the adventures had the same sword and shield pattern on their left shoulder as these knights who were resting. It meant that they must have come from this troop.

The Brut Merchant Alliance was a distance from the Dark Forest. After passing through the Dark Forest, they would arrive directly at Zajoski City on the southwest of the Lancelot Empire. The knights had good equipment, fine warhorses, and some even more powerful experts. It was an unknown why they appeared in the Dark Forest.

After looking around for a bit, Han Shuo was silently shocked by this troop. He noticed that their power was even a bit stronger than how they'd first appeared. The magical pulses from the central tent were intense, with some strange sounds ringing out faintly from it. After Han Shuo released his consciousness, he kept on feeling that there was something amiss inside. After thinking about it, he decided to have a look at what these people planned to do.

# Chapter 318: Saving the beauty

Cough...

A shrill, miserable scream rang out from the tent. This extremely tragic scream, which wasn't completely suppressed by the boundary on the tent, came to an abrupt end. Han Shuo caught a faint reverberation with his great sensitivities.

The only remaining yin demon slowly drifted over to that direction in a probe. However, Han Shuo had already felt magic fluctuation ripple out in all directions before the yin demon even came close. With his extraordinary knowledge, he immediately knew that this was a soul inspection magic. Han Shui hurriedly withdrew the yin demon.

After the soul inspection magic was released, a dazzling rift suddenly cracked open in the sky. It patrolled the surrounding area like a bright eye.

Han Shuo immediately held his breath and entered the realm in which nothing affected him, his body hidden in the lush foliage of a big tree.

The fluctuation of the soul inspection magic drifted out gently like water ripples. When it passed through Han Shuo, he felt a bit of surprise. However, he easily avoided the inspection with a tight lock down on his consciousness.

"There's someone there!" A soft cry suddenly rang out from the tent.

A figure shot out from the tent like a streak of lightning. A team of knights followed closely behind that silhouette, quickly chasing towards the east.

Rustling sounds travelled quickly in from that area, Han Shuo clearly heard that a person was swiftly running away from where the knights stationed. It seemed that there were also others who were paying attention to this troop of the Brut Merchant Alliance. However, they must've not concealed themselves very well since their tracks were discovered.

Han Shuo remained where he was without moving. His eyes swept again through the tents in the distance, stopping at the few in the center of the

group. The withdrawn yin demon was once again released. It flew towards the direction of where the sound had travelled.

What had the knights of the Brut Merchant Alliance come to the Dark Forest for? Han Shuo was full of doubts, his bright eyes looking at the tent in the center as he silently pondered.

Rumble...

A huge explosion echoed from the direction in which that figure had rushed toward. Afterwards, a strange cooing laughter resounded sinisterly, "Heh heh, I didn't expect two beautiful women. Don't think of getting away."

"Cecilia, you go first. I'll stop him!" A familiar female voice rang out from the distance.

Han Shuo had been calmly watching the tent, and suddenly paled upon hearing this voice. His heart had been as still as clear water, yet was instantly disrupted. He shot out like a sharp arrow, flying across the sky, drawing a silver arc through the air.

It was Emily's voice. It had been someone who Han Shuo didn't know, he naturally wouldn't have poked his nose in their business. However, since it was Emily in that area, he definitely wouldn't let anything happen to her.

"Want to run? Keke, you can't escape!" The nasty cooing of an owl rang out again, accompanied by the sounds of spells and weapons colliding.

Han Shuo's heart was on fire with anxiety as he utilized the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to its extreme. He reached that area in the span of three breaths, much faster than the yin demon.

Broken, uprooted trees filled the area. Emily and Cecilia wore pure green magic robes, their delicate faces painted with green plant sap. Their entire bodies seemed to blend into one with the Dark Forest as they leaned on a big tree trunk and ceaselessly casted magic spells.

Several members of the Dark Mantle with their strength, agility, and endurance enhanced by Cecilia's magic were fiercely throwing themselves



in front of the attacks from the Brut knights.

There was a thin middle-aged man with short, red hair and a cruel smile hanging on his face. He stood behind the knights with his hands behind his back, watching Emily and Cecilia struggle while cackling nonstop.

“Who is it?!” The thin, middle-aged man suddenly discovered Han Shuo dashing over. Surprise flashing through his eyes, he raised his left hand to form a complicated magic formation. An enormous force then surged out from his palm and quickly assaulted Han Shuo.

Bang!

It was as if being hit by an iron mountain. Han Shuo immediately felt dizzy. He glared furiously at the middle-aged man, unable to move forward.

“Eh!” The middle-aged man exclaimed, his eyes switched from Emily and Cecilia to Han Shuo. The lines in the center of his palm twisted up like a snake, faintly revealing a trace of blood.

Whistle...

Han Shuo finally mobilized the Demonslayer Edge, its murderous intent billowing to the skies and filling the area. The middle-aged man suddenly roared to the heavens. His originally one meter seventy-five centimeters body began to grow with unimaginable changes.

The man’s smooth glossy skin was instantly covered in a thick, hairy coat. His slender, long arms became very strong and sturdy. His body expanded to ten meters before transforming into a huge black bear. The bear growled and slammed down his paw, ferociously smashing down Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had intended to fly up but suddenly staggered. He’d discovered that the gravity in the surrounding had increased tenfold. Han Shuo couldn’t react in time in his surprise, and the feeling was extremely unsettling.

“Bryan!” Emily had been about to cast a dark magic when she finally discovered Han Shuo’s appearance. She didn’t had the time to feel happy

when the palm of the black bear slapped down like a small mountain. Emily screamed in panic.

As his movement had been affected, Han Shuo's mind churned rapidly in the face of this crisis. Seeing the huge paw slam down, he immediately infused magical yuan into the Demonslayer Edge. Blood red light exploded and shot to the skies from the weapon that had absorbed an enormous amount of killing intent from resentful souls. Clouds of blood drifted out continuously, transforming into thin, blood-red threads that wrapped around the Demonslayer Edge.

A glaring red light abruptly beamed out from the tip of the Demonslayer Edge. The endless, vicious, resentful intent shot straight at the bear's paw.

The bear's gray pupils wavered slightly, the thick fur on his arm standing erect like needles. This paw emitted light waves that ripped forth like the surface of a water disturbed by a thrown rock.

Rumble rumble...

Loud rumbling sounds echoed from the collision of the Demonslayer Edge and the black bear's palm. Blood red light radiated in all directions, accompanied by the agonized cry of the black bear.

A force that could topple the mountains and overturn the seas surged violently into Han Shuo's arm. The force was purely brute power without any skill, even Han Shuo's rock solid body couldn't withstand it. The vessels of his right hand holding the Demonslayer Edge burst open.

"The hell! What kind of person is this!" Han Shuo could help but curse. After his strength had spiked up a great margin after entering the separate demon realm, he'd thought that there wouldn't be many people that could exceed him in strength. He had unexpectedly been injured by Kosse last time, and now he was even wounded after one strike.

"Who are you!?" After one blow, the big black bear shrank back into the thin, middle-aged man. However, his palm was now dripping with blood. He looked at Han Shuo, terrified disbelief on his face.

Not paying attention to his opponent, Han Shuo rushed over to Emily as

soon as the terrifying gravity was lifted, shouting, "Hurry and get away from here! There are more experts coming."

Cecilia, one of the three Dark Mantle heavyweights, had observed the fight from beginning to end. A strange look filled her eyes as she looked at Han Shuo. Upon hearing his shout, she suddenly turned to the front and softly yelled, "Retreat!"

As her words fell, Cecilia took out a magic scroll. Her long, slender arm held the scroll and shook it fiercely, a space door appeared amidst a dazzling white light in front of her. The Dark Mantle members struggling with the knights seemed to know beforehand that Cecilia would do that, as they immediately disengaged from their opponents and entered the space door.

Not waiting for Han Shuo to react, Emily grabbed his hand and dragged him through the space door without any reservations. Cecilia then also leapt into it.

It was as if they had taken a transportation matrix. A white light flashed as everyone appeared in the middle of a river. Heads poked up from the water's surface, the entire group resembling drowned rats, gulping in fresh air in big mouthfuls.

"Bryan, shouldn't you be at Brettel City? How are you here?" Emily had let go of Han Shuo's hand and asked after sticking her head out of the river's surface.

"Eh, it's very easy for me to come here. You know." Han Shuo winked several times at Emily, his voice quiet.

Emily was stumped for a bit before recalling the Cemetery of Death within the Dark Forest. With the transportation matrix there, Han Shuo could easily run back and forth no matter where he was.

"Damn it! Why did we end up here? Hurry up, they are chasing us!" Cecilia's voice rang out in the distance. Her body was dripping wet as she shouted suddenly.

Emily sent a signal to Han Shuo with a glance upon Cecilia's shout. The

two immediately followed the Dark Mantle members in leaving the river, moving along a path leading to the Dark Forest.

# Chapter 319: The art of shapeshifting

“Who was that just now?” Han Shuo didn’t forget to ask Emily about the identity of the middle-aged man as they hastily fled.

Emily arrowed out of the small river, her dripping wet body enveloped in a deep black mist. She revealed only her flawless face as she quickly caught up to the group behind Cecilia. Cecilia was walking quickly in the front, Emily and Han Shuo were side by side in the back, and low rank Dark Mantle members brought up the rear.

Emily turned to glance at Han Shuo and explained, “That was Kassel, a great druid who betrayed the Druidic Order and a terrifying powerhouse in his own right. Even though he’s betrayed the Druidic Order and can no longer utilize the force of nature, he can still skillfully use the shapeshifting art of the great druids. That transformation back then was him turning into an earth bear that can utilize the art of gravity. Taking him head on like that, your strength is becoming more and more impressive.”

Upon hearing that his counterpart was a great druid, Han Shuo suddenly remembered great druid Caspian. He subconsciously compared them and felt that Caspian was much weaker in strength.

“Caspian is also a great druid. Why isn’t he as powerful as Kassel?” Han Shuo frowned and inquired, inwardly doubtful.

Emily casually arranged her messy hair. She glanced at Cecilia in the front before continuing to explain, “The great druids can train in the various magical arts of the Druidic Order. The majority of them master the method to manipulate plants. According to the legends, this is the ability that the Goddess of Nature has bestowed upon them.”

“However, the art of shapeshifting isn’t as easily mastered. Only a few great druids with extraordinary talent can successfully grasp it. It looks like Caspian hasn’t fully mastered it yet. Otherwise, he couldn’t have been so easily captured last time in Valen City.”

Han Shuo had to muse on Emily’s words for a moment before he could

understand them. He thought it to be quite an irony that Caspian, who'd always served the Goddess of Nature, couldn't learn the art of shapeshifting, while the traitor of the Druidic Order could learn it.

"Right, what mission brought you guys to the Dark Forest this time?" Han Shuo leisurely followed Emily along the way into the lush forest. He continued to ask her about their purpose.

Cecilia was leading the way at the front. She suddenly tossed her long, beautiful hair and sent pearls of crystal clear water rolling down. She turned her head to direct her bright eyes at Emily and let out a faint snort, "We still could have left safely even without your help. This mission is under my charge, and even big sis Emily has to listen to me. Your name isn't listed in this mission, so you don't need to know."

Emily had been about to answer, and couldn't help but feel apologetic towards Han Shuo for Cecilia's words. She said to him with a wry smile, "Since Mistress Cecilia has spoken, I'd better not say anything."

"Big sis Emily!" Cecilia stared at Emily with rebuke in her eyes, saying softly, "We have to be clear about work and personal matters."

"I know, I know!" Emily cried out before smiling at Han Shuo, "Alright, you shouldn't ask too much. We're fine. If you have matters to handle, go quickly. No need to worry about us."

Cecilia had obviously created the space door through the magic scroll. However, since she possessed the scroll, it meant that even without Han Shuo's appearance, Cecilia could still have brought Emily and the group to safety with the scroll. Therefore, it didn't quite count as Han Shuo having saved Cecilia.

Even though Han Shuo was still worried about Emily, it was obvious that Cecilia didn't want him to be involved, so he didn't say anymore after hearing her words.

Han Shuo was planning to say a few words to Emily when he suddenly realized that he'd arrived at the forest trolls' territory while following Cecilia's group. At first sight, a dozen blue-green troll warriors hurled their axes straight at Cecilia without a word.

“Hateful forest trolls, why are their weapons getting more and more sophisticated lately?!” An arc drew across Cecilia’s chest and triggered a magic formation, spilling liquid into the air before coalescing into a magnificent, blue ice crystal shield.

The axes thrown by the troll warriors created clanking sounds upon hitting the ice shield. They only left some faint marks on the surface and simply couldn’t penetrate the defense of the ice shield.

“This is the territory of the forest trolls. Let’s first hide in here. Once the Redbud Knights enter this area, these greedy, idiotic forest trolls will definitely risk their lives to attack them. Even though the Redbud Knights are one of the top ten knights of the continent, their power will be greatly restricted in this forest. The forest trolls’ tribe isn’t small either, so they will definitely cause some trouble for those knights. Even if the Redbud Knights do destroy all of the trolls, it can be considered eliminating a harmful element of the Dark Forest.”

Cecilia coldly narrated as she watched the forest trolls run away after throwing their weapons. She then turned to the masked Dark Mantle members and ordered, “Destroy the forest troll scouts in front. Once they’re provoked, they’ll definitely attack with all they have when the Redbud Knights arrive. Not only can we take this opportunity to escape, we might even come out on top.”

Several Dark Mantle members had already rushed out as soon as Cecilia’s words sounded. These folks had at least the strength of senior swordsmen. A few mere forest troll scouts absolutely had no way to resist them.

At this moment, Han Shuo suddenly blocked their way with a darkened face and commanded in a low tone, “Find another way. You guys cannot touch these forest trolls.”

The forest troll race could be considered a force in Han Shuo’s hand. They treated the little skeleton as their god Datara. This force was completely under Han Shuo’s control and heeded his orders without hesitation. He’d be using them a great deal from now on, so he certainly

couldn't let Cecilia borrow the Redbud Knights' power to exterminate the tribe.

Any of the top ten knights in the continent would be veterans who'd been through numerous battles. Since the Redbud Knights were on this list, they would only need a hundred of their fellows to slaughter over five hundred forest trolls.

Han Shuo had precisely heard of their reputation, which was why he was absolutely against Cecilia doing so. Otherwise, the only thing awaited the forest trolls would be genocide. This was something completely unacceptable to Han Shuo.

"They're only some greedy forest trolls. Why are you protecting them? You're crazy aren't you!?" Cecilia wrinkled her delicate brows, looking unhappy as she coldly rebuked Han Shuo.

"Hurry up and take a detour. I can feel the Redbud Knights close behind. These forest trolls are of use to me, and no one can touch them. Otherwise, don't blame me for offending you as your subordinate!" Han Shuo said frostily, looking at Cecilia in a manner that brooked no room for discussion.

"You are obstructing our mission. As a member of the Dark Mantle, do you realize that I have the right to punish you?!" Cecilia was also angered by Han Shuo. She glared at him, her voice rising in anger.

"Detour! Otherwise, don't blame me for not being polite!" Han Shuo wasn't scared at all, instead stressing his words.

"Little sis Cecilia, how about taking a detour? Consider giving me some face!" Seeing the two locked in an argument, Emily hastily tugged on Cecilia's clothes and asked in a pleading tone.

Cecilia had just witnessed Han Shuo fight fearlessly against the transformed big earth bear, so she knew full well that his power was absolutely unfathomable. The knights chasing after them could arrive any moment now. It was pointless to be locked in an impasse with Han Shuo now.



Cecilia was caught between a rock and a hard place. Upon hearing Emily's pleas, she swept a cold glance at Han Shuo, "I will demand an explanation from that old fox Candide about this. We go, let's take a detour!"

After her words finished, Cecilia turned around and led the way. Emily threw a glance at Han Shuo before hurriedly chasing after the angry Cecilia. The Dark Mantle members participating in Cecilia's mission also glared at Han Shuo in an ill manner as they left one by one.

"Datara, Datara!" After Cecilia's group had left, the forest trolls suddenly surrounded Han Shuo when they saw him.

Han Shuo was taken aback until he heard the sounds of footsteps fast approaching. He hurriedly led the forest trolls away from this place.

The traitor of the Druidic Order, great druid Kassel, burst onto the scene with roughly sixty Redbud Knights shortly after Han Shuo had left. Even though he'd betrayed the Druidic Order, his experience in forests yet remained.

Looking at the two paths of footprints in front while sniffing the scents in the air, Kassel pointed at the direction where Cecilia's group had left, "Chase after them for me, they have indeed run in this direction. Humph! No one can evade the pursuit of me, Kassel, in the forest."

# Chapter 320: Treasure trove

Han Shuo didn't stop to chat with the forest trolls after dragging them far away, nor did he enter the forest troll village to meet the old priest who could understand the common tongue. He backtracked on his original path and snuck into the camp of the Redbud Knights.

With the space door scroll, Cecilia's group should have no trouble escaping, even though their power couldn't measure up to Kassel's group. However, Han Shuo felt that something wasn't quite right for the Redbud Knights of the Brut Merchant Alliance to appear in the Dark Forest. Since Emily couldn't tell him the truth because of Cecilia, Han Shuo decided to check things out for himself.

Using his only remaining yin demon to scout ahead, Han Shuo sent out his consciousness at the same to sense any presence within a certain range. Noon's sunlight pierced through layers of foliage, stubbornly shining down on the ground of the Dark Forest. At a glance, these rays of sunlight looked like a bunch of sharp arrows.

Han Shuo's sensitivities were razor sharp, moving between the trees as swiftly as a veteran hunter. His figure dashed swiftly through and over several growths and rocks without making a sound. Relying on his pervertedly strong sensitivity and the yin demon's vision, Han Shuo arrived at the staging area of the Redbud Knights after a few minutes.

The knights were scattered in the area as they rested lazily. They squinted beneath the sunlight, chatting about stuff that shouldn't be heard by children. From time to time, perverted laughs rang out from within the clusters of knights. Sitting apart from them, there were also several knights who were persevering in training their fighting aura alone.

The magic enchantment on the tent in the center had yet to be lifted. One to two miserable screams faintly echoed out, seemingly the sounds of criminals being tortured.

Han Shuo hid patiently within the foliage of a big old tree to observe the Redbud Knights. He spread his powerful consciousness to enclose a small

area, preventing anyone from getting close. A yin demon soundlessly drifted around to spy and constantly eavesdropped on the knights' conversations.

The majority of the knights talked about boring, trivial matters. However, there were some stern faced knights who were in the middle of a serious meeting. The yin demon cautiously eavesdropped on their meeting. Picking up on their brief descriptions Han Shuo gradually gleaned the purpose of their trip to the Dark Forest this time.

A faint wave of magical fluctuation emitted from the tents among the knights, followed by three soul searching magic spells. Han Shuo had been on guard, so he hurriedly withdrew the yin demon back into his body before using magical cultivation to hide his presence.

When the fluctuation of the three soul searching spells passed through, a huge eye appeared above Han Shuo's head. It was the Sky's Eye again. The eye in the sky looked down below for a moment before gradually dispersing.

Wuuu...

The battle signal sound of a buffalo horn trumpet suddenly resounded. A shout echoed from the tent in the middle, "Assemble. Prepare to march!"

The lazily resting soldiers instantly sprang up, organizing their armor and weapons at the horn's call. They walked energetically towards the fierce warhorses grazing and drinking at the river's bank. A surge of domineering air suddenly spread out.

They were indeed worthy of belonging to one of the top ten knight troops in the continent. It didn't show when they rested, but when they organized themselves, they naturally emitted this fierce atmosphere. Han Shuo was secretly surprised as he watched the Redbud Knights gather from his hiding place within the lush foliage. He began to worry for the races in the underground world of the Dark Forest.

The Redbud Knights had traveled the lengthy distance of a thousand miles to the Dark Forest this time to deal with the underground world beneath the Dark Forest. The underground world produced various types

of exotic ores, as well as crystals and beautiful jade used to refine magic weapons and protective gear. However, the path connecting the underground world and the world above was extremely secretive. People above ground were generally hard pressed to find it.

As a great druid of the Druidic Order in the Dark Forest, Kassel had naturally known of the entrance to the underground world beneath the Dark Forest. One time when he'd ventured into the underground world to explore, he'd stumbled upon the sight of the lizardmen mining a small magic crystal mine. Since magic crystal ores were extremely valuable, Kassel had been taken over by greed and violated the order's doctrine, wanting to monopolize the magic crystal mine. However, an unknown, powerful super rank creature had appeared to expel him when he was killing the lizardmen in the underground world.

Furiously returning to the Druidic Order, Kassel had tried to use the Order's power to destroy the lizardmen along with that powerful super rank creature. It was a pity that the elder druid, who worshipped the Goddess of Nature, had rejected Kassel's proposal out of his love for peace. He'd even angrily reprimanded Kassel. Kassel, blinded by greed, injured the elder druid out of rage, which put him on the wanted list by the Druidic Order. He had to flee the Dark Forest, and now, for reasons unknown, he'd somehow partnered up with the Brut Merchant Alliance.

The wealth of the underground world as well as the small magic crystal mine had successfully tempted Celt, the commander of the Redbud Knights of the Brut Merchant Alliance. He'd led the elite of the Redbud Knights to cross a long distance, spending a month to travel into the Dark Forest with the intention of coming back with an enormous haul from the underground world.

Celt's hair was graying at the temples, his weathered face engraved with the traces of time. His figure was tall, and his eyes exuded a calm, peaceful atmosphere. If Han Shuo hadn't known about the purpose of his trip here, he wouldn't have thought of Celt as a greedy bandit from his appearance.

After emerging from the tent, Celt took out a clean white handkerchief and carefully wiped off the blood on his hands. When he was cleaning

himself, he looked at the assembled Redbud Knights and casually asked the young mage beside him, “How come Teacher Marceau hasn’t returned yet?”

“My apologies, I don’t know why teacher hasn’t come back even when it’s already so late.” The young mage answered hurriedly and was obviously quite polite when facing Celt.

Promptly throwing away the bloodstained handkerchief, Celt looked at his two clean slender hands with satisfaction. He said in a calm voice, “Forget it. Teacher Marceau knows what we need to do this time anyway. She can fly, so she can catch up with us once she finishes her matter. Let us leave first.”

Celt then suddenly let out a loud, clear whistle, so shrill that it seemed to tear through the sky. A huge shadow flew over shortly afterwards. As it drew near, Han Shuo saw that it was a green dragon over twenty meters long.

This green dragon was much bigger than Gilbert. The strength of every dragon race wasn’t necessarily measured based on volume. However, for the green dragon race, it was indeed that the bigger the volume, the higher their power. This twenty meter green dragon must be a super rank magic creature at its second evolution. Otherwise, it couldn’t have achieved such a length.

Celt leapt up seven or eight meters into the air and landed nimbly on the green dragon. His one meter eighty centimeters tall figure only occupied a small space on the green dragon’s back, but the faint presence that emanated from his body couldn’t be covered up by the dragon’s huge body.

Celt sat firmly on the back of the green dragon and let out another long, high whistle. The green dragon flew rapidly through the sky like a huge dark cloud blotting a large patch of the air. Their direction seemed to be where Kassel was chasing Cecilia’s group.

The Redbud Knights on the ground below packed up their tents and slowly headed towards another direction under the leadership of several

majors. Their chosen direction seemed to be towards the entrance to the underground world that Han Shuo had once entered.

With such a powerful lineup, no one dared provoke them even in the extremely chaotic Dark Forest. The magic creatures in this region were all intelligent, they certainly wouldn't come to seek their own death. Therefore, the Redbud Knights advanced leisurely and unhurriedly to their target destinations without encountering any obstructions.

Some tragic screams echoed from the tent after they left. Marceau's students had suddenly cast fire magic. Waiting until these people completely left, Han Shuo flew over to examine the burned bodies. They seemed to be all lizardmen. It seemed the knights were looking for some information from these lizardmen.

Celt had likely gone off in pursuit of Kassel. With Celt's strength, Han Shuo would be very worried if he joined the group chasing after Emily. Cecilia would be hard pressed to escape even with the space door. After some hesitation, Han Shuo decided to follow Celt and see what would happen.

At this moment however, a huge, dazzling golden figure shot in Celt's direction like a strip of golden lightning. Han Shuo even heard a familiar voice from its furious roaring.

"It's the golden dragon who was trapped in the forbidden land last time. Oh! He seems to be attacking Celt. This is getting more and more interesting!" Exclaiming in surprise, Han Shuo snoopied through the yin demon to observe the situation on that side. He decided to get closer and took flight, keeping himself hidden.

"Damnable bandit, you dared take advantage and rob my treasure while I wasn't present. Quickly hand it back over!" The golden dragon roared at Celt on the green dragon, its huge body thrashing in the sky. Lightning sparks crackled towards the green dragon.

# Chapter 321: Dragonlance and Dragon Net

The golden dragon, that lived deep within the Dark Forest, was a super rank magical creature that had evolved three times. Han Shuo had clearly understood his strength from the previous time. The golden dragons were hailed the race with the strongest physical bodies out of the dragons. The aura of a rank three golden dragon was steady, and as it moved its enormous body, rays of lightning struck the green dragon and Celt.

The commander of the Redbud Knights, Celt, showed a hint of surprise on the back of the green dragon when he saw the golden dragon rush over fiercely.

As bolts of lightning struck, the green dragon beneath him raised its head and breathed out, redirecting the scorching lightning to one side, not actually taking any sort of actual damage.

The golden dragons were hailed the dragon race with the strongest physical bodies. Perhaps it was due to the strength of their physical bodies that resulted in magic not being an area that they specialized in. Even the thunder attacks shot out by this thrice evolved golden dragon was merely equivalent to the attack of a thunder adept mage.

It wasn't hard for the green dragon, also a super rank magical creature, to defend against this level of attack. A mere exhale was able to stop the bouncing thunder attack. The green dragon had a large physique and was a twice evolved super rank magical creature. In contrast to the golden dragon, the green dragon specialized more in magic. Although it didn't have a dragon body that was as hard as iron like the golden dragon, its magic was able to supplement some of its physical disadvantages.

Celt slowly took out a thin, silver dragon lance from the back of the green dragon. He smiled and pointed at the golden dragon from afar, "Honored golden dragon, I have already taken your treasures. If you want to take them back, then you'll have to see if you have the ability to."

"Pitiful human, you have offended me! I will make you regret having those greedy thoughts!" The golden dragon was closing in on them and

roared loudly, directly pressing down its huge body on Celt.

The golden dragon clearly recognized that with the existence of the green dragon, he couldn't think about killing Celt with only magic attacks. Thus, he decided to use the golden dragons' powerful body to teach them a painful lesson.

"Hehe, foolish golden dragon, you are just asking to suffer!" Celt raised his dragonlance with a laugh as silver fighting aura condensed at the tip of the gun. Then, Celt charged towards the golden dragon using the momentum of the green dragon.

Halfway through, Celt suddenly put down the dragonlance and flung something towards the sky. All of a sudden, a black dragon net of sharp blades suddenly came down over the golden dragon.

The golden dragon who'd charged over had his attention completely focused on the dragonlance in Celt's hands. He didn't think that Celt would suddenly throw out a dragon net. Due to the lack of appropriate defense, he was unable to avoid it and was immediately firmly entangled. Sharp little blades hung all over the black dragon net and quick tightened the moment the golden dragon was caught. The more the golden dragon moved, the tighter the black dragon net became. Meanwhile, little blades stabbed merrily into the muscles of the golden dragon in between the golden dragon's scales with ringing sounds.

Suddenly, a powerful magic pulse passed through the black dragon net and rays of silver light exploded from the black strings. This proved to be of marvelous effect against the dragon shapeshifting in order to escape. The moment the golden dragon was hit by the magic pulses, he immediately felt that his entire body grow numb, causing him to be unable to use his natural talents.

"I already told you not to make things hard on yourself. This dragon net was refined for me by three alchemists. Don't think about escaping from it, even if you are a golden dragon!" Celt slowly approached the golden dragon with a peaceful smile. He aimed the dragonlance in his hand at the large eye of the golden dragon within the black net.



Although the golden dragon had a powerful physical body, their eyes were as fragile as any others'. The golden dragon roared tragically, "Despicable human, fight me fair and square if you have guts to!"

"Hehe, us humans rely on our brain," Celt said with a smile. He sized up the golden dragon with interest and teased in a manner as if he was talking to himself. "Hmm, the entire body of a rank three golden dragon is a treasure. How should I deal with you? Should I kill you and take your dragon tendons, bones, eyes, and core? Or should I make you one of my magical pets? Hehe. I already have a green dragon, this is really troubling!"

"Despicable human, if you cannot defeat me justly, then even if you kill me, the proud golden dragon will not bow in defeat!" Even at this moment, the golden dragon still spoke loudly without any fear of death.

Celt had been smiling but his expression immediately turned cold upon hearing this. He waved the dragonlance in his hand in front of the dragon's eye, an eye as large as a fist, and said, "I don't have too much patience, and don't want trouble. I'll give you a final chance, form a slave contract with me immediately. Otherwise, die."

"I will not form a contract with a human as despicable and sinister as you. Just give up!" The golden dragon struggled fiercely in the giant black net, causing the small blades hanging off the threads to cut deeply into his flesh through the gaps between his scales, resulting in a small drizzle of blood.

Han Shuo had already seen that the golden dragon was very powerful last time in the territory of the Lord of the Flames. However, the black dragon net was something created by three alchemists specifically to use against dragons. Something that had been brought out by the commander of one of the ten largest knight troops on the continent was naturally not going to be something ordinary. Even though the golden dragon struggled with his life on the line, it wasn't enough to improve his situation and merely worsened the wounds on his body.

"Alright, then die!" Celt yelled softly, then thrust the dragonlance into the gap between the golden dragon's scales.

Since the golden dragon continuously moved its body, the black dragon net tightened around him even more, worsening his injuries. Even so, Celt was unable to easily pierce his eyes. That's why, he chose to attack the dragon's body instead, and stabbed into the golden dragon's body over and over again.

No matter how strong the golden dragon's physical body was, it was unable to endure attacks like this without the ability to fight back. A mist of blood seeped out from his body as howls of pain rang out.

"Despicable and cowardly human, you will definitely pay the price!" The golden dragon continued to curse even as he howled in pain.

"I can't see how you're going to make me pay the price. Pitiful lizard, your long life has finally reached its end today!" Celt chuckled softly without stopping the dragonlance in his hand. After pulling it out of the dragon's body with spray of blood, he stabbed down once more. As he watched the bloodied golden dragon, his eyes were filled with an excitement that he found difficult to hide. He subconsciously licked his lips, as if he was enjoying this sort of moment very much.

Suddenly, a light pierced through the sky and slipped into the black dragon net agilely like a fish. The huge dragon net was slowly ripped to shreds with whooshing sounds by the movement of the light.

"Who is it, actually daring to stick your nose in my business!" Celt frowned. The excitement disappeared from his body like the receding tide as he snorted coldly while glancing around with sparkling eyes.

"ROAR..."

Under the help of the black ray of light, the black dragon net was ripped apart, no longer able to entrap the golden dragon. With a ghastly roar that was furious to the extreme, the golden dragon lumbered towards the green dragon, while bits of ripped dragon netting hung off of him. The golden dragon used his sharp claws and fangs to rip and bite at the green dragon as well as Celt, without any fear of death.

Due to needing use the dragonlance to pierce the golden dragon, Celt was actually very close to the golden dragon. The freed golden dragon

immediately entangled with the green dragon. His immensely wounded body actually invoked the golden dragon's savageness. The golden dragon howled desolately during its maniacal attacks.

Celt was the enemy that the golden dragon nursed a bone deep hatred against. Unfortunately, Celt was also extremely agile. He kept on changing positions on the green dragon's large body so the golden dragon's swipes with his claws were unable to find their mark at all. He merely caused the green dragon to continuously scream out with pain.

Han Shuo had been hiding on the top of an ancient tree. He gazed at the intense battle of dragons above with a cold gaze. Surging dragon auras caused unending, rumbling explosions to sound in the surrounding ancient trees and hill. A ray of black light circled around the golden dragon before swiftly entering Han Shuo's body.

The yin demon slowly drifted out again and focused on another ambusher – the giant silver ape that had appeared at the territory of the Ruler of the Flames.

The giant silver ape had appeared when the golden dragon had been trapped by the dragon net. The four meter tall giant silver ape was incomparable in size to the enormous dragons in the sky. As it laid in the bushes, it hid its presence most excellently. At this moment, the giant silver ape was drooling with the liquid of greed as it fixed its blood red eyes on the battle in the skies, as if it was preparing to join in at any moment.

Super rank magical creatures were able to consume each other's bodies in order to digest the other's magical core to strengthen the devourer directly or even evolve. Super rank magical creatures of the same level normally wouldn't fight to the death, but if they had the chance to kill each other, these savage magical creatures definitely would not hesitate.

To the giant silver ape, the two dragons in an intense battle in the sky represented a potential chance for it to quickly evolve, particularly since both of the dragons that were fighting to the death were a bit crazed. He knew that sooner or later, one of them would be unable to stand the

assault from the other anymore and fall from the sky. That was when his chance would arrive.

# Chapter 322: The green dragon's crystal core

“ROAR...”

The green dragon madly twisted its body, a long mournful cry resounding from its mouth. The golden dragon had desperately wrapped his body around the green dragon. Well known for their bodily strength, the latter was obviously not an opponent for a golden dragon. Not to mention that the golden dragon had already evolved three times. He wasn't afraid of death at all as his ferocity burst out upon being wounded.

The golden dragon and green dragon were locked in close quarter combat. The former took advantage of his steely body, hook-like claws, and enormous maw full of stark white teeth to leave grievous wounds on the green dragon that reached the bone. The scales on the green dragon's body were effective against human arrows, but could not withstand the force of the madly clawing and tearing of the golden dragon that was a rank above it.

Due to the distance between the two super rank creatures, the green dragon was unable to find an opening to retreat and utilize its powerful magic attacks. Because the two dragons were tearing each other so intensely, Celt couldn't even stand firmly on the green dragon's back, let alone release any attacks.

“Despicable human! I've warned you already. You will pay the price!” The golden dragon let out a roar of insanity. With a swing of his shining golden tail, the miserable green dragon was thrown back.

The green dragon was already woozy and flew straight downwards onto a distant hill. The huge body looked like a green ribbon, rapidly falling amidst its howling.

The giant silver ape remained in his hiding place, its blood red pupils stared fixedly at the descending green dragon. Waiting until the green dragon had almost hit the ground, the fur on its body suddenly stood erect

as it made a beeline towards the hill like a bolt of silver lightning.

Rumble...

The green dragon's massive body smashed into the hill, flattening the ten meter tall hill and making a rumbling sound that shook the ground.

The golden dragon was dripping with blood and created a rain of red liquid. He stretched out a bit in the skies, bringing his iron hook-like claws down upon the caterwauling green dragon below.

The injured green dragon spat out several green puffs of dragon's breath with a strange sour stench. The golden dragon hadn't completely dived down and suddenly staggered like a drunkard, changing directions upon coming into contact with the dragon's breath. He now landed on a small hill ten meters away from the green dragon.

A silver bolt of lightning abruptly shot out from the shrubbery. The giant silver ape used his sharp, knife-like claws to assault the green dragon in the golden dragon's stead. His two claws proved to be incredibly sharp as nearly half of his arms penetrated the green dragon's body.

"Aowuuu... Aowuuu..."

This strike was obviously very painful for the green dragon to deal with. Its huge body thrashed violently, destroying all the trees in the surrounding radius of dozens meters. The giant silver ape also rolled together with the green dragon, since his two claws were still within the latter's body.

However, the toughness of the giant silver ape's body was astonishing. He immediately pulled out his claws when he reacted. His entire body transforming into a silver bolt, he aimed right at the green dragon's eyes, trying to blind it before slowly torturing it to death.

Whoosh!

A silver dragonlance suddenly stabbed forwards, nailing the giant silver ape in the chest with an audible sound. The madly charging ape was hindered by the dragonlance's blow. He let out a shrill, raging howl, and swung his claws fiercely, slicing the lance into two pieces. Only the tip of

the spear was still stuck in his chest.

“Damnable beast! Even you want to seek undue advantages!” Celt casually threw away the broken pieces of the lance and slowly pulled out a strange looking sword.

A cold presence suddenly started spreading along the blade as soon as the sword was drawn. Ripples of starlight orbited the sword before spreading outwards. Celt pointed the sword point at the silver ape. His silver fighting aura instantly fused with the starlight, shooting straight towards the giant silver ape with raging momentum.

Han Shuo was still hiding surreptitiously nearby. Upon seeing Celt raise the sword, Han Shuo’s consciousness immediately sensed an infinite, starry presence that shook his very being. He instantly knew that the sword was absolutely extraordinary. Otherwise, it wouldn’t have possessed such an enormous, exotic hidden atmosphere.

The naturally ferocious giant silver ape also felt the same boundless presence, especially when the starlight merged with the silver fighting aura. A mysterious, horrifyingly dangerous feeling of the unknown descended, along with a small galaxy that had been created from the fusion of the two forces.

However, the giant silver ape was so close to getting the magical core of the green dragon, as the latter was slowly dying after being heavily injured. The green dragon only needed a single strike to finish it off. Upon seeing the silver fighting aura twinkling with countless starlights drawing near, the giant silver ape blinked his blood red eyes, as if hesitating whether or not he should take the risk.

Suddenly, the giant silver ape’s savage eyes shone brightly. The giant silver ape moved as quick as lightning, attempting to dodge the starry silver fighting aura, while killing Celt and excavating the green dragon’s magic beast core in one swift move.

“It won’t be that easy to escape!” Celt sneered. He twisted the sword in his hand slightly, suddenly changing the direction of the starry fighting aura in mid-air. It continued to shoot at the giant silver ape’s back at an

extremely fast pace.

A tragic roar emitted from the giant silver ape's mouth. The starry fighting aura bore more than a dozen bloody holes into his back, each hole overflowing with blood.

"Greedy beast, how does the divine weapon 'Starry Sky' taste? You want some more?" Celt stood upright on the back of the green dragon as he laughed heartily at the giant silver ape.

Divine weapon "Starry Sky"! Han Shuo was shocked. He'd initially intended to take this opportunity to make his move, but once again had to restrain himself. Han Shuo looked at the "Starry Sky" in the sky rider's grasp. He understood that Celt being able to injure that tyrannical giant silver ape was all thanks to the strength of the divine weapon.

The giant silver ape's bloodshot eyes stared fixedly at the divine artifact in Celt's hand. He could feel waves of vast cosmic power pulsing from the weapon.

Fear gradually crept into the giant silver ape. He let out two low growls and slowly retreated. His speed had been extremely fast just now, yet the divine weapon "Starry Sky" had still been able to hit him. The giant silver ape possessed extremely high intelligence. He didn't dare to run with his injured back facing Celt, even if his heart was now filled with the desire to avoid the latter.

"Despicable human, I shall tear you to pieces!"

At this moment, the golden dragon approached with a roar. He'd transformed into a middle-aged man with a twisted expression as he rushed towards Celt.

Evidently, the golden dragon knew that having too large of a body would hold no advantage over Celt and would instead make him an easier target for the latter. Therefore, he switched over to his human form to continue his attacks. As his roar rang out, a golden light shot towards Celt. The giant silver ape, who'd been about to dodge, quickly darted towards the green dragon like a flash of lightning upon seeing the golden dragon furiously engage in battle with Celt.



However, he'd yet to reach the green dragon when the latter suddenly let out a tragic scream. The giant silver ape landed in front of the green dragon, only to find that a big hole had been drilled out of the latter's head.

A person shrouded in a black magic shield had harvested the green dragon's core, eyes, and horn.

"Heh heh, my bad. Everything from the green dragon will belong to me. I advise you to best mind your own business." Han Shuo laughed heartily as he collected the trophies while wielding the Demonslayer Edge wreathed in a dense blood light.

The giant silver ape was about to disregard everything and draw closer, when he suddenly felt the endless murderous intent emitting from the Demonslayer Edge. There seemed to be tens of thousands of innocent souls crying and screaming from it, instantly ready to drown anyone who dared to come close.

Since the divine artifact "Starry Sky" had left a dozen bloody holes in the giant silver ape's back, the latter had developed an instinctive fear for strange weapons. Not to mention that the surge of murderous intent that exuded from the Demonslayer Edge wasn't as natural and peaceful like the "Starry Sky", but an infinite, brutal atmosphere of death and killing.

To the giant silver ape, the threat from this kind of atmosphere was even greater than that of "Starry Sky".

Therefore, the giant silver ape could only watched dumbly as Han Shuo harvested all of the treasures one by one, not daring to take a step forward in his hesitation.

"Uraka!"

Celt was still entangled with the golden dragon when he heard the shrill, ghastly screams full of grievances. It seemed that he had very deep feelings for the green dragon. The latter's tragic death was a huge blow to him.

Distraction was an enormous taboo in a fight. Celt's distraction gave the

golden dragon an opening as the latter flattened Celt's sturdy armor. Celt retreated hurriedly as he had been injured, two streaks of blood flowing from the corners of his mouth. He coldly looked at Han Shuo, who stood above the green dragon's head, and let out a low shout, "Whoever you are, I will make your life worse than death!"

As his words sounded out, Celt screamed out with all of his resentment and grief before turning to escape. He knew that he couldn't hold any advantage against three enemies from all sides, even with the "Starry Sky" in his hand. Particularly for Han Shuo, whose appearance was hidden, Celt couldn't predict this new enemy's strength at all. Therefore, he had to flee despite the unwillingness that filled his heart.

"If the weeds aren't pulled out from their roots, they'll grow back at spring's breeze. Since it's like that, don't blame me for being ruthless!" Having finished excavating all of the treasures from the green dragon's body, Han Shuo spontaneously mumbled before turning to the salivating giant silver ape, "The rest is for you!"

A beam of black light abruptly shot up into the sky. The beam chased Celt together with the golden dragon, intending to take advantage of Celt's injuries to finish him off, as to not leave behind endless trouble.

After Han Shuo left, the giant silver ape let out a low growl and instantly jumped on the green dragon's corpse. He started eating the dragon's meat and brain. Even though these things weren't as nutritious as the core, they would still increase the giant silver ape's strength by a little bit.

Celt fled in Kassel's direction. He would never have expected that so many experts were lurking deep within the Dark Forest. He and the green dragon should have been unimpeded. In the end, the green dragon was miserably dead, whilst Celt was heavily wounded.

To him, the lofty commander of the Redbud Knights, this was simply an unacceptable fact. He'd dominated the Continent for many years and had rarely experienced the taste of failure. He was truly angered right now. Etching the figure enveloped in that black halo into his mind as he escaped, Celt was already planning about how to use the power of the

Redbud Knights to catch the person who killed Uraka and slice him into a million pieces.

“Despicable human, let’s fight to the death!” The golden dragon’s loud roar carried along the path. He was determined to kill Celt, but it was a pity that his body was no longer able to bear the injuries that he had taken. Not only were his roars becoming much weaker, but his speed gradually slowed and his mind grew dizzy due to the profound loss of blood.

If he hadn’t been the strongest member of the golden dragon tribe, he would’ve collapsed long ago. For him to be able to hold on until now made him truly worthy of the title of strongest amongst the dragon race.

“Since you wish to die reptile, then I shall fulfill your wish!” Celt had run a distance. Upon seeing that the golden dragon was becoming increasingly weaker but still chased him, Celt couldn’t help but screech to a stop due to his extremely bad mood.

“Starry Sky” burst out again with its orbiting brilliant constellations. The starry light spots created a beautiful luster amidst the silver fighting aura. The vast celestial presence once again spread out slowly to encompass the incoming golden dragon.

Last time, the golden dragon had assaulted Celt so suddenly that he simply hadn’t given the latter any time to use his divine weapon. The golden dragon had taken advantage of Celt’s distraction to strike him. Now that the divine artifact had displayed its full power, the golden dragon suddenly became somber upon seeing the galaxy spread out.

However, it was too late to dodge. The golden dragon was flying forward at a speed so fast that it was difficult to stop. He could only utilize all of his power to barely change direction, attempting to clear the area that was shrouded in the starry fighting aura.

A sharp, shrill whistle suddenly rang out at this moment. A streak of black light zigzagged like a snake to suddenly appear a dozen meters away in front of Celt.

Celt had been looking coldly at the heavily injured golden dragon when

he suddenly saw the sharp tip of the black light rapidly closing in on him. Frightened out of his wits, Celt hastily withdrew the starry fighting aura. The fighting aura that'd been shooting at the golden dragon once again made a miraculous 180 degree turn to shoot straight at the black light instead.

# Chapter 323: Leaving behind an ear

Crackle... pop...

The starry nebulae, which dotted the fighting aura, transformed into a dark ray, fusing with the Demonslayer Edge. The formerly black and matte Demonslayer Edge suddenly exploded with a pillar of bloody light, the fearsome killing intent condensing into clouds of bloody mist, with thin, red lightning crackling within.

The divine weapon in Celt's hand, "Starry Sky", suddenly flew out from his hand, abruptly landing in the glow of clustered nebulae within the blood cloud. With little spots of cold light flaring from its body, it continuously clashed with the bloodthirsty Demonslayer Edge.

The two battling weapons gave off an aura of violence. Within the multicolored light, increasingly loud explosions echoed, causing nearby plants and animals to be knocked over by the sounds before the undulations spreading towards other areas.

Han Shuo remained hidden in the dark, feeling all of his magical yuan surging towards the wild Demonslayer Edge. The greatly worried Han Shuo immediately sat down cross-legged, circulating his magical yuan as he tried to provide more power for the Demonslayer Edge to utilize.

Celt moaned painfully, his veins popping out of his forehead. The fighting aura in his body ravaged his wounds as it continually circulated, causing Celt to spit out another mouthful of blood.

The golden dragon had originally thought that it would be impossible to escape. He was unable to react for a moment when he saw the starry fighting aura engage in combat with a blood-red weapon. The dragon sat, staring distractedly at the light strewn skies, slowly starting to feel that the blood-red weapon looked a bit familiar.

"It's that man, that lunatic!" After staring for a while, the golden dragon finally remembered and cried out in surprise.

"Rumble..."

The sky rumbled as if there were thunder, with the sound of a large explosion ripping past. Rays of light crisscrossed through the magnificent sky, and the divine weapon "Starry Sky" turned tail and retreated back towards Celt.

Celt was actually kneeling on the ground at this very moment. It looked like he'd expended too much fighting aura in too short an amount of time. He was quivering like a leaf seeming to be suffering from an epileptic fit. The blood flowing from the corners of his mouth became white foam; he looked like he could collapse at any moment.

"I will kill you!" The golden dragon finally found his opportunity. Not thinking carefully about why Han Shuo had appeared, he madly charged towards Celt.

Celt could barely stand. He had been weakened to a critical point. Seeing the blood-covered golden dragon charging towards him, Celt used his trembling hands to throw out a magical scroll. The lifesaving scroll transformed into a mass of silver light, wrapping around Celt, and releasing strong magical pulses.

"Crap. It's another priceless spatial magic scroll!" Han Shuo cursed under his breath, his attention calmly focused as he manipulated the Demonslayer Edge that was flying straight towards Celt's neck.

Consumed by the flash of dazzling light, Celt let out a mournful screech. Large undulations rippled through the area, as if it had been ripped in half. By the time it calmed down, Celt's body had vanished without a trace, only leaving left ear on the ground.

When the golden dragon arrived, the only thing he found was Celt's left ear. He didn't find anything else apart from this. Even Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge had been recalled into his body after that single strike.

"Kill me! I just hope that after you kill me, you'll also kill off that despicable human!" Standing at the place where Celt once stood, the golden dragon reached out and picked up Celt's ear, shouting at his surroundings while stuffing it into his mouth.

In the Dark Forest, strength determined everything. In the cruel Dark

Forest, the strongest gained everything, while the weakest didn't even have the right to live. Such were the rules tacitly agreed upon between the super-ranked magical beasts and the humans.

The golden dragon had reached its weakest point now. Without a space magic scroll to save its life, and having already witnessed Han Shuo's unfeeling ferocity, it correctly predicted that Han Shuo would treat him as another animal of prey and kill him. This was why he had said these words.

"Celt's loss of an ear won't affect his strength at all. This time, he only exhausted his fighting aura and sustained a few injuries. When I was fighting with him, not only did he recognize my weapon, but he also managed to perceive my presence. I've already detected that Celt's has met up with the Redbud Knights. We now have a common enemy, so I think killing you wouldn't be the wisest idea."

Han Shuo slowly walked out of the shade and spoke calmly to the golden dragon. Seeing that the golden dragon had become quiet, Han Shuo continued to speak: "Besides, I feel like you're a dragon whom I should befriend. I highly admire your bravery and dedication. As such, I feel that making a friend like you is far more valuable than your magical beast core."

"Thank you. You have won the respect and friendship of me, the golden dragon Sidrick!" As per the etiquette of the dragon race, golden dragon Sidrick expressed the highest level of respect towards Han Shuo.

"Sidrick, I feel that your best course of action right now is to properly tend to your wounds. That despicable knight called Celt will definitely not let us off after regrouping with the Redbud Knights. However, the Dark Forest is very large, so it shouldn't be a problem for the two of us to disappear. On the contrary, their group is large and easy to discover. When your wounds have healed, we can work together to deal with them."

This golden dragon trembled every time he tried to speak. Han Shuo could see that he would collapse at a moment's notice. Since that was the case, Han Shuo had offered this thought to Sidrick after mulling the

situation over.

“I shall return to my race. After I recover a bit, I’ll bring my fellow dragon warriors and kill every one of those despicable ambushers who dared to offend me.” The golden dragon vowed solemnly. He then respectfully spoke to Han Shuo once more, “There is a Dragon Valley located in the deepest parts of the Dark Forest. In the future, be it you or your sons and descendants, if you ever need me, Sidrick, you can always come to the Dragon Valley to find me.”

“I apologize, I really can’t endure it any longer. I’ll be taking my leave now.”

As if he were afraid of Han Shuo reneging on his promise, Sidrick managed to force out a friendly smile after saying these words. He transformed back into his draconic form, flying towards the deepest recesses of the Dark Forest. It seemed like his injuries really weren’t light; he probably wouldn’t be able to recover any time soon.

Mature dragons of the dragon race would usually leave the Dragon Valley and occupy a mountain or a river, gradually building their wealth over the long course of their evolution. Some dragons preferred to live alone, while others preferred to live in groups. Han Shuo had learned a little about the Dragon Valley from some of the Dark Mantle’s intelligence reports, but had never gone there to explore himself.

The golden dragon Sidrick had actually come from the Dragon Valley! It seems like his influence wasn’t something to sneeze at. The reason why Han Shuo had let Sidrick go was because he wanted to use the dragon’s power against Celt, though he would never have thought that he had come from the Dragon Valley. Han Shuo thought that since Sidrick had been able to leave alive, if Celt didn’t quickly leave the Dark Forest and a group of dragons from the Dragon Valley found him, then one of the continent’s ten great troop of knights, the Redbud Knights, would vanish forever.

With the commander of the Redbud Knights lying injured, along with the disappearance of fire grand magus Marceau, this time’s plan of looting



of the underground world would likely be seriously delayed.

After following the trail of and discovering the Redbud Knights, Han Shuo discovered that the Redbud Knights had been prevented from making good time. Everyone was frantically converging on the central tent, tending to Celt's injuries. The central tent was surrounded by rows of knights, with a few powerful mages setting up magic boundaries in the vicinity. Han Shuo hid in the shadows, observing them, realizing that it was impossible to assassinate Celt at this time.

Even the ground beneath Celt had become as hard as steel due to the effects of the boundaries. When the earth elite zombie returned after failing to penetrate the enchantment, Han Shuo immediately gave up on this idea. Seeing the Redbud Knights set up camp, seemingly wanting to bring Celt's injuries under control first, Han Shuo understood that their planned raid on the underworld would be suspended until further notice.

After observing for a bit longer, Han Shuo spotted the traitor druid Kassel returning without any accomplishments, both his hands were empty and his face held an expression full of ire. It was obvious that he had failed to catch Cecilia and Emily. Only after seeing this did Han Shuo truly relax. He didn't stick around, flying straight towards the Cemetery of Death.

Han Shuo spent a night resting at the Cemetery of Death, then used the transportation matrix the next day to return to the city lord's residence in Brettel City.

Walking out from the secret chamber in the city lord's residence, Han Shuo was deeply moved by the profoundness of magic. Yesterday, he'd been thousands of kilometers away in the Dark Forest, struggling for his life. He'd appeared here after using the transportation matrix, skipping a long journey and arriving with a thought. Even the technologically unparalleled Earth couldn't accomplish this, but this magic and martial skill wielding Profound Continent could.

After leaving Brettel City for a couple of days, Han Shuo suddenly remembered his prisoner, Helen Tina. He happened to recall that Helen

Tina hadn't eaten anything for two days. The secret prison in the city lord's residence had never really been used to lock people up. After Han Shuo tied up Helen Tina and threw her in there, he hadn't even told anyone about her. As such, he believed that nobody had brought her any food.

Han Shuo rushed towards the prison to take a look when he remembered. He found Helen Tina, with a pale complexion and sallow cheeks, belly deflating and rumbling continuously, as if there was a bird constantly calling. Sure enough, Helen Tina had been starved pretty badly over these two days. Had Han Shuo returned any later, it was likely that this enchanting beauty would have starved to death.

# Chapter 324: Blackmail

“De...demon, just kill me! No need to humiliate me like this!” The weakly starving beauty spoke in a weak voice upon seeing Han Shuo approach. She wanted to put on a fierce front, but didn’t have the slightest bit of energy to do so, even just talking alone had exhausted all of her strength.

“Eh... I’m very sorry. These past two days I had to go out for something, but forgot to instruct my people to bring you food.” This time Han Shuo was genuinely embarrassed this time. He explained with all sincerity as he looked at Helen Tina.

Helen Tina had been barely able to mouth a few words. When she heard Han Shuo explain, she pointed her finger at him, her pale lips trembling as if wanting to say something. However, whether she was too hungry or angry, she actually fainted without another word.

“Aii, mages are truly fragile, unable to hold up after two days of hunger.” Seeing Helen Tina fall unconscious, Han Shuo spoke with a sigh and involuntarily shook his head.

He’d forgotten that last time along the way he’d brought Helen Tina back, he’d only let her eat one meal during those two days. She’d been locked up in Brettel City for two more days, meaning it’d been four days in total since Han Shuo had captured her. For Helen Tina, who’d eaten only one meal on the way here, for her to still be alive, her body was already much better than that of an ordinary mage’s.

Han Shuo hauled Helen Tina up and carried her out of the cell. He handed her over to the two maids in the city lord’s mansion with the following instructions, “Prepare some food for her. Wait until she recovers before putting her back into the cell.”

The two maids looked at Helen Tina’s pale face in shock, then turned to Han Shuo with a strange gaze before withdrawing with the unconscious Helen Tina in trepidation.

When they’d completely cleared the room, the two foolish maids started chattering in a low voice as they thought that Han Shuo couldn’t hear

them talk.

“Two days! The city lord disappeared for two days! I can’t believe that he ravaged a beautiful woman until she’s this weak. The city lord is really a brutal, perverted evil demon!!

“Mm... two days in a row! How could the city lord hold up? No wonder he could kill all of those hateful bandits. His endurance is terrifying!”

“Aii. Poor woman, she must have been so devastated, being ravaged for two days!”

“Yeah, you see how she haggard she is. I can’t believe she’s become like this in just two days!”

The two maids whispered as they went. Han Shuo’s sensitive hearing having involuntarily caught all of their conversation. He was torn between laughter and tears, his eyelashes constantly trembling. Han Shuo wanted to explain but didn’t know where to start.

After roughly half an hour, Faulke arrived along with Dick and Chester after hearing the news. The three stood before Han Shuo, looking at him somewhat strangely. Faulke was a true knight so he didn’t say anything. The one in charge of the Dark Mantle here, Dick, was a subordinate so he kept silent all the same.

However, Chester had long been familiar with Han Shuo, so he had no reservations between the two. He complimented with a slight smile upon arriving, “My lord is really intense alright! I only knew about your powerful martial skills before. Only now do I know that not only your martial art is superb, your other aspect is even more terrifying. Two days, my gosh, two days in a row. This little one has no words to describe my admiration for you!”

Faulke and Dick seemed to share the same thought as they nodded solemnly at Chester’s words. The good-for-nothing Dick even exclaimed with a deep sigh, “Comparisons really will be the death of people, ai! I utterly concede!”

Han Shuo’s brows jumped constantly at their words. He suppressed his

anger, before opening his mouth to explain to his so-called three subordinates, “The truth isn’t like what you’ve imagined. Don’t listen to the drivel of those servants. I only left that prisoner hungry for two days. You guys shouldn’t think nonsense.”

The three dirty minded fellows didn’t believe a word. However, as subordinates, they naturally understood the need to maintain some dignity in the surface. Therefore, they earnestly nodded, admitting that they had misunderstood, saying that the lord wasn’t that kind of person. But their eyes was filled with envy and admiration. They obviously didn’t believe Han Shuo’s explanation.

“This woman is Grand Duke Helen Tina of the Helon Duchy. Has anyone come to negotiate with you guys for her release over the past two days?” Seeing the three refused to believe him, Han Shuo had to reveal Helen Tina’s identity, inwardly wondering if they would believe him now.

“What? My lord, you actually dared to eat even Grand Duke Helen of the Helon Duchy!” Chester blurted out without thought.

Faulke and Dick’s expression abruptly changed. Dick was especially solemn as he said loudly, “My lord, we’re in big trouble this time! I think Brettel City will face crazy retaliation from two other grand duchies. Once people know that this poisonous beauty is in your hands, many from the seven grand duchies will become interested in Brettel City again.”

“There’ll naturally be a solution for any troubles that come. What are you afraid of? If the seven grand duchies dare to come, they will be just in time to taste our magic crystal cannons. All six magic crystal cannons have been installed at the city’s wall. Any duchy that wants to invade the Brettel City will have to pay with their blood.” Faulke was indeed obsessed with battle. He coldly snorted with an air of arrogance.

Stopping for a bit, Faulke suddenly thought of something as his expression somewhat changed. He turned to speak to Han Shuo, “But if the seven grand duchies attack repeatedly, our supply of magic crystal ores will be far from enough. Once it’s not enough for our operations, it’s simply impossible to resist the attacks from the seven grand duchies with

the Brettel City's current defenses."

Magic crystal ores were formed by nature. They could be used for refining various magic equipment, and were needed in some transportation matrices as well as magic weapons. Magic crystal ores were different from creatures cores. The energy within the former couldn't be directly absorbed by human or beasts, and could only be used via tools. As for the creatures cores, the majority of them could be directly absorbed by magic creatures, while a few could be absorbed by human who had the same kind of element. Therefore, creatures cores were more valuable than magic crystal ores.

Even though creature cores were more precious, most of them couldn't be used as a source to operate transportation matrices or magic crystal cannons. Magic crystal ores were needed to run magic crystal cannons.

"It looks like we need to pay attention to the harvest of magic crystal ores in the underground world!" Han Shuo's mind spun quickly with the information about the different uses of creature cores and magic crystal ores as he whispered to himself.

"My lord is truly a man of courage. You knew full well that she was Helen Tina yet still dared to lock and ravage her for two whole days! I'm in awe of your spirit that is fearless of any pressure or threat!" Dick exclaimed sincerely.

It looked like these three perverts had determined that Han Shuo had nailed Helen Tina no matter what he said. Han Shuo was too lazy to say anything else in the end. He turned to give orders to Faulke, "Use all of the gold coins I brought back defending of Brettel City. I will make the people of Helon Duchy ransom a million gold coins for Helen Tina. If they come, report to me."

Han Shuo no longer pay any heed to the flattery of these three perverts after he gave his orders. He returned to his room in the mansion, waiting for the two maids to bring Helen Tina back. The two maids slowly brought the weak looking Helen Tina to Han Shuo's room after half an hour.

Helen Tina's mental strength had been confined, while she herself had

been left hungry for quite a long time. She probably wouldn't even be able to beat a maid in her current state. It was simply impossible for her to escape from the city lord's mansion. Helen Tina put all thoughts of escape to rest and meekly let the two maids lead her.

Helen Tina's face now had some color to it after eating some food and drinking some water. She didn't need to lean on the two maids anymore. Her bright eyes full of hatred as she glared at Han Shuo, her gentle voice instantly ringing out curses, "You crude, despicable necromancer, I can't believe you dared to treat me like that! Even if you are an insidious, evil necromancer, you should know that abusing prisoners deserves everyone's spittle!"

"My lord, if you have no other orders, we will be taking our leave now." The two maids turned their eyes away and lifted their heads to look at Han Shuo with fear. One of them pleaded in a low voice.

The two maids were already regarding Han Shuo as an abusive pervert in their hearts. Their voices trembled, eyes looking at him full of fear, like lambs facing a wolf.

"Go. Speak no more nonsense from now on!" Han Shuo swept a cold glance at the two maids as he spoke frostily.

The two maids were so scared that they went soft at the knees, trembling as they nodded in agreement. Neither of them dared to lift their heads. After a while, seeing as Han Shuo had no intention to punish them, the two maids left the room in shock and fear.

This time they left without daring to say a word. It seems Han Shuo's deterrence had begun to take effect.

Waiting until the two maids left, Han Shuo opened his mouth to speak to the furious Helen Tina, "My apologies that you were starved for two days because of my negligence. But I really didn't do it on purpose, I truly only forgot."

Han Shuo took out her space ring and handed it back before carrying on, "Alright, I've returned your space ring to you. I think this kind of situation won't happen again next time."

Helen Tina's pretty eyes glared bitterly at Han Shuo, uncontrollable hatred still remaining on her face after she recovered her space ring. However, she obviously understood that she had no capital to make a fuss since she was a prisoner. After rolling her eyes at Han Shuo for a while, Helen Tina finally let out a light sigh and said in a soft tone, "If you think you can use me to threaten the Helon Duchy, I think your wish won't be fulfilled. Four days have passed already. The Helon Duchy likely hasn't sent anyone with a million gold coins for my release. How about this, my space ring still has four hundred thousand gold coins. If you release me, I'll give you these gold coins, alright?"

Han Shuo sat there on the chair, stroking his chin as he stared fixedly at Helen Tina. He opened his mouth after a bit of pondering. "Don't worry. I'll wait for some more time and see how it goes. If it's really as you've said, I can discuss conditions with you again."

"No. If I don't return to the Helon Duchy in a short period of time, it will definitely fall into civil strife. As time drags on, it'll be useless for me to return to the Helon Duchy anymore." Helen Tina's tone became urgent as she immediately responded.

"That has nothing to do with me. You are the grand duke of Helon Duchy, you're absolutely worth a million gold coins. Heh heh, four hundred thousand gold coins is really a bit too little. I'll be taking a huge loss if I just simply let you go like that! I don't care if your duchy has civil unrest. Will corpses pile up everywhere just because of civil strife? Don't expect to leave my place without handing over a million gold coins." Crossing his legs and leisurely looking at Helen Tina's urgent posture, Han Shuo slowly replied with a smile.

"You, you demon from hell! The six magic crystal cannons is worth a million gold coins! Is your greed truly that bottomless?" Helen Tina's face flushed red in fury. Her body staggered as if she wanted to fall down in a faint.

"The longer the time is dragged out, the more it'll be detrimental for you. I see you obviously don't have enough gold coins on you. I'm not an unreasonable person either. Mm, how about this, write me a note. Bring



the remaining six hundred thousand gold coins to me within three months after you return to your duchy.” Han Shuo squinted at Helen Tina, waiting until she vented all of her rage before opening his mouth to speak one more.

“You greedy pig, you’ll get what’s coming to you!!” Helen Tina screamed in fury.

“Alright then, you can just keep screaming here and wait for your Helon Duchy fall into chaos. Heh heh, I have something to attend to and won’t keep you company!” Han Shuo stood up calmly, seemingly not taking Helen Tina’s screaming in his eyes as he leisurely walked to the door.

“You evil demon, greedy evil demon. I’ll agree, I’ll agree!” The noisy Helen Tina finally yielded and screamed hysterically when Han Shuo had almost walked out the door.

“Isn’t it good to agree early? Your body is so weak, screaming loudly is not good for your health!” Han Shuo laughed heartily. He promptly took out a contract, making Helen Tina finger print and sign it, finally placing down a magical brand.

# Chapter 325: Lack of manpower

The clouds were a fiery red in the sunset, refreshing gentle breezes blowing happily through people's hearts. All of the potholes and scars in Brettel City had been fixed during this period of reparation.

The main city gates had two huge magic crystal cannons stationed at them. They shone a faint red halo under the sunset, seemingly ready to spit out enormous flames at any moment.

Helen Tina was currently standing in front of the city gates after having been forced to sign the contract. She looked up at the two magic crystal cannons that'd originally belonged to her, unsure what to feel. Han Shuo stood on the city's walls, smiling merrily as he held the contract aloft and waved goodbye, "Dear honorable Duke Helen Tina, we won't be seeing you off."

Helen Tina inwardly gave eighteen generations of Han Shuo's ancestors a good cursing. However, she was worried that rebellion that could break out any time in her Helon Duchy. Having recovered her mental strength, she slowly floated up using levitation skills. Her shining eyes glared fiercely at Han Shuo as she gritted her teeth and lowered her voice, "Greedy evil demon, I'll definitely be back for revenge!"

"Have a safe journey. Remember that you have to pay back the gold coins you owe me in three months!" Han Shuo beamed radiantly, waving the contract in his hand as if telling Helen Tina not to try to weasel her way out of her debt.

"Hmph!" Helen Tina turned her head angrily. She transformed into a fiery shadow, slowly flying towards the direction of Helon Duchy. The fiery shadow looked like a rainbow across the horizon beneath the sunset.

"My Lord is truly too evil. Not only did he take this poisonous beauty, he even exorted a huge amount of gold coins. Truly eating people down to the bones!" Chester shook his head emotionally, his eyes looking at Han Shuo full of worship.

"I didn't think Helen Tina was this beautiful, no wonder Benedict of the

Narsen Duchy is so obsessed with her. A pity, ah, a pity. He definitely wouldn't expect that our lord was one step ahead to pluck this flower!" Dick chuckled at the pain of others, making malicious speculations about how ugly the situation would be after Benedict learned of this.

"Your Lordship, I think that with her malevolence, Helen Tina definitely won't be willing to let this go after she leaves. Hmph, if she spreads the news about our Brettel City extorting four hundred thousand gold coins from her, I think it will give rise the greed of the seven grand duchies." Faulke approached Han Shuo, saying worriedly as he watched Helen Tina depart.

Han Shuo looked at the red clouds spread throughout the sky, silently frowning for a bit. He then casted his eyes at the blurry outlines of the mountain ranges around Brettel City. He told Dick, "Dick, send people to the surrounding mountains, ask the leaders of the mountain people to pay a visit to Brettel City. Just tell them that I invite them for a meal."

"My lord, because the former city lords were all incompetent and mediocre leaders, they couldn't help the mountain people resist the bandits. So the mountain people have never harbored any good impression, let alone respect, for the city lord. I can pass the news to them, but I'm afraid that they won't come out of contempt." Dick revealed a difficult expression and explained to Han Shuo after some hesitation.

"Now is different from the past. Fulkin of Mount Tali will come for certain. If he informs the others beforehand, the other leaders will know of our strength. I think they'll be willing to come, heh heh. The past is the past, the present is the present. The entire Brettel City is my territory, they are all my people. If these people really can't tell good from bad, then I will make them know how to respect a city lord." Han Shuo said to Dick in a neither fast nor slow manner.

Nodding his head, Dick promised, "Alright then, I will definitely notify them."

Dick was also a mountain man. He had already had contact and even secretly maintained a good relationship with the people in the

surrounding mountains before Han Shuo had arrived in Brettel City. He'd had no hope in Han Shuo originally. Now that he'd witnessed the knowledge, power, as well as the schemes of the latter, Dick understood that his stubborn people would definitely eat a bitter loss if they provoked Han Shuo.

Therefore, Dick was determined to persuade those stubborn fellows to come as soon as he heard Han Shuo's words. He didn't want any of those people to die at the hands of Han Shuo's undead army.

After Dick left, Han Shuo said to Faulke, "Use the gold coins we have to arm and power up the entire city with everything we've got. War chariots, catapults, oil, goblin missiles, etc. As for equipment, I have entrusted some merchant guilds to transport them here. What you have to do is tell the masons to reinforce any fragile areas of the city's walls. Make it taller in areas where it isn't tall enough."

"Your lordship, the craftsmen have already increased their overtime to do these things. What we lack the most now are soldiers with sufficient combat effectiveness. Brettel City has suffered through many battles with devastating effects from fire. The total population in our city is only fifty thousand or so, this is really miserably few compared to some big cities of millions. The number of young people is even fewer. We have been conscripting men through providing enormous temptation in recent periods, but have only recruited two hundred or so. The number of our people is far from enough!"

"Brettel City is so big that it's simply impossible to protect all four gates with only roughly three thousand soldiers in the city. Even if we have strong firepower, we still need people to operate it! If the problem of the population can't be resolved, I think Brettel City will still remain in this half dead atmosphere." Faulke was indeed a knight who'd been tempered by the fires of war. He only took one glance to point out what the city lacked the most, which was also its current biggest weakness.

This was truly a difficult problem. Han Shuo also knew that what Brettel City lacked the most was people, but he didn't have a proper method to solve it. Brettel City had always been in the midst of war and had become

a hell on earth due to the number of departing citizens throughout so many years. Even ordinary citizens of other cities might not be willing to migrate to the Brettel City, not to mention the natives who had left

The first thing Han Shuo could do now was secure the safety of the city before gradually turning to expansion of other aspects. He then could slowly attract people from other cities to inhabit Brettel City through good security conditions that are beneficial to their development.

However, this wouldn't be an overnight process, it required quite a long transition period. At least, the pillaging and threats from the seven grand duchies had to be halted before the Brettel City could slowly prove to outsiders that it was safe. Only then would fear and panic be dispelled.

"Mhm, I know this is indeed our biggest problem. We temporarily have no way to attract new residents. However, as long as we can stop the pillaging of the seven grand duchies and spread the news that the Brettel City is safe, some original inhabitants missing their hometown might be willing to come back. We will tackle this problem from multiple angles. I think Brettel City will be much more bustling sooner or later."

"First, about the lack of staff and soldiers, we can start from the mountain people in the surrounding mountains. This is why I've invited them to the city. I heard from Dick that there are thirty, forty thousand of them, of which around ten thousand have the ability to fight. If we can firmly grasp and use this force, in addition to being equipped with six advanced magic crystal cannons and a sturdy city wall, our odds of successfully blocking the invasions of the seven grand duchies will be much higher." Han Shuo had considered this issue early on. He explained himself leisurely regarding why he'd invited the mountain people.

"If my lord has made careful considerations already, then I will say no more. On the other hand, young master Lawrence will soon send over several talents who are knowledgeable in city and financial management. The military of Brettel City is also getting on track." Faulke said respectfully.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo said noncommittally, "Mm, for the time

being these things are under your arrangements.”

At the present, there were hundreds of things are waiting to be done in Brettel City. All kinds of talents were greatly lacking. Lawrence's arrangements of talented military and political personnel would indeed play an important role. However, since they were arranged by Lawrence, it would be difficult to remove them once these military and political talents officially took control.

If this situation was left to develop as it would, if Han Shuo still continued to use Lawrence's people, then this subconscious infiltration would slowly turn Brettel City into Lawrence's territory. Han Shuo was now much more mature than in the past and understood clearly this drawback clearly. Unfortunately, he didn't have any of his own people to use at the moment. He also temporarily couldn't identify if Lawrence's help was out of good intentions or other purposes. What Han Shuo currently lacked the most was manpower, so he could only leave things as they were.

However, Han Shuo had started thinking for the future and was seriously considering using his own trusted people. Be it developing or discovering these people, neither were simple matter. He slowly walked to his room with this idea in mind.

Staying in the city lord's mansion for two days, Han Shuo monitored the progress of enhancing the city's defense facilities during the day, and tirelessly practicing demonic cultivation and necromancy magic at night. However, breakthroughs in cultivation became harder the more he progressed, and there weren't many gains to be had in his boring regular day to day practices. On the other hand, since his mental strength was at the grand magus rank, his grasp over necromancy magic actually made rapid progress.

Therefore, Han Shuo put more effort into studying necromancy magic. Using the secret chamber in the city lord's mansion, he could easily transport to the Cemetery of Death – the most perfect training grounds for necromancers. Not only the scent of death here dense, this place even had plenty of magic tools and laboratory. Han Shuo stayed here alone

every night and captured some live magic beasts to practice the spell “Soul Tremor”.

For a demonic practitioner at the separate demon realm like Han Shuo, their soul had become the even more mysterious consciousness which possessed some truly wondrous uses. Based on his study of the soul, in addition to his memory of demonic magic, Han Shuo gradually felt that there was a link between the understanding of the soul in necromancy and the changes in the consciousness in his demonic cultivation.

Especially at this realm, the consciousness had miraculous abilities to sense the presence of all creatures in the surroundings, to create illusions and implant magical brands on the soul, and seemed to be able to communicate with the magic elements that existed everywhere in this world. Han Shuo suddenly had a whim to consider if it was also possible to integrate demonic cultivation and magical training so they could complement each other.

However, this wonderful idea was still extremely difficult to implement with Han Shuo’s current situation because his knowledge had yet to reach true proficiency in any field. There would be a long process of exploration if he wanted to master the two aspects. It seemed this wouldn’t be able to be applied for a short while.

This spell “Soul Tremor” used the consciousness to attack the opponent’s soul. Han Shuo had experimented it on living magic creatures over the past two days. Moreover, he had certain reflections in some areas of using the mind to attack, gradually grasping some key parts of this spell in two days.

Han Shuo walked out from the Cemetery of Death on the third day. Bathing under the warm sunshine, he felt a very leisurely pleasure. While he was checking on the progress of the city, Dick ran out from an unknown location to Han Shuo’s side and said respectfully, “My Lord, I have sent out the invitations according to your orders. The five mountain leaders on the surrounding mountains all agreed to come to Brettel City seven days later.”

Smiling lightly, Han Shuo looked at Dick deeply before finally saying, “Dick, you are also a mountain man. I know that you wouldn’t let me down if I placed this in your charge.”

“But of course. Otherwise, with your methods, all the leaders who didn’t come with definitely meet with some accidents. I didn’t want to become the villain of my people.” Dick thought inwardly, his expression still respectful as he said smilingly, “My Lord has gained the mountain people’s trust after you exterminated the Red Beard bandits. I think they’ll be coming here with hearts full of hope.”

“Perhaps with more fear than not, haha!” Han Shuo laughed heartily with Dick. How could he not know what these people wanted to do? Dick had said all that needed to be said, and so they naturally knew what to do.

“Eh... They actually are a bit afraid. Heh heh!” Dick answered with a laugh. He looked into Han Shuo’s eyes and felt as if the latter knew the thoughts in his mind. Dick involuntarily felt scared in his heart.



# Chapter 326: Somewhat tricky

Frantic hoofsteps resounded, approaching swiftly from the distance. Han Shuo was atop the city wall to oversee the construction progress when he saw Commander Knight Faulke anxiously charge over on the back of a warhorse.

Flying off of his horse, Faulke ran all the way to the foot of the city wall where Han Shuo was standing. Panting heavily, he looked up at the latter, “Your Lordship, the caravan transporting the war chariots and other equipment from Seamist City has been robbed by several bandit groups. They say they will only release the merchants and goods if we pay them fifty thousand gold coins.”

The bandit groups along the road from Seamist City to Brettel City weren’t large in scale. Han Shuo had ordered this equipment from some of Phebe’s merchant guild contacts. Not only had he reminded them to be careful of the bandits on the way, he even had Faulke send people along to escort the convoy. These small bandit groups certainly shouldn’t have had the guts to make a move. Han Shuo’s face darkened when he heard the news from Faulke, “You say that several bandit groups allied up to make a move?”

Faulke’s expression was quite ugly as he answered with a nod, “That’s right. One bandit group alone definitely wouldn’t dare to do something like this. However, five bandit groups banded together this time. The guards of the caravan simply couldn’t hold up against them. Your Lordship, these damnable bandits are seeking death. I’ll immediately lead the knights in the city to exterminate them all!”

“Wait!” Han Shuo shouted to stop Faulke’s impulsive action. He thought for a bit before asking, “Our purchase of war chariots and equipment this time, how many people knew about this?”

“The soldiers who were to escort the goods all knew. Why, My Lord?” Faulke was confused, not knowing why Han Shuo had suddenly mentioned this.

Han Shuo asked with a cold snort, "How could it be a coincidence that these bandits knew which day the caravan would arrive? How come they suddenly banded together and even dared demand a ransom after robbing the caravan? Can't you see how abnormal this is?"

Faulke was in shock after these words rang out. He shouted, "My Lord, you are saying that there may be spies among our people?!"

"Not maybe, but for certain!" Han Shuo suddenly shouted loudly, "I will not pursue your negligence of duty for now. You have half a day to find the spies and execute them! On the other hand, don't just accept anyone in the next recruitment drive. Kick out all of those whose backgrounds aren't clean!"

"Yes, My Lord!" Faulke replied loudly. His face was icy as he leapt on a horse and quickly rode off.

Since this matter had been his duty, he wouldn't absolve himself of responsibility from such a big incident no matter what. Lawrence had made it clear that his life and death would be up to Han Shuo when he stepped foot in Brettel City. Having witnessed Han Shuo's powerful strength, Faulke knew full well that this city lord was definitely not the benevolent, lenient sort. Faulke cursed that traitor while quickly thinking of a way to catch him.

An hour later, three hundred bulky knights in shining armor were neatly lined up in a wide marble square in front of the city lord's mansion, in accordance with Faulke's commands. If one overlooked his negligence of duty at the moment, judging from their posture and presence, Faulker's training had indeed produced knights with the demeanor of a knight regiment. This indeed showed the capabilities of Faulke as a superior knight officer.

Han Shuo sat in the city lord's mansion, not caring what methods Faulke would use to find the spies. He was pondering how to eradicate these bandits and clear the path from Seamist City to Brettel City as soon as possible.

Han Shuo had placed all of his attention on the possibility that the seven

grand duchies would muster up a raiding force at any moment. However, he'd forgotten about the large and small bandit groups along this trip. There were more than a dozen forces, either small-scaled bandit groups with over a hundred members, or bands with only a dozen members who didn't even warrant a mention. These groups scurried messily around Brettel City and the seven grand duchies all the time. They weren't on the same level as the large groups with thousands of bandits.

After killing Troda last time, Han Shuo had thought that these petty bandits wouldn't dare act rashly, so he hadn't paid them any heed. He hadn't expected them to stab a knife into his back at such a crucial moment, robbing a hundred thousand gold coins worth of battle equipment. This birthed a killing intent so fierce in Han Shuo, he wanted to exterminate them from the world.

The road between Brettel City and Seamist City was the most important channel that connected Brettel City to the Lancelot Empire. If Brettel City wanted to develop, then there were no words that could describe the importance of this road. If immigrants were robbed before they could even reach Brettel City, no one would dare to settle down there no matter how eloquent Han Shuo was.

"They're asking for it. It's not that I didn't want to give them a chance to live!" Han Shuo had cleared up his thinking, and his fingers subconsciously tapped on the chair armrest as he spoke resolutely.

Faulke didn't failed to live up to Han Shuo's trust. He only took two hours to find the spies. Han Shuo didn't actually see who they were, but he could hear mournful, hair-raising wail after wail echoing from outside the city lord's mansion.

The scalp-tingling, tragic screams only lasted for a bit before petering out. Five minutes later, Faulke walked in, filled with trepidation. He humbly paid his respects to Han Shuo and said in a low voice, "Sir Count, I have neglected my duties."

Straightening his somewhat lazy posture, Han Shuo indifferently swept a sharp glance at Faulke and asked, "Got something out of the

interrogation?”

Nodding his head, Faulke answered, “A total of three new recruits. All of them are infiltrators from the surrounding bandit groups. Because their bodies were strong and we were lacking people, I didn’t investigate them carefully and let them join our knight regiment. It was all my negligence! I ask Your Lordship for your punishment!”

It was as Faulke said, Brettel City was utilizing every person to the extreme. Talents like Faulke who could train soldiers were truly too scarce. Faulke’s temporary carelessness could be considered negligence of duty, but Han Shuo had no candidate for his replacement.

Han Shuo was silent for a bit before saying with a cold harrumph, “I will take note of this for now. If you can contribute achievements to redeem your mistake when we exterminate the bandits, I will overlook your negligence this time.”

Faulke nodded heavily. He solemnly struck a ceremonial posture and said in a loud voice, “Rest assured Sir Count! This kind of thing shall never happen again. None of the bandits involved in this robbery will escape! I give you my word as a knight.”

“Very well. Assemble a hundred knights. We are going to visit their lair and see if they have the qualifications to take fifty thousand gold coins from my hands.” Han Shuo narrowed his eyes and stood up. Faulke could clearly sense the thick killing intent radiating from his body. He understood that the bandits who had acted in such a wanton manner would be paying a painful price soon enough.

Night fell. A moonless night, the pitch black sky was like a canvas smeared with a dense, thick layer of ink, reducing line of sight to a bare minimum. Torches burned brightly as they headed in a direction where the air was humid and wild weeds grew.

A dozen huge rafts were lining up on a long river shaped like a willow leaf. Many strong sturdy men stood on these rafts, their hands also holding torches. The noisy sound of an argument echoed out from these people.

Faulke rode a warhorse, a torch in his hand. He frowned at the bandits on the rafts on the distant small river and scolded in a low voice, "Cunning bandits, they unexpectedly chose this place for the transaction. This makes things a bit difficult."

This place was very far from Brettel City and simply wasn't anywhere between Seamist City and Brettel City. Instead, it was in the area connecting Brettel City to the seven grand duchies.

Last time Han Shuo had caught Helen Tina, it had been precisely at this river where he'd transported the six magic crystal cannons back to Brettel City. However, because the six cannons were so heavy, it had taken him two days to return from this place. This time, Han Shuo's group that solely consisted of knights, took only half a day to arrive here at night to meet the deadline.

It was undeniable that these bandits had picked a good place this time. Once they took the fifty thousand gold coins, they would be able to quickly get away using the rafts. Han Shuo's group were all knights, simply unable to pursue them on this small river. When they notified Han Shuo of the place the transaction was to take place, it was already too late for the latter to make preparations. They had involuntarily fallen into a passive state.

"This group of bandits really isn't simple. They've arranged everything properly and even took the advantage from us. They can easily escape on the rafts after taking the gold coins. The knights can't pursue them. It seems we have encountered some difficult to handle bandits." Han Shuo looked at the flashing lights of the bandits before him and spoke to Faulke.

"Sir Count, how should we handle this? Even if you're a necromancer, the dark creatures can't make a move in the water." Faulke spoke worriedly to Han Shuo. He was ready to redeem his mistake with all of his enthusiasm, intending to make a big move this time.

"There are some light mages on their side. It seems these bandits have been planning this for a long time. These light mages must have been

arranged specially for me. Could it be that this matter isn't so simple? That there are people secretly plotting against us?" Han Shuo's voice was soft, but surprised. The yin demon he'd secretly released had caught sight of two low ranked light mages.

There was a light journeyman mage and a light adept mage. These ranks of light mages had limited influence against high rank creatures like evil knights. However, even a middle level holy light spell could cause considerable damage to the gargoyles.

Therefore, Han Shuo immediately became cautious upon seeing the two light mages. He waved his arm at Faulke, "Halt for now. Let's me ascertain the situation first. If this is a trap, we'll immediately retreat."

Han Shuo was left with only one yin demon now. His observation was no longer as speedy as before, and he had no way of covering everything at the scene. He'd started to consider whether he should spend a while in closed door training to refine the higher rank mystical demon.

Circling around the rafts on the river, the yin demon indeed discovered the war equipment that Han Shuo had procured, and even Fabian and Jack of Boozt Merchant Guild among them. The bandits had tied them up tightly and placed two glinting steel knives against their necks. Their faces looked wan and forlorn, obviously having been immensely frightened.

There were a dozen merchants as well as thirty or so guards from other merchant guilds tightly tied up beside Fabian and Jack. The bandits surrounded and watched them closely.

After winning the gamble against Cameron, the Boozt Merchant Guild had naturally become the richest merchant guild in the empire. Cameron had fallen into a slump and lost the trust of his merchant guild. The Boozt Merchant Guild had taken advantage of the situation to develop, gradually becoming the most active amongst the major merchant guilds.

The war equipment Han Shuo had purchased was being transported by Boozt along with several other merchant guilds. If they didn't have a good first experience, it would negatively affect their impressions of Brettel City. Cooperation would be difficult to continue from then on.

Therefore, it was not just Fabian and Jack, the safety of these merchants and guards were equally important. If their safety wasn't guaranteed, the subsequent fall out would be hard to make up for, even if the bandits were all killed. Han Shuo had a major headache just looking at the strict security of the bandits.

"Dorcus, what should we do next?" A crude looking burly man over two meters tall, obviously the leader of these bandits, was currently asking a young man sitting on the raft. This young man had a resolute face, his eyes burning with wild ambition.

This young man was dressed in the clothes of a minor bandit lackey, with a height of nearly one meter ninety centimeters. He stood tall, like a straight pole that never bend nor break, and the vividly colored bandit outfit couldn't hide the wild light of ambition in his eyes. This young man was named Dorcus. He glanced at the bandit leader and said confidently, "Rest assured. I've made careful preparations beforehand. That I didn't let you kill these captives will make them apprehensive, not to mention we also hold the advantage with the rafts on this small river. We even used a large amount of money to recruit two light mages who can stop the assault of gargoyles. This plan is absolutely safe, they have no other choice but to bring the money."

"Dorcus, the civilian genius of the Imperial Academy of Strategy. So it's him. No wonder!" Han Shuo murmured upon hearing the two's conversation through the yin demon, who was circling around the young man.

# Chapter 327: A talented person

The nature of the Lancelot Imperial Academy was different from that of the Babylon Academy. Lancelot Imperial Academy was an academy that groomed talented strategists, with magicians, swordsmen, and knights not within its scope. Similar to all other schools on the Profound Continent, it was always nobles who held the important positions within the Imperial Academy.

There were several reasons for why so many talented nobles came to be. The first reason being that the astronomical costs associated with attending such an Academy caused ordinary civilians to back down. The other reason was that, even if a civilian managed to enroll in the Imperial Academy, they would find it extremely difficult to find a good teacher who could teach them systemically about military affairs

However, nothing was ever set in stone. The Imperial Academy would still occasionally see one or two civilian students. These civilians would still manage to reveal their talents, even under such unfavorable conditions; they were so brilliant that they managed to steal the limelight from the other students of noble descent.

In such an academy, unparalleled geniuses would receive a multitude of offers from the greatest of teachers, guaranteeing their success. As long as these talented civilian teenagers appeared docile and clever, there would always be talent-seeking nobles and generals who would attempt to recruit them.

Of course, there were also a few wild and unruly civilian teenagers who didn't know to conceal their brilliance, which angered their fellow noble students. In the worst case scenario, they would be killed by their fellow students out of jealousy, or if their luck permitted, their careers would be obstructed, losing their chance to join the military.

Dorcas was exactly this kind of unlucky genius. The young Dorcas had once been unsurpassed in the Imperial Academy, but he'd become too haughty and didn't conceal his talent, falling in love with an earl's



daughter. This made the girl's father and her fiancé's family very angry indeed.

The end result was that Dorcas had been groundlessly accused of crimes. Not only was he expelled from the Imperial Academy, but he was also hunted down by the two families, and almost lost his life. He had been forced to become a fugitive.

This had happened about a year ago. The Dark Mantle's records had details of this incident, and Han Shuo had also read through this intelligence when he'd exercised his rights in the Dark Mantle headquarters. It had left a deep impression on him, and he hadn't thought that he'd be able to meet this civilian military genius here.

Dorcas was standing on a wooden raft. His once haughty face was now a bit more melancholy due to the bitter experiences he had faced. He stood straight and looked off into the distance. He turned his head and said to that bandit leader, "Captain, the people holding torches should be those from Brettel City. After we acquire the 50,000 gold coins, we should refrain from appearing in the vicinity of that city. The city lord named Bryan isn't an easy person to deal with! If we don't leave quickly enough, not only will we have to give up the gold coins, but even our lives will be forfeit!"

"Don't worry. I'm not stupid enough to stay behind and let the people who killed Redbeard Troda surround me. Heh heh, let Laxi and the rest experience the rage of these people. Ten thousand gold coins is enough for us to live comfortably for quite a while." This bandit leader wasn't a fool. He cackled, and expressed his satisfaction that, after a lifetime of small jobs, he was able to split ten thousand gold coins for their efforts.

Han Shuo had seen everything through the eyes of the yin demon. He took a careful look at the raft that Jack and the others were on, before turning to Faulke and saying, "Hand the carts with the gold coins over to them, we cannot lose a single merchant."

"Sir count, are we really just going to submit to them just like this? We've already prepared many ways to counter them!" Faulke said

anxiously upon hearing that Han Shuo intended to hand over the money without a fight, trying and failing to suppress his doubts.

“The Imperial Academy genius, Dorcas, is out there. If we are to go through with original plan we created, then we would be at a complete disadvantage. Water lies in the distance, we won’t have an opportunity to act without them harming the merchants. We should give them the gold coins first as ransom for the merchants and war equipment. We can discuss the matter of annihilating the bandits after they arrive safely back in our hands.”

Before they’d arrived, Han Shuo had planned to have the earth elite zombie strike out in an ambush. Had they been in the forest, then the wood elite zombie would be able to quickly ensure the safety of the merchants. Unfortunately, the cunning Dorcas had chosen the middle of a river as their place of transaction. Han Shuo had no other option since the water elite zombie had yet to finish developing.

“Alright, I’ll go now!” Faulk nodded his head. He didn’t have a better idea either. He mounted his horse and rode forward, opening his mouth and shouting, “Carry the boxes with the gold coins next to the river, we’re going to make the trade with the bandits.”

Han Shuo had purposely filled one box with gold coins and not crystal cards. The original plan had been to dump the box filled with gold coins amongst the bandits. The suspicions of the allied bandits would surely explode and result in a fight over the gold coins. As such, the earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie would be able to ambush them.

Now that Han Shuo and the others were in a passive position, they naturally could not force this scenario. When the clinking of gold coins sounded out, the bandits drew near on their wooden rafts, with those behind them raising their bows, taking aim at the knights on the shore. The bandits in the front slowly pushed the merchants and equipment to a more shallow location along the riverbanks.

Dorcas was indeed cautious enough, never allowing the rafts to wash ashore. The merchants and the battle wagons all waded to the banks a

close distance away, not providing Han Shuo's side with a single chance to act.

After a case of gold coins were hauled aboard a raft by two bandits, a loud cheer arose from amongst the ranks of the bandits. The arrogant bandits laughed excitedly, with many leaders praising that the Imperial Academy's Dorcas, saying that he was very able indeed.

Ducas, responsible for the scheme, did not smile. His expression from start to finish was one of gloomy remoteness. Under the cheering of the bandits, his eyes held a hint of hesitation, as if this arguably perfect plan was a disgrace.

Amongst the excited clamor, the bandits were taking advantage of the fact that the raft was slowly floating away to suddenly extinguish all the torches in their hands when they were 50 meters away from Han Shuo and the others. The bandits ceased their mad laughter under the berating of their leaders. The moonless night was pitch black. Having lost their light and sound, no one could clearly see what path they were taking when they were 50 meters out, the only exception being Han Shuo.

These bandits didn't cross the river and disembark, but instead paddled along with the river, making use of the current. Dorcas shook his head at the bandits, who were silent but were squirming around with all sorts of weird postures to convey their excitement. He sighed inwardly, not knowing if it was right to use these bandits to exact his revenge, but now that he was considered a fugitive, unless he carried out the disgraceful actions of becoming a traitor to the Empire and seeking asylum in another country, who else could help him sate his desire for revenge?

Ai. He was someone who'd been born and raised in the Lancelot Empire in the end. No matter what, he couldn't become a lifelong traitor with unforgivable crimes. Being a bandit was vastly preferable to being a traitor hated by everyone in the Lancelot Empire, right?

"Faulke, escort them back. We're still some distance away from the city, so don't have any mishaps." Han Shuo's vision was likewise affected in the inky night. He'd had nearly lost sight of the wooden rafts that were slowly

floating away. When the merchants and war weapons had all clambered ashore, Han Shuo hurriedly turned to Faulke and gave his orders.

“Sir Count, are we not going to hunt and slaughter those rotten bandits?” Faulke asked, looking at him confusedly.

“If you safely escort this equipment and the merchants back to the city, I’ll forget about your previous negligence. Remember, the area outside of Brettel City still isn’t safe. Make sure you don’t overlook anything again!” Han Shuo was thinking of the constant threat from the seven grand duchies, as well as the larger bandit groups wandering between the duchies and Brettel City. He gravely warned Faulke to be careful.

Faulke’s goal this time was to redeem himself through meritorious acts. It was because he was constantly thinking about this that he’d lost his usual cool-headedness during this extraction mission. He immediately came to his senses after hearing Han Shuo’s warnings and realized that he had become too obsessed. He calmly said, “Rest assured Sir Count, I will definitely ensure their safety and bring them back to the city.”

Seeing that Faulke’s eyes had regained their calm, Han Shuo relaxed. He knew that Faulke had recovered from his urgent desire of redeeming himself. He patted Faulke on the shoulder, and said in a gratified manner, “Be careful!”

He left nimbly like a light wind after speaking. Han Shuo’s figure quickly flashed out of sight in the pitch black night. Faulke and the others didn’t know what Han Shuo was planning to do.

“You lot, use your warhorses to pull the carts. You over there, dismount and give the merchants your horses. Hurry up, we need to take advantage of this darkness to return to the city. Stay sharp. We’re all going to be in for it if something happens...” Faulke began loudly giving orders after Han Shuo disappeared. The knights that Faulke brought quickly executed his orders, organizing the merchants and tying up the battle wagons and other materials, slowly making their way back to Brettel City.

Dorcas was standing on a wooden raft, his gloomy face flickering between red and white with the lights of the torches. He looked at some of

the bandits busily splitting a chest full of gold coins in the next raft over. He asked with awful timing, “That matter that you promised me... when are you going to do it?”

“Relax, Dorcas! As long as you help us with a few more of these ‘business transactions’, and we earn enough gold coins to grow strong from recruits, even hiring soldiers and wiping the dukedom off the map won’t even be a problem then!”

A bandit leader amongst them casually fobbed off Dorcas’s inquiry. He turned to another leader beside him, smiling lecherously, “Tuca, we’ll soon bring our brothers to the Full Spring Garden brothel to play. These gold coins are enough for us to play for a while! Heh heh, our brothers have always wanted to go and try it out. Unfortunately, those refugees from Brettel City didn’t have much on them... we didn’t really earn much in all these years. Now that we finally have money, we should thoroughly enjoy it!”

“I like your suggestion, Laxi. Haha, let’s go together!” Bandit leader Tuca laughed and rubbed his chin. He chatted knowingly about the smaller bandit groups with them, the smaller ones comprised of 70-80 bandits, and the larger ones around 200. They specialized in robbing refuges between Brettel City and Seamist City. They had no ambition or great accomplishments to their name at all. Otherwise they would have gone and raided Brettel City long ago. These people didn’t plan on upgrading their subordinates’ weapons and armor after earning these gold coins, but instead harbored thoughts of enjoying their lives to the fullest. They didn’t appear to give a damn about the promise they’d made to Dorcas.

Dorcas, a student of the Imperial Academy, wasn’t an outstanding swordsman or knight. He’d spent all his time studying military strategy and tactical skills. Even though he was 1.9 meters tall, his strength wasn’t strong at all. To these crude and uncivilized bandits, this kind of weak strategist, who didn’t pose a threat to them and was able to scheme and create plans for them, was very handy indeed. They weren’t in a hurry to help him exact revenge at all.

“You guys promised me that you would help me take revenge after we

got the gold coins!” Dorcas stared at the bandit leaders, who were unrestrainedly talking about which girl’s breasts were the largest, and which girl’s asses were the plumpest. Dorcas’ muffled voice carrying over the water.

“The most important thing is to let the brothers rest and have a hell of a time after working so hard for so long. Dorcas, let’s talk about this matter later. I’ll help you find a girl to thoroughly enjoy. She’ll definitely be a lot more worth it than that little noble girl you like, haha!” Even the leader that Dorcas was following was also laughing heartily without any cares, completely setting aside his promises to Dorcas.

“Aha, we’re here!” Once we get ashore and walk for a bit, we’ll arrive at the Narsen Duchy’s Tulian Town! The girls in the Full Spring Garden are awaiting us!” Laxi excitedly laughed, instructing his subordinates, “Hurry up! Stop the rafts, your boss will take you to have some fun!”

Dorcas wore an unsightly expression. He resented these untrustworthy bandits, but he knew that his own strength was limited. He was angry to the point of erupting, but he didn’t have any other choice. He could only stare at the bandits who were disembarking the rafts one by one, walking happily towards the Full Spring Garden in Tulian Town.

“My friends who have so graciously taken my fifty thousand gold coins, I’ve been waiting a long time for you!” Suddenly, the silence of the night was broken by the sound of a young man laughing. The silhouette of an extremely large person gradually appeared beneath the flickering light of the bandits’ torches, blocking their way.

# Chapter 328: I will be your hunting hound!

The extremely tall figure was gradually revealed beneath the illumination of the torches as the mocking laughter rang out. It was a handsome, young man with a strange and evil smile. The young man was around a meter and ninety something centimeters tall. When he stood there, he was like an unsheathed sword, giving people an intense visual impact.

An azure warrior uniform emphasized his refined physique. His mouth showed a faint smile that gave off an aura of playfulness, like an eagle in the sky planning to toy with a rabbit that was frantically running away on the ground. He seemed both confident and at ease.

The frightened bandits hurriedly looked around when the young man revealed himself, as if they thought that there were more people behind the young man, which caused their nervousness and wariness to peak.

“Stop looking around. There’s only me!” Han Shuo explained with a faint smile, then stopped looking at the bandit leader that clearly let out a sigh of relief. He merely set his gaze on Dorcas, who was standing stiffly amongst the crowd, and asked, “Do you think these bandits, who only know how to enjoy themselves and are unable to achieve anything, will be able to help you to exact revenge?”

Dorcas revealed an indifferent expression. Then after a moment of silence, he looked at Han Shuo, “That is none of your business. You came for the fifty thousand gold coins, right?”

Han Shuo shook his head with a smile, then continued to fix his gaze on Dorcas, while saying dashingly, “No, fifty thousand gold coins might be a huge amount of money in the eyes of these bandits, but not in mine. The reason I followed you guys was not for the fifty thousand gold coins, but for you, Dorcas!”

Dorcas had a sudden change in expression and stared hatefully at Han Shuo, as if wishing to firmly commit Han Shuo’s appearance to memory. Then he smiled sadly, “I hadn’t that the two families would still have the

desire to come after me after so much time had passed. I never would have thought that I would be worth so much. Ha!”

“Stop the bullshit. You’re just a single man and you dare to block our path. You’re just seeking death!” Laxie, the bandit leader, wanted to hurry along to the Full Spring Garden. He suddenly roared loudly after confirming that Han Shuo was indeed alone, unable to suppress the urgency in his heart.

The other bandit leaders all agreed after hearing Laxie’s roar. It seems like their lust had caused them to be unable to withstand the situation any longer. Under the orders of the bandit leaders, their underlings, equally urgent, quickly surrounded Han Shuo while wielding worthless weapons.

Han Shuo had a smile on his face from the start. He was completely indifferent towards the actions of these bandits, who only thirsted for the smooth skin of women. He continued to gaze at Dorcas and shook his head slightly. He finally decided to explain upon seeing Dorcas’ confused expression, “You might be both worthless and a hot potato to others, but you are worth far more than fifty thousand gold coins to me. I will explain to you in detail later, after I clean up these bandits. Then, I’ll take my time to discuss with you your true value.

“Prideful fellow, you are asking for death!” Laxie gazed at Han Shuo with rage. He waved his hands and shouted, “Kill him! He’s definitely that evil necromancer. Close in on him and don’t give him the chance to chant any spells.”

“Aha, he is the new city lord of Brettel City! Just look at that space ring on his hand. He’s definitely a fat target!. Brothers, take the space ring for me, I can already imagine the wealth within the space ring!” Bandit leader Tuca cawed weirdly in excitement. He raised the broad, double-edged battle axe in his hands and stared greedily at the space ring on Han Shuo’s finger.

“Dong... Dong dong...”

Just as the bandit underlings were about to tear Han Shuo to shreds, the sound of dull footsteps suddenly rang out.



“What’s that?!” Laxie’s messy eyebrows tensed, becoming two irregular triangles as he looked around and asked loudly.

The underlings had been about to make a move, but looked around in confusion when they heard Laxie’s shout.

“Dong... Dong dong... Dong dong dong...”

As the dull footsteps neared, several branches with sparse leaves began to shake, notifying these third rate bandits that even the ground was slightly shaking. However, even if they had a torch, the distance that the torch could illuminate was still very limited on this pitch dark night. This was why the bandits could only hear increasingly loud footsteps drawing closer to them, but they were unable to see what it was no matter how hard they looked around.

“That, my friends, is the sound that the metal hooves of the fire-spurting steeds of the evil knights make. Everyone, no need to look around, you’re all doomed!” Han Shuo suddenly explained with a smile in the midst of being surrounded by the bandits.

“Damn it, he already summoned his undead creatures! Kill him immediately! As long as he dies, the undead creatures won’t be too much of a threat without his orders!” The light adept mage, who had been hired by the bandits with a lot of gold, quickly exclaimed as he lost his calm.

The bandit leaders were frightened and unsure of what to do. They all yelled at their underling loudly when they heard the light adept mage’s shout, “You idiots, kill him quickly!”

The underlings swung back into action when they heard their leaders give them the same order to kill. They brandished the weapons in their hands and charged Han Shuo, trying to kill him before the undead creatures arrived.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

Under the flickering red light of the torches, long, thin, black bone spears shot out from Han Shuo. These bone spears flew out with extreme speed and were like rays of life-reaping black light. The unending bone

spears actually seemed to be connected to each together, causing Han Shuo to look like a strange, black peacock with its tail fully opened.

“Ah.. Ahhhh....”

The bandits, who'd charged over, let out a dense series of terrible howls, sounding like firecrackers. When Han Shuo opened his “tail”, the bone spears either easily pierced their armor, which was only worth several silver coins anyways, or penetrated deep into the gaps between their bones or guts, sending blood flying everywhere.

The bone spears didn't diminish in power as they pierced the bandits' bodies. They had enough momentum to even string up the bandit behind the first one, making this sort of tremendous impact truly terrifying.

In the blink of an eye, the roughly thirty bandits that had charged forward had all been fatally pierced by the bone spears amidst their terrible wails. The blood covering the ground became strangely beautiful under the illumination of the torches that had fallen to the ground. The dense smell of blood instantly spread into the noses and mouths of the bandit leaders.

“Not-Not good!” Laxie's lust was gradually extinguished by the bone-piercing cold as he saw Han Shuo slowly rise from the mounds of corpses and blood. An intense flame of fear incinerated everything in his mind.

“Dong dong...”

The dull footsteps pounded on the hearts of every single bandit like beating drums. The “things” that they had only heard but couldn't see, now appeared behind them one by one. These “things” did not have eyes. Instead, their sockets were filled with flickering flames. Under the illumination of their burning eyes, enormous figures gradually appeared from the darkness.

Tuca's lips suddenly became strangely dry. He couldn't even speak smoothly as he muttered softly, “Everyone. T-those are Evil Knights, run!”

The hands of the two light mages trembled as they held their staffs. They had been hired with a lot of gold. However, purifying light magic at

their current level of strength was truly limited. What's more, there were actually more than ten evil knights in front of them. Thanks to the blurry light, their sharp eyesight could see many more shadows behind the evil knights.

These bandits had indeed heard of the rumors that Han Shuo had obliterated the bandit Troda and others at the foot of Mount Tali. However, they'd thought that it had been done by the many soldiers of Brettel City, as well as Fulkin's mountain people.

There was no way that they would have factored the appearance of an archmage necromancer with mental strength on par with a grand magus, as well as a bone staff that doubled the number of summoned undead creatures. Just how many could Han Shuo summon?

"Sorry, we don't want the wages anymore!" The light adept mage turned around and looked towards Dorcas, then said to the other light journeyman mage, "Give them back the gold coins!"

The two light mages poured out roughly a thousand gold coins from their money bags. The adept mage bowed slightly towards Han Shuo in the distance and said in fearful yet respectful tone, "This doesn't have much to do with us. Please allow us to leave."

"You two despicable mages! How dare you actually run away first! I'll kill you myself!" Dorcas' bandit leader roared and then charged at the two light mages who wanted to retreat.

"I don't know why, but I'm starting to dislike light mages more and more. Also, I really hate your actions of defecting at the last minute, I think it's better if you stayed," Han Shuo gazed coldly at the two mages, who only knew how to save their own skin very well, and responded plainly.

Due to the wave of dense bone spears, none of the bandits dared to draw near to Han Shuo. All of them stayed as far away from Han Shuo as they could. However, there was still a large number of undead creatures behind them, so they were still dead no matter how they looked at it.

"Pierce!"

A bandit right next to an evil knight was pierced through by the evil knight's enormous bone spear and hoisted up high. The slaughter began the moment this bandit's corpse hit the floor. The ten evil knights slowly drowned the bandits with endless death along with the roughly thousand different undead creatures.

The night was as dark as ink. The torches began to extinguish as the bandits were killed one by one, and the darkness of the night gradually affected the bandits' vision. However, the undead creatures were like fish in water during the night. They silently slaughtered everything in front of them, not knowing what mercy was.

Dorcas had also revealed a terrified expression when all sorts of terrible howls started ringing out, standing out for his peculiarities as he held the torch amongst the crowd of people. Evil knights and zombies walked past him, as if they didn't know that there was a delicious human body standing beside them. He didn't seem to exist to them as they only slaughtered the living around him.

When the stark straight Dorcas noticed that none of the undead creatures attacked him, the fear in his heart gradually resided. Due to the treachery of the bandit leaders earlier, even though Dorcas had originally been their comrade, he felt a hint of joy as he watched them die.

"Good riddance, good riddance, that scum should have been dealt with ages ago." Dorcas muttered to himself as he looked at the bloody slaughter with indifference.

The two light mages were the first to receive the brunt of the bandits' attack after Han Shuo's merciless refusal. The two light mages, who'd originally been able to threaten the undead creatures a bit, nearly drowned in the furious attacks of the bandits. After the bandits had done away with the light mages, they were then consumed by a wave of undead creatures. As time passed in the pitch dark night, the terrible, unending screams gradually came to a halt.

After a while, only Dorcas, holding a torch with an indifferent expression, was left. There was also a ground covered in corpses apart

from him, as well as a few ghouls munching on the corpses.

“That was a bit gory, but I hope you don’t mind.” Han Shuo floated towards Dorcas with a smile. He didn’t seem gentle at all as he smiled amidst a ground full of corpses. Instead, there was another sort of terror and sinister atmosphere about him. The fact that the ghouls feeding on the ground all left Dorcas’ side when Han Shuo neared only emphasized that all of this horror had resulted from this young man with a strange and evil smile.

Dorcas took in a deep breath and forcefully stopped himself from vomiting. He placed his focus on Han Shuo in an attempt to soften the hideous scene painted around him. “What do you want?”

“Hehe, I know some things about you, and I can also understanding the endless anger in your heart. I want to give you a chance. A chance to release your vengeance,” Han Shuo offered this extremely alluring suggestion with a smile.

This wasn’t something that anyone could bestow on him!

Before Han Shuo displayed the savageness of slaughtering all of the bandits, Dorcas wouldn’t have thought that the lord of Brettel City, someone who’d found it hard to keep himself safe, could give him any sort of chance.

However, Dorcas now had reason to believe that, as long as Han Shuo was willing, the revenge that had seemed impossible to take was nothing difficult in front of this man as savage as a demon.

Due to this, Dorcas only hesitated for a moment before nodding, “As long as you can take revenge for me, I can do anything for you.”

Han Shuo shook his head and said slowly with a smile, “It’s not that I will take revenge for you, it’s you who will take revenge for yourself!”

When Dorcas frowned, Han Shuo explained with a smile, “I will give you the chance to take revenge with your own hands. With your talent, the two families will be dancing in the palm of your hand sooner or later. Hehe, isn’t torturing them to death bit by bit with your own hands much better

than letting someone else kill them?”

The girl that had fallen in love with Dorcas had now become his enemy's plaything. Due to the girl's relationship with Dorcas, her fiancé treated her savagely. The pitiful girl was completely helpless as she washed her face with tears everyday.

Although the girl's family was unhappy about this, there was nothing they could do about it as their daughter was already married. What's more, her husband's family was of a higher position, so her father could only blame all of it on Dorcas. He did not hold back in his pursuit of Dorcas. It could only be said that Dorcas possessed great luck to be able to survive the chase for so long.

The Dark Mantle knew about all this, but in the world where nobles ruled, even though the commoner born Dorcas was shockingly talented in militaristic affairs, it was not enough to change these unwritten rules that had existed for several thousand years.

The Dark Mantle would only kill the nobles that had betrayed the empire. However, nobles occasionally bullying a few peasants wasn't a huge matter. It was even more negligible if the bullied peasant didn't have any backing. The Dark Mantle had countless other things to do. They naturally would not waste their effort on minute matters like these. The fact that they had a note of this in their records was already due to Dorcas' strategic talent. Otherwise, there probably wouldn't even be a record of his name.

“I am a fugitive, how could I possibly use my power to kill my own enemies!” Dorcas was clearly moved by Han Shuo's suggestion. However, since Dorcas had shone with brilliance in the Imperial Academy, he was naturally not a fool. He looked at Han Shuo and asked after pondering for a while.

“Whether you are a fugitive in Brettel City or not is decided by me, the city lord! I know about your identity and hatred. The fact that I dare to accept you means that I am not afraid of your identity as a fugitive,” After saying this with a slight smile, Han Shuo raised a finger and pointed in the

direction of the seven duchies, then said enticingly, "Aside from intense hatred, I can also see arrogant ambition that cannot be concealed in your eyes. Brettel City is a hunting ground for the seven duchies. However, they are also a hunting ground for me. Are you willing to become a hunter like me?"

Dorcas gazed deeply at Han Shuo. After a while, he prostrated himself towards Han Shuo without any regards to the blood on the ground and said solemnly, "Sir Count, I am not a hunter, but I will be your hunting hound!"

# Chapter 329: Friends

The day had yet to brighten completely. In the soft purple and grey glow of dawn, the morning light slowly chased away the darkness in the sky as cool winds gently blew over. The golden sun slowly burst out with a thousand rays of splendor after a while.

Upon their return to Brettel City, Han Shuo and Dorcas were surprised to find that Faulke and the knights had also just arrived. Han Shuo could see traces of battle from their bodies and even see that some had disappeared eternally.

Dorcas rode on a thin, weak horse that had been taken from the bandits as he slowly followed Han Shuo back to Brettel City. Upon entering the city, the first things to greet his eyes were two mighty magic crystal cannons mounted on the city walls. Not only were the previously old broken down walls now shining brightly, their height had also increased. Looking at the city from a distance, Dorcas even felt that Brettel City had recovered a bit of its former prestige and magnificence.

Nodding to himself, Dorcas turned back to look at Han Shuo, who was quickly entering the city with a slightly darkened expression on his face. Dorcas understood that for Brettel City to have changed like this, the credit entirely belonged to this new city lord.

“What happened? Did something happen again? Where are the merchants and the battle equipment?” Han Shuo was like a ghost drifting by. His cold shout, along with the cool winds of early morning, made the still fearful Faulke jump out of his skin.

Hurriedly turning around to see that it was Han Shuo, Faulke heaved a sigh of relief. He hastily straightened his body and explained, “Your Lordship, some small incidents occurred on our way back. Our torches attracted the attention of many bandit groups, but luckily that area was near Mount Tali. Before the bandits could rush over, the mountain leader Fulkin came down to assist us. The merchants and battle equipment are still safe and sound, and only three knights died.”



Han Shuo's heart slowly returned to its proper place upon hearing that the merchants and equipment were all safe. He looked at Faulke with a faint nod and said in a softened tone, "Arrange proper funerals for the knights who've died. Our top mission is to exterminate all of the bandits in the surroundings before the seven grand duchies arrive."

"Rest assured, Your Lordship. I, Faulke, swear to take revenge for our brothers!" Faulke's tone was determined as he took out his sword to point it towards the sky and solemnly make a vow.

Dorcas rode the weak horse over to this side with clapping sounds. He'd taken meticulous looks at the city's defensive measures, contemplation filled his eyes. When he arrived in front of Han Shuo, Dorcas looked at the latter with a measuring look before opening his mouth to propose, "There were seventeen bandit groups between Brettel City and Seamist City. Taking away the five that you annihilated last night, there are still twelve left. The scales of these bandit groups aren't much, but they are as annoying as hateful flies. I think you should exterminate them first. Otherwise the safety of the merchants won't be guaranteed later."

"Your Lordship, are all of those greedy bandits dead?" Faulke queried upon hearing Dorcas' words.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo answered, "That's right. All five bandit groups are finished. Mhm, let me introduce someone to you. This is Dorcas from the Imperial Academy of Strategy. Perhaps you've heard about some of his past deeds. He will be your comrade from now on. No one is allowed to mention his identity as a fugitive in the future."

"Yes, Your Lordship!" Faulke immediately replied, his eyes looking at Dorcas with a hint of admiration. He also didn't ask Han Shuo why Dorcas was joining Brettel City. It had been this person who'd single-handedly planned the robbery and transaction. Dorcas had held the advantage from beginning to end and played with their group in the palm of his hand. Even Han Shuo ultimately had to surrender the fifty thousand gold coins. The intellect of this person was indeed the real deal.

"Take out a thousand knights for Dorcas from the three thousand you're

training. Dorcas will be the captain of that team!" Han Shuo gave Faulke an order before looking over to Dorcas, "Dorcas, wipe out the remaining twelve bandit groups between Brettel City and Seamist City for me!"

Dorcas dismounted from the weak warhorse and saluted Han Shuo with a standard military posture. He said crisply and neatly, "Yes, Your Lordship!"

Nodding his head, Han Shuo once again turned towards Faulke and said, "The equipment for the city's defenses that have just arrived are for you to assemble in the appropriate positions.

Do this well for me during this time, as well as keep an eye on other matters within the city. Prepare to deal with the attacks of the bandits and seven grand duchies at any moment."

"Rest assured, Your Lordship. With this defensive equipment, I will make sure that anyone who dares to come and pillage Brettel City pay with their blood." Faulke promise.

"Mm. Right, what arrangements did you make for the merchants?" Han Shuo asked Faulke, suddenly remembering that he hadn't seen little fatty Jack in a long time, and also Fabian as well.

"I've arranged places for them in the city lord's mansion. Your Lordship's mansion is quite large and is currently the safest place in Brettel City, so I have arranged for the honored merchants to be located there." Faulke answered.

"Well done. I won't pursue your negligence any longer. Dorcas is a new addition to Brettel City, so help him familiarize himself with the city. Also, place a thousand soldiers under his command." Han Shuo gave his orders. He nodded towards Dorcas before leaving the city gates.

Han Shuo appeared in the city lord's mansion after a short while. More than ten merchants had been settled in. These merchants had fallen into a deep sleep, like dead pigs after the big fright. One or two of them occasionally whimpered in their nightmares, their bodies drenching in cold sweat.

Little Jack of the Boozt Merchant Guild was tightly hugging a pillow, the corner of his mouth dripping with saliva in his sleep. Han Shuo soundlessly walked in front of him. He revealed a knowing smile upon seeing Jack's ugly sleeping posture.

Back in the necromancy department at the Babylon Academy, Han Shuo recalled how he and little fatty Jack had swept the ground quickly with brooms. He also remembered when his body had still been weak and his magical cultivation still hadn't taken shape, this little fatty had stolen black bread to feed him. Han Shuo even recalled the time that he fought with other necromancy students...

Separated for more than two years, little fatty Jack actually hadn't changed too much, he was still ever so simple and honest. However, his body was becoming increasingly fatter. It was Han Shuo himself who'd changed the most. During these past two years, Han Shuo had grown from an errand boy to the point where no one dared to look down on him, be it his intelligence or his strength.

Having experienced one dangerous battle after another, Han Shuo's body, mental strength, and magical yuan had developed rapidly. He'd made breakthroughs again and again, many times with his life on the line. And now, he held the titles of count and city lord. As for this little fatty who lusted after food and wealth all day, he was still an accountant for the Boozt Merchant Guild.

"This brat will keep eating and drinking well in the Boozt Merchant Guild and won't have to meet with any danger. Phoebe gives me face and takes special care of him. Although his days aren't as interesting, they're very peaceful!" Han Shuo smiled and murmured as he looked at the drooling, sleeping fatty.

Not waking up little fatty Jack from his deep sleep, Han Shuo stood outside the window to look at him for a while. He then turned to leave, intending to chat later after he woke up.

Han Shuo had just taken a few steps when he heard a sudden, loud cry from inside Fabian's room. He hastily walked into Fabian's room and

found the latter sitting up on the bed, drenched with sweat and a look of fear still lingering on his face. It turned out that he'd had a terrifying nightmare.

Seeing Han Shuo suddenly come in, the newly jolted awake Fabian cried out once again. Only when he discovered that the person who'd come was Han Shuo, did Fabian shut his mouth. He turned to give Han Shuo an ugly smile before saying with a somewhat embarrassed expression, "These past several years with the young miss have been all too peaceful. After encountering such a dangerous incident once again, I've discovered that I'm becoming more and more afraid of death. Maybe I've gotten too old now. I can no longer tolerate dangerous adventures like I used to. I just want to continue my life with quiet, peaceful days!"

Hearing Fabian say so, Han Shuo recalled the first time they met and revealed a relaxed smile. He found himself a chair and sat down, before saying to Fabian, "Such is life. If you want more wealth and a more prominent position, you have to put in more effort and handle greater danger. Heh, it was my carelessness that caused you guys to encounter this kind of incident this time. Fortunately everyone came out unscathed, otherwise I really wouldn't be able to forgive myself!"

Among these people, the merchants had all come here because of the benefits that Han Shuo promised them, apart from Fabian and Jack. If these people died, Han Shuo would only feel pity and immediately find a way to make it up for their guilds, lest their guilds lose their confidence in him.

But for Fabian and Jack, Han Shuo truly cared for them, especially Jack. Jack had been Han Shuo's best friend since when he was still a nobody with nothing. If Jack died because of his carelessness, Han Shuo would never forgive himself. He'd might even blame himself to the point of breaking down in the short run.

Fabian looked at the young man who was over one meter ninety centimeters tall standing before him. He inwardly tried to overlap this person with that thin, weak figure that he'd met for the first time in the Dark Forest. Fabian discovered that he couldn't do so no matter how hard

he tried just based on the change in body size alone.

Time could change everything, so Fabian couldn't help but feel emotional. The older he became, the more timid he grew. However, Han Shuo was the opposite. He'd developed from a youngster to a young man whom no one dared to underestimate.

Han Shuo's power had become increasingly stronger as he slowly revealed himself to be a striking figure in the upper echelons of society. For His Majesty the King to allow Han Shuo to take up the mess that was Brettel City, it absolutely wasn't a poor posting that those unaware were gossiping about. It was actually the tempering for an invincible sword. Fabian looked at the young man in front of him, the look in his eyes deepening as he was unable to understand the latter's inner thoughts. A flash of inspiration suddenly struck him.

"This is the letter that young Miss Phoebe asked me to personally hand to you." Fabian took out an envelope emitting a faint fragrance with a rose printed on it. He respectfully placed it in Han Shuo's hand.

"Alright, old Fabian. You continue to rest. I still need to console the frightened merchants after they wake up! Many industries in Brettel City are awaiting investment. Cooperation with other major merchant guilds will certainly be more intimate from now on. Apart from the current, urgent shortage of weapons and equipment, I also need a steady stream of food and pharmaceuticals. I will be depending on you for all of this." Han Shuo put away the fragrant letter before saying to Fabian with a smile.

"Hehe, with the relationship between you and young Miss Phoebe, the Boozt Merchant Guild will definitely give you our full support." Fabian also understood the two's relationship. He winked at Han Shuo and spoke humorously with a meaningful smile.

"Of course, I won't treat the Boozt Merchant Guild badly either. Eh, your leader Phoebe included!" Han Shuo said smilingly, his face delighted as he left Fabian's room. The open door closed slowly by a wave of force after he left.

"He is getting more and more powerful. Young Miss Phoebe is indeed a

true businesswoman. She knew to invest in him before he even accomplished his great deeds. It seems the Boozt Merchant Guild will definitely bloom and usher in a new era of glory in the hands of young miss!" Fabian whispered thoughtfully to himself as he watched the door close automatically without wind.

"Phoebe, ah Phoebe, I've received your love!" In his room, Han Shuo murmured to himself with a cute smile after reading the fragrant letter.

Brettle City had been bathing in a happy, joyous atmosphere three days later. The center of the city lord's mansion was filled with the sounds of chatter and laughter.

The Food Festival wasn't considered a big festival in the Lancelot Empire. However, Han Shuo was placing great importance on this festival because the merchants had arrived safely. Moreover, he wanted to use them to send some messages.

Rows of tables, that were over ten meters long, were set up in front of the city lord's mansion. Various fine snacks and deliciously aromatic, steaming hot meals came out in turns from the wide open gates of the city lord's mansion. Any civilian in Brettel City was free to enjoy this food to their heart's content.

The civilians coming because of the news took only ten seconds to get past their initial doubts, becoming deliriously happy instead. Knights in shining armor maintained order with a polite, refined manner and smiles on their faces.

Exquisite food had been arranged on a luxurious, round sandalwood table inside the city lord's mansion. Dick had prepared for the merchants who'd escaped death. Fabian, on the other hand, seemed to become a co-host as he helped Han Shuo entertain the guests who came from distant areas. He placed gold coins directly in their hands for the war chariots and equipment that they'd transported.

The merchants' grins grew even wider after they'd received their payment, ceaselessly showering praises upon Han Shuo, who was sporting a refined smile. They declared that this business was just the beginning of

a great partnership, and that whatever Han Shuo needed would be delivered in an endless stream.

“Ladies and gentlemen, everyone...” Han Shuo picked up his glass of fine red wine, his voice resounding loudly throughout the entire audience. The profit seeking merchants were currently overjoyed as they received their payment. Everyone immediately stopped their noisy chattering and smiled as they looked up to see Han Shuo’s dashing figure, waiting for him to continue his speech.

When the hubbub had quieted down, Han Shuo said with a slight smile, “Ladies and gentlemen, this transaction is just the beginning. Brettel City needs a steady stream of goods and resources. The harvest from the mines of the surrounding mountains is also priceless. From now on you will definitely be able to obtain more wealth in this city.”

Pausing for a bit, Han Shuo’s smile disappeared as he raised his voice to speak gravely, “As a city that had been trampled on by bandits and foreign countries for too many years, Brettel City has been through too much hardship and pain. No other city has been through so much agony and humiliation like this city in the Lancelot Empire.”

“His Majesty bestowed upon me Brettel City. I accepted it with a heavy heart and the mission to bring back its prosperity. However, my power alone is limited, but I will create good conditions that are favorable for you, so that you can obtain what you need in Brettel City.”

The merchants weren’t stingy with applause that didn’t cost the anything. After the rain of applause, the not-too-luxurious banquet continued.

Little fatty Jack and Fabian walked over to Han Shuo. Jack looked up at the tall, imposing Han Shuo and said, “Bryan, I don’t want to stay at Ossen City anymore. It’s so boring. Let me stay in Brettel City, I can help you.”

Han Shuo was surprised. He subconsciously raised his glass to clink with Jack’s for a toast. After finishing the glass of fine wine, he spoke unhurriedly after some hesitation, “Jack, only the two of us know how deep our relationship goes. It’s not that I don’t want you to stay here, but

this is a very dangerous place. You will be in constant, life threatening danger. As a friend, I advise you to remain at the Boozt Merchant Guild. That way, at least you will always be safe.”

Jack shook his head, the layers of fat on his face also shaking. He turned to look at the shocked Fabian by his side and said, “The Boozt Merchant Guild is too peaceful. I’m still too young. I’m very grateful to young Miss Phoebe and you for always taking care of me, but Jessica has said that the one she likes must be an experienced knight or a noble. I feel that no matter how much I try, young Miss Phoebe can’t make me a knight or a noble, but maybe you can, Bryan.”

Han Shuo was speechless. He hadn’t expected that because of a lady, the always timid, cowardly little fatty Jack could also grow to possess this dangerous item called “ambition”.



# Chapter 330: Preparing for war

“Jack, are you truly prepared to face the dangers that are to come?” Fabian asked Jack after he let out a long sigh. He could see the same prideful and fearless spirit that he used to have emanating from Jack

Nodding heavily, Jack said stubbornly, “Yes, I’ve made up my mind.”

Seeing that Jack was insistent, Fabian shook his head and didn’t say anything more. He understood in his heart that Jack had finally grown up. Maybe some tempering at Jack’s age wasn’t a bad thing. Not to mention that Fabian knew that Han Shuo would definitely take good care of Jack and never allow his friend to get hurt.

Fabian’s silence meant that he was no longer opposed to the idea. Jack then turned towards Han Shuo, eyes full of expectation. Han Shuo, half a head taller than Jack, stood in front of him and patted him on the shoulder. He said sincerely, “Don’t rush such a decision for now. Stay in Brettel City for a few days. Let me know after you’ve thought things through clearly.”

Brettel City wouldn’t be quite so peaceful over the next few days. Maybe when Jack saw the cruel realities of war for himself, he’d automatically drop this idea, Han Shuo thought to himself.

Han Shuo didn’t continue to talk with Jack about this topic anymore. However, he was rather interested in Jack’s favored girl, Jessica, and he asked all sorts of things about her.

According to Jack’s stammering answers, Han Shuo gained an understanding that the girl named Jessica was the daughter of a small noble. Her father had done some business with the Boozt Merchant Guild and had gotten to know Jack as he’d often visited Boozt. At the moment, Jack’s love was one-sided. He was a mere accountant of the merchant guild, so he naturally couldn’t attract the attention of the noble’s daughter. Not to mention Jack’s chubby body garnered no advantages in his favor.

Jack had also found out about Jessica’s ideal man by use of sly methods to extract this information. In the Profound Continent, where aristocracy

dominated, even Phoebe, the owner of the Boozt Merchant Guild, wasn't accepted by the upper class. How could Jack, a small accountant, be accepted then?

Therefore, Jack now hoped that Han Shuo would help him due to his fanatical love for Jessica and possibly his truly motivated mindset.

The joyous atmosphere lasted throughout the banquet, the guests feeling very much at home. Outside of the city lord's mansion, the civilians, who'd heard the news, were reluctant to disperse and kept on coming. The temptation of free food had exceeded Han Shuo's imagination. The hired servants were busy all day, but still couldn't manage to keep up. This situation dragged on until the sun set behind the mountains and the veil of night was about to shroud the earth. Only upon the knights' friendly persuasion did the crowd of civilians finally disperse.

The previous night had been without a moon. It was conspicuously bright tonight, as if the moon were making up for yesterday's day off. Standing in the highest bell tower of the city lord's mansion, Han Shuo looked over Brettel City, bathed in moonlight. Brettel City was vast as it covered an enormous area. Houses occupied every stretch of land all the way to the city gates in four directions, absolutely able to accommodate millions of inhabitants.

Brettel City had originally been built as a military base from which to attack the seven great duchies. Brettel City was still standing proud even after much vicissitudes and humiliation. Had it not suffered the severe retaliation of the seven great duchies after many failed attempts at conquering them, Brettel City would likely be one of the strongest cities in the Lancelot Empire

A great deal of gold coins had been poured into the renovation of Brettel City. Han Shuo hadn't held back on the heightening and enhancement of the city walls. In addition to the six terrifyingly powerful magic crystal cannons, many war chariots and stone-throwing catapults now filled the originally empty posts along the wall. Various equipment of great firepower had been assembled.

Brettel City had just begun to reveal its fangs starting at an unknown time, like the ferocious, giant war machine it was. After investing millions of gold coins, it was ready to crush all of those arrogant, ambitious invaders that dared to come at a moment's notice.

A brigade of a thousand people gradually made their way back from the direction of Seamist City. This soldier brigade belonged to Dorcas. Their shining weapons and sturdy armor were completely on a different level compared to those of last night. Each sword was worth at least three gold coins, and each set of armor and helmet was worth at least five gold coins as they were forged from the finest of steel.

Moreover, each soldier was equipped with other sharp, dexterous weapons, such as daggers, worth over ten gold coins in value. However, there were soldiers who should have been knights but had temporarily been assigned to the infantry units due to a lack of warhorses. Warhorses were a scarce resource even in the Lancelot Empire. In fact, the seven great duchies were experts in rearing horses. It was a pity that Han Shuo hadn't found a way to purchase from them.

A thousand soldiers riding warhorses advanced orderly towards Brettel City under Dorcas' leadership. These people must have been through many battles, each looked remote with a subtle glint of madness in their eyes. Their armor and weapons had been polished clean, but the bloodstains on their clothes underneath were very obvious.

From the highest point of the city lord's mansion, Han Shuo looked down from above at Dorcas for a while before whispering to himself in satisfaction, "Three days, twelve bandit groups. Out of the thousand soldiers who'd departed, nine hundred and sixty have returned safely. Only forty deaths. Quite a talent indeed!"

Half an hour later, Dorcas had changed into a clean outfit and walked under the moonlight towards the city lord's mansion. Han Shuo received him in the living room.

"Dorcas, very well done. Have all twelve bandit groups been completely destroyed?" Han Shuo looked at the kneeling Dorcas and asked smilingly.

Shaking his head, Dorcas looked up at Han Shuo and said, "Sir Count, there are still over seven hundred that are still alive."

Han Shuo frowned, not yet allowing Dorcas to rise. His finger subconsciously tapped the armrest of his chair. He squinted at Dorcas, asking, "Dorcas. You led a thousand soldiers out. With your methods, you wouldn't have allowed seven hundred bandits to escape, would you?"

Dorcas looked up at Han Shuo, his expression unchanged as he replied, "Sir Count, twelve bandit groups were completely destroyed, all of the obstacles between Seamist and Brettel City have been cleared. Only, your humble servant doesn't think that blind killing is a good way. The crimes of those seven hundred bandits aren't enough to condemn them to death. They were only helpless and forced to commit crimes to survive."

"This servant feels that if your Lordship wants Brettel City to develop as fast as possible, appropriately soft policies are needed, apart from the weapon of wholesale slaughter. The bandits are easy to tame. Once they experience some tempering, they will sincerely submit to you, my Lord. They will also become your fierce and loyal warriors."

Han Shuo was silent for a while after hearing Dorcas' words. He then looked at Dorcas, slowly nodding as he said, "Dorcas, your words aren't wrong. I indeed hadn't considered it carefully. Mhm. If so, then you must have recruited all seven hundred of those bandits, but why don't I see them?"

Nodding his head, Dorcas was still kneeling on one knee as he hadn't received an order to rise. He said respectfully, "That is right. Seven hundred forty two bandits have all submitted and are cleaning up the battlefield as per my order. My Lord, the rotting corpses of refugees are everywhere along the road from Seamist City to Brettel City. This kind of situation is very detrimental to the development of Brettel City, so I've ordered the bandits to clean all of the eyesores from the roadside."

"Very good, Dorcas, that's very thoughtful of you. Mm, right, all of your people have come back. Aren't you afraid that those bandits will run away?" Han Shuo first praised the other before asking skeptically.

“My Lord, you may not know that the life of those bandits isn’t any better than that of the refugees’. I only promised to give them the same treatment as ordinary soldiers in Brettel City, and they agreed without hesitation.” Dorcas replied before pausing for a moment. He took out a big bundle, handing it over to Han Shuo with both hands as he said, “A total of thirty-seven thousand gold coins were found after raiding the twelve bandit groups. There were also, silver, jade, and ores of about several thousands gold coins worth, which the soldiers are now transporting to the warehouse. As for some worthless weapons, I left them in the lair of a bandit group for now as they were too heavy while their value wasn’t very high. I felt that there was no need to bring them back, so left them.”

“Good. Well done. You’ve thought it out very well. Rise. I will record your accomplishment of great merit. As long as you keep this up, you’ll get what you want sooner or later !” Han Shuo looked deeply at Dorcas, saying, “Brettel City is your stage. It seems that you are slowly adapting to your new position. Our Empire has sent the great armies to the seven duchies in the east, but couldn’t dominate them. However, since we’re already standing here, we must seize this chance at all costs to soar to new heights. We shall show those mediocre talents of the Empire, who couldn’t do it, how we do it.”

“Your servant swears to follow you to the end, my Lord!” Dorcas let out a loud shout. He stood up straight before Han Shuo, like another invincible Demonslayer Edge.

“Alright then, you are dismissed. The gold coins are temporarily in your care, consider them the capital for the armor and weapons of the seven hundred new recruits.” Han Shuo signaled Dorcas’ dismissal. After the latter left, Han Shuo fell into silence, musing over Dorcas’ words about tempting the bandits. He felt that there was indeed some truth to his words.

Two days later, early in the morning.

Dick hurriedly came to see Han Shuo with a report, “My Lord, several large bandit groups of the same size as Troda’s group are gathering in a forest over six miles away from Brettel City. I have received this

information from a Dark Mantle member conducting a mission in one of the duchies. I heard that these bandit groups have a total of fifteen thousand people, all are prepared to rush over and furiously pillage our city.”

“It’s about time they came!” Han Shuo coldly snorted then said, “Send some people to keep tabs on their whereabouts. Fifteen thousand bandits? This will be the first real challenge for Brettel City to face!”

“My Lord, do you want to notify the chiefs of the mountain people? It’s too dangerous this time with just the three thousand soldiers guarding Brettel City. The mountain people might be able to help us!” Dick proposed.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo said, “Not for now. This is a test for us. The results of this battle will determine if I can make them dance to my tune in the future. Humph! Even though we only have a little over three thousand soldiers, the walls of Brettel City are no longer tattered like they were before. I’ve spent so many gold coins on Brettel City! Do they think it’s that easy to break?”

Han Shuo dared to say so because he was quite confident. The soldiers could hide on the high city walls and wait at ease for the enemies to exhaust themselves, while using their new equipment such as the great war chariots, fire and stone-throwing catapults to attack downwards. The six magic crystal cannons were no decorations either. In the worst case, Han Shuo could also summon the great undead army to join the fray. He believed that it absolutely wouldn’t be that easy for fifteen thousand bandits to break into the current Brettel City.

The entire Brettel City had unknowingly gone on high alert. Groups of soldiers dragged massive rocks through the streets. However, the war chariots and huge magic crystal cannons that the citizens had grown used to seeing everyday became tightly covered under gray cloth for an unknown reason, as if afraid of being discovered.

The originally indifferent civilians gradually became more interested in this new city lord. In addition to the bandits being annihilated at Mount

Tali, there was also news of the obliteration of a dozen bandit groups between Seamist City and Brettel City that'd been deliberately spread throughout the city.

Moreover, an endless stream food had been distributed to them from the city lord's mansion on the Food Festival yesterday. For once, the civilians had been treated to a fine filling meal. Their confidence towards the city gradually increased.

However, they were used to the city lords betraying them at critical moments. As the real crisis had yet to arrive, it was still unknown whether this new city lord was worthy of their trust. Therefore, the civilians had yet to sympathize with the new city lord. They only quietly observed the changes in Brettel City with eyes withholding.

After one more day, the four gates of Brettel City were all shut tightly. Merchants or civilians, all were forbidden from leaving. From time to time, soldiers would appear at the four gates to swept their vigilant eyes across the scene outside. Several small teams of knights on warhorses rode tirelessly around the city.

Even though the knights didn't say anything, the citizens of Brettel City had been through too many painful wars. They smelled a familiar scent in the air.

War was coming!

# Chapter 331: So what if I tricked you!

Bandits from the four large bandit groups had gathered on the plains six miles away from Brettel City, and were slowly making their way towards the city.

These bandit groups were vastly different from the small bandit groups that hid between Brettel City and Seamist City. Among these groups, the smallest, the Bloodtooth Bandits, had more than two thousand people. The largest Greenfire Bandits had more than six thousand people, and was double the size of the city guard of Brettel City by itself.

These large bandit groups were the same as the Redbeard Bandits, a harbinger of disaster that frequently visited and looted the seven duchies, spelling doom for every city they descended upon. Wherever they went within the seven duchies, the cities that were robbed were swept clean. As the seven duchies were constantly warring with each other and there were many mountains and hills to hide in around the seven duchies, these bandits were like fish in water, becoming parasites that were thoroughly hated by the seven duchies.

In contrast to the typical bandit groups, these bandits were well-equipped. Some former military officers from the seven duchies were actually amongst them. They decided to bring their men out to the plains when they'd run afoul of the nobility in their own duchy or had committed some dire crime.

These people had military backgrounds. Although they had become bandits, their discipline and combat knowledge had not decreased one bit. After becoming bandits, they used the wealth and equipment that they plundered for soldiers and warhorses. This resulted in their equipment and combat strength being on par with the official armies of the seven duchies.

This time around, the four bandit groups heading towards Brettel City were the Greenfire Bandits, the Battleaxe Bandits, the Flying Dragon Bandits, and the Bloodtooth Bandits. The Battleaxe Bandits and the Flying



Dragon Bandits had four thousand and three thousand men respectively. They had excellent equipment and were experienced and bloodthirsty people.

Currently, the leaders of the four bandit groups was walking in the center of his troops, still discussing the plans for their attack on Brettel City.

“Does Brettel City really have the wealth that you mentioned? I visited the city just half a year ago. Apart from stones, there weren’t any other valuables. The brothers who made the trip with me didn’t gain anything!” Bloodtooth’s leader Lance asked skeptically.

Lance had only joined this time because the other three had personally invited him. He had planned on pillaging a small town in the Helon Duchy. If he hadn’t understood that the other three were even greedier than him, Lance definitely wouldn’t have agreed to join them on this raid of Brettel City.

“Brettel City is different from before. The new city lord is said to be extremely wealthy. The magic cannons owned by the Helon Duchy sissies were seized. There are rumors that Helen Tina was even raped by the city lord. Damn it, that wench Helen Tina is one of the well known beauties in the seven duchies and is also grand duke. Who would have thought that she would actually be sullied by the new city lord!” Leader Bynam of the Battleaxe Bandits was a brute that stood over two meters tall. He had an enormous battle axe strapped on his back that was a meter and fifty centimeters long. What exposed skin could be seen showed that he was as hairy as an orc.

“Lance, I’ve received definitive information that Brettel City is definitely different from before. Just the six magic cannons alone are already worth six hundred thousand gold. There’s also the wealth of the governor and merchants. Brettel City currently has at least one million gold.” Greenfire’s leader Faust explained to Lance.

Faust had once been a high ranking officer of the Narsen Duchy, and had a decent reputation in the ever raging conflict between the seven

duchies. However, he had been dismissed for wantonly slaughtering captives in battle. When Faust received this news, he led his men and transitioned to being bandit mercenaries. By transitioning from a high ranking officer to a bandit, Faust was even more in his element, expanding the Greenfire Bandits to their current size of six thousand men, no longer restricted by anyone.

Of the four bandit groups, Faust's Greenfire Bandits were not only the largest in number, but they were also the strongest in combat. After all, Faust had a military background and was extremely skilled in leading and training his men.

Hearing Faust's explanation, the eyes of other bandit leaders, including the silent, malicious looking Flying Dragon Bandits' leader Afie, shone with greed. One million gold was a large amount in anyone's eyes. If even the dukes of the seven duchies knew of this, they would've possibly come on the raid as well, not to mention these bandits!

"Faust is indeed formidable, haha! One million gold! They want to defend that only relying on Brettel City's defensive measures? We've really struck it rich this time." Battleaxe's Bynum laughed loudly, as if imagining limitless gold coins raining down on him.

Flying Dragon Bandit's Afie looked at Bynum in disdain. What an idiot. If Brettel City was so easy to conquer, why hasn't the equally brutal and greedy Faust already taken all the gold for himself? He'd even kindly invited them to share the spoils.

Of the four bandit leaders, although Faust was brutal, greedy, and had outstanding military strategy, he wasn't a ruthless or scheming person. On the other hand, Flying Dragon's Afie had the nickname of "Vicious Dragon", referring to his vicious personality and his tendency to use despicable, insidious tricks.

When Faust mentioned the one million gold, Graves thought for a moment and secretly decided that he definitely shouldn't be the main offense after reaching Brettel City, at least not until after analyzing the situation. If not, he could easily lose all of his hard earned capital.

With the temptation and desire for gold, the four bandit groups marched slowly towards Brettel City's city walls dressed in their respective colors.

Tall and broad city walls stood before them, not a single hole could be seen on the repaired city walls. From the outside, Brettel City seemed to have a tight, sturdy defense.

"Wow. Brettel City has changed a lot, I remember when i was here previously, the city gate was riddled with holes. The walls weren't as high as they are now either. We could easily break into the city at that time. We definitely didn't encounter such a strong resistance. Looks like Brettel City is definitely different now." Lance couldn't help but exclaim as he raised his head and gazed at Brettel City.

"Eh? Faust, where are the magic cannons you mentioned?" Battleaxe's leader Bynum firmly remembered the cannons were worth six hundred thousand gold. He wasn't fazed by the destructive power of the cannons. Instead, he was pondering how to exchange the magic cannons for glittering gold coins after obtaining them. Bynum felt a delightful sense of satisfaction every time he imagined being drowned in gold.

Faus was riding on a tall warhorse and didn't immediately respond to Bynum's question. Instead, he started ordering the Greenfire bandits to line up in formation, preparing to engage in battle at any moment. Only when the Greenfire bandits were in formation did Faust gaze at the city walls, realizing that there really seemed to be no magic cannons on top of the city walls.

Frowning as he thought for a moment, Faust replied, "The magic cannons are definitely in Brettel City. Just keep focusing on that. Brettel City has four city walls, our four groups will each take one city gate. Follow our previous arrangement. Once you see my signal, we will all attack Brettel City together."

"Brettel City's city guard only has three thousand soldiers. A city gate will at most have a thousand soldiers defending it. You have all heard of their combat strength. As long as you spread your troops out when attacking, the magic cannons would not be able to deal a heavy blow. Also,

the magic cannons need to be reloaded with magic ores. There is also a delay after every cannon blast. They could possibly be lacking in magic ores as well, therefore, there is no need to fear them.”

“Our four sides only need to break through one of the walls. Brettel City will be ours based on our strength. There might be a few casualties this time around. However, think about the one million gold, the glittering gold that is piled up in the governor’s mansion. It’s impossible to obtain that without any sacrifice.”

Bynum rubbed his hands and said excitedly, “I’m itching to begin!”

“That’s good. Leave the main gate to us. The three of you decide amongst yourselves who to attack which gate. I’ll send the signal to begin the attack in two hours. Whoever first breaks into the city will get 40% of the gold.” Faust said with a low voice.

This was the plan that was previously agreed on, everyone had no objections. Hence, the other three bandit groups left in their respective directions after a short discussion. On the way to their selected city gate, “Vicious Dragon” Afie ordered his men, “Take note of the other three city gates. You are to immediately send a signal to me when any of them has broken through.”

“Relax boss, we all know what needs to be done.” One of the bandits nodded, leaving stealthily with the rest of them. They had already known of their leader’s sinister personality and were already used to such situations.

Afie didn’t want his Flying Dragon Bandits to actually test out how strong the Brettel City defenses were. Furthermore, Afie was afraid Faust had deliberately invited them to be cannon fodder. He was taking careful precautions against Faust in case Brettel City had any powerful artillery. In this way, Graves would still consider whether or not he needed to follow Faust’s plans.

The temptation of a million gold was indeed huge. However, Graves naturally would retreat without hesitation if he wouldn’t be able to survive to enjoy it. He didn’t care about Faust’s arrangements. Only by preserving

his own strength would there be more opportunities to gain wealth. If he recklessly squandered his capital, it definitely wouldn't be worth it.

Han Shuo, Dorcas, Faulke, Dick, and the rest had just exited the city lord's mansion after a discussion in Brettel City. Han Shuo, Dorcas, and Faulke headed towards one of the city gates, while Dick, Chester and Fabian headed towards another city gate.

The remaining yin demon floated around, eavesdropping on every conversation that the four bandit groups had. The weapons with heavy firepower on the high city walls were all temporarily hidden. The sparse soldiers on top of the city wall were only equipped with bows and crossbows, attentively watching the bandit groups that were a distance away.

Of the four city gates, the main gate that Han Shuo went to had the fewest soldiers and weapons. There were only three hundred soldiers and not a single magic cannon located here. However, he had to face the Greenfire Bandits' six thousand members. The Greenfire Bandits were the strongest and were also the main force behind this attack.

"Bryan, do you feel confident?" Little Fatty Jack's voice trembled, a bit hesitant compared to normal as he looked at the dense mass of bandits in the distance.

End of Part 1 of the chapter

Jack had come over at Han Shuo's request. He had already told Jack before that, "Join me in seeing this battle through. If you are willing to stay after the battle ends, I'll agree to appoint you as Brettel City's finance minister."

When Jack heard Han Shuo's words, he agreed without hesitation. However, as he currently stood on the tall, broad city walls, seeing the well-equipped, vicious-looking bandits, his heart quailed.

"Why, are you afraid?" Han Shuo chuckled as he poked fun at Jack.

Valiantly puffing out his chest, Jack shouted as if reassuring himself more rather than answering the question, "What's there to be afraid of?!"

I'm just a little nervous since this is my first time. Not to mention, even if I stay in Brettel City, I will only be a finance minister. It's not like I need to go to battle. What should I be afraid of?"

"Very good, if you are able to continue watching to the end of the battle, still have just as strong a resolve then, I guarantee you will be able to win over that noble girl Jessica." Han Shuo laughed as he spoke.

Once he heard Han Shuo mention Jessica, Little Fatty Jack's eyes became a little downcast, but was immediately replaced by a look of determination. Nodding his head gravely, Jack clenched his fist while looking at Han Shuo, "Bryan, although I can't become a knight, I can definitely still become a noble!"

Smiling slightly without reply, Han Shuo observed the Greenfire Bandits in the distance. They were currently using simple wooden frames to form a tall wooden tower, ten mages of various aptitudes were slowly climbing up the tower with the aid of the other bandits.

The strongest of the mages was a lightning archmage. The rest were all minor mages from other majors. The rarity of mages made them highly valued in any country throughout the continent. Their value differed accordingly based on the difference in strength. It was said that the Greenfire Bandits kidnapped the lightning archmage's family and was threatening him with his family's lives. If not, no archmage would be willing to be a lowly bandit's accomplice.

The equipment of the mages on the wooden tower were rather uncommon though. Not only were their magic robes exceptionally beautiful, they each held a valuable magic staffs. It looked like Faust had really invested quite a bit into them. That made sense, considering the impact mages had on a battle. If a bandit group boasted of a mage, their strength would naturally greatly increase. Furthermore, it was also a sign of status to a bandit leader for his troop to have a mage.

The wooden tower was six hundred meters from Han Shuo, with some wheels at the bottom of the tower that could be pushed. A few bandits equipped with shields also climbed onto the tower, protecting the valuable

magicians from all directions so that they could unleash their magic without distraction. Once the battle truly started, the tower could be pushed nearer to the city wall by using the wheels. This would allow the magicians to better rain their spells down onto Brettel City.

Six hundred meters wasn't an unsurpassable distance to the Demonslayer Edge wielding Han Shuo. Once the Demonslayer Edge flew out, the magicians that were six hundred meters away would definitely be caught off guard, either dying or suffering severe injuries. However, the battle had yet to begin. It wasn't wise for Han Shuo to unleash the Demonslayer Edge at this moment. Hence, he only watched as they completed the construction of the wooden tower, not acting rashly.

Once the wooden tower was finished, the bandits also pushed out four repeater ballistae. These ballistae had a shooting range of around five hundred meters and could amazingly shoot six penetrative crossbow bolts in a single load. Han Shuo had also purchased twenty of these from the Boozt Merchant Guild this time, with six of them hidden on the city walls right at this very moment. Han Shuo was naturally familiar with the piercing abilities of these carts.

"Jack, when the battle begins, don't leave my side no matter what happens, and always stay within ten meters of me. I can guarantee your safety, but if you happen to be ten meters away, immediately lie down and climb within the city walls." Han Shuo immediately turned towards little Fatty Jack when he realized that the bandits actually had crossbow carts, giving prudent instructions.

Jack became nervous again when he heard Han Shuo's words and drew even closer. He was almost glued to Han Shuo's side, saying with a cracked voice, "Don't worry, I'll follow you wherever you go."

When the wooden tower and chariots were displayed, Faust haughtily steered his enormous warhorse forward, shouting loudly towards Han Shuo, "Brettel City Lord Bryan, you know the reason why us brothers have come. My brothers have survived under poor living conditions and have recently run out of food. We will leave you and your Brettel City alone if you give us a million gold coins."

“Pitiful Mr. Faust, I deeply sympathise with your group’s misfortune. However, Brettel City’s poverty is also well known. The people in my city are lacking in food as well. I am really unable to bring out a million gold.” Han Shuo miserably lamented with a twisted expression.

His voice was neither loud nor soft, but both the faraway bandits, as well as the soldiers on the city wall, heard him clearly. Even the citizens within the city, who were closer to this location could hear him. Some of the braver citizens even exited their homes to see what was going on. There were even those who wanted to head to the city gate to investigate the happenings outside.

“How much can you cough up then?” Discerning from Han Shuo’s reply that there was still room to negotiate, Faust paused for a moment before replying loudly.

The current Brettel City walls didn’t have any holes. Although there were only a few soldiers on the imposing city walls, they were equipped with shiny new equipment. There were also rumours that Brettel City’s city lord, Bryan was a necromancer archmage himself. If they insisted on attacking, the Greenfire Bandits would definitely suffer losses. If they could gain a generous amount of gold without losing a single soldier, only a fool would choose the latter. Therefore, when Faust heard Han Shuo’s tone, he pondered for a moment before inquiring about Han Shuo’s bottom line.

“Uh, Mr Faust. How does one gold coin sound?” Han Shuo seriously thought for a moment before responding earnestly.

“Wahaha.....”

The city guards had been a bit nervous. They couldn’t resist laughing out loud after hearing Han Shuo’s reply. Even the citizens who heard the reply had an interesting look on their faces, thinking that this new city lord certainly had a nice sense of humor.

“You conniving bastard!” Faust exploded, he hadn’t been this angry in a long time. His subordinates also had unsightly expressions, wishing that they could rush over and tear Han Shuo and his men into pieces.



“Haha, so what if I tricked you! You won’t be getting a single gold coin today. Hehe. Who knows? You might even be leaving behind gold for my personal use! How dare you pathetic scum dare to steal from me? You obviously want to die. I’ll tell honestly you that I seized all of Redbeard Troda’s wealth. Along with the four hundred thousand gold coins from Helen Tina and the gold I own, Brettel City currently has more than one million gold coins. However, let’s see if you have the ability to obtain even a single coin. Stupid swine. Come at me!” Han Shuo laughed savagely, ridiculing Faust as if he was an idiot.

Faust was truly indignant. He had never been this dismissed by others in all the years since he had left Narsen Duchy. Staring at the extremely arrogant young governor on the city wall, Faust had the urge to eat him alive. His men had similar feelings, their expressions steely as they started charging towards the city gates.

“Attack! Massacre everyone in the city!” Faust furiously gave the order as he charged towards Brettel City.

“Mass.... Massacre everyone?!” Jack became weak in the knees, almost paralyzed on the cold, marble floor.

The citizens had previously relaxed due to Han Shuo’s humor, but now sank into a bottomless abyss when they heard the words “Massacre everyone!”. Everyone’s eyes dimmed, at a loss of how to respond.

All along, although Brettel City had experienced the cruelty of war, they had never faced a bloody massacre. Otherwise, Brettel City would have long since become a ghost city. Although their valuables would be snatched, the citizens were still able to retain their lives.

Unless the attacker was a bloodthirsty devil or possesses endless hatred, the order to massacre everyone in the city was not easily given regardless of bandits looting or war between two countries. This was because it would mean effectively destroying everything in a city. That was the true meaning of creating rivers of blood and leaving nothing alive.

A person like this would usually be condemned by every country. One who dared to massacre a city would even be denounced and despised by

even their own country, while the side who had a city massacred would spare no expense in getting their revenge. Although the seven duchies were entrenched in war, the act of razing a city was also extremely rare. It wasn't something a normal person would dare to do.

The unaffiliated Faust could no longer stopper the anger raging in his heart in the face of Han Shuo's arrogant provocation and utterly humiliating insults. This was why he'd given such a crazed order. He felt that only by sending everyone in Brettel City to their graves would he be able to cleanse the shame brought about by Han Shuo.

"Humph. Do you think you'll be able to do so?" Han Shuo snorted. Turning towards the soldiers by his side, he said, "Bring out the catapults, let's see how they die!"

Once the order to massacre the city was given, the green flame on the flags of the Greenfire Bandits were painted in blood red, forming blood red flames. The mages on the wooden tower were also slowly taxied towards Brettel City. The four crossbow carts were also loaded with bolts and pushed forward. Two thousand furious bandits, carrying the ladder hooks of climbing ladders started charging towards Han Shuo.

Chariots, crossbow carts, catapults, as well as fire oil, giant stones, and other city defense tools were rapidly hauled out from their hiding places by the hundreds of soldiers, and distributed to various locations along the vast city walls. However, the number of soldiers, as well as the number of chariots and crossbow cars were still limited. The wall, which could hold seven to eight thousand men, was only being defended by several hundred soldiers. It indeed seemed shamefully few.

"Kill!" The bandits had already charged over. The bandits who had been insulted hardened their hearts to kill everyone they saw in Brettel City. Faust was green in the face and hysterically bellowed, "The first brother who scales the city wall will be rewarded with a thousand gold!"

A large cloud of magical flames shot from Faust's hand towards the sky. This was the prearranged signal between the four bandit groups. When the signal shone magnificently in the sky, that marked the official

beginning of the battle.

The bandits had been deluded by gold and blinded by anger. They charged forward with reckless abandon. Han Shuo didn't say a word as he calmly observed the situation, waiting for the bandits to enter their range. Only then did he give the order to the soldiers, who were so afraid that their palms were already sweaty, "Attack!"

Rumble...

The rumbling of chariots resounded through the entire city, spraying a tongue of flames towards the skies. The crossbow carts rapidly fired crossbow bolts, crashing into a crowd of bandits along with giant rocks from the catapults, instantly creating a grisly scene. The areas that were sprayed by the chariots experienced huge explosions. Limbs and heads streaming with blood rolled and bounced out from the monstrous dust clouds.

Giant rocks continued raining down, transforming all the bandits they touched into paste. The crossbow bolts whizzed past, strong penetrative power piercing through several bandits before stopping. The area in front of Brettel City had transformed instantly into a river of blood with countless corpses everywhere.

# Chapter 332: Corpses scattered across the ground

The change of nearly a hundred bandits had been forever halted in just a blink of an eye, thanks to the bombardment of two war chariots, five ballistae, and three stone-throwing catapults.

As the smoke from the explosives billowed above the battlefield, Fass' insane roaring rang loud and clear, "Mages! Push the mages' tower forward! Launch the ballistae! Be quick about it!"

As Fass hollered orders left and right, the bandits beneath the tower pushed with all their might. The ballistae that the bandits had transported were quickly brought up from the rear. There were several bandits with iron shields in hand, standing in front of each ballista to force open a path.

The war chariots continued to enthusiastically spout flames as stone-throwing catapults drew beautiful arcs across the sky before smashing the ground with terrifying, earth-shattering rumbles. Each impact created its own unique pattern, a painting of blood and severed body parts. Six bolts darted through the air with each shot to reap cheap lives like cold, fatal blades.

Five hundred meters of the path that lead to Brettel City's gates had turned into a literal hell on earth. The bandits who had charged forward was met with overwhelming firepower. Anyone in range of the barrage had no chance of making it out alive.

"Spread out, spread out already! You damned stupid fools! How many time have I told you?!" Fass' shouts were verging on hysterical, but it was of no use. The rumbling of the war chariots overrode his words to the point where only the row of bandits behind him could hear his words.

The Greenfire Bandits had a total of six thousand members, and Fass had certainly not planned on committing his entire force at once. Thus, the bandits who'd come to attack Brettel City were definitely not the true

elites of the Greenfire Bandits.

Fass only had roughly a thousand trusted followers when he left the Narsen Duchy. The band had swollen to their current numbers by recruiting during raids as they traveled. As such, those currently charging towards Brettel City were the newest recruits, the ones whose strength Fass wasn't quite satisfied with. Their combat ability was the weakest in Greenfire.

This was the case in every attempted siege, the cannon fodder was always the first to be sent out. In Fass' heart, these two thousand underlings were completely expendable. As long as there were enough gold coins, he never had to worry about not being able to recruit more lackeys amidst the never-ending chaos surrounding the seven grand duchies. According to Fass' initial plan, these two thousand underlings were more than enough to bring down Brettel City.

What quite surprised Fass was Brettel City's defensive ability. He'd originally thought he'd face the bombardment of the magic crystal cannons, yet unexpectedly, he'd seen no sign of them and had instead discovered other defensive emplacements. Further, this array of defensive artillery were all time-tested instruments of war. Once they started their lethal spray from the tall city walls, they reaped life like a scythe through corn.

Two thousand bandits were approaching Brettel City step by step beneath the massive artillery shelling and missiles. After paying the price in four hundred more deaths, a portion of the bandits reached the city wall. They'd brought wooden ladders, and quickly set them up against the city wall, doing their best to dodge the heavy bombardment.

"Faster! Fill the bolts and load the goblin explosives into the war chariots!" Han Shuo's expression was indifferent, but the speed of his speech was extremely fast as he yelled orders to the soldiers around him.

These soldiers had only recently become familiar with war chariots and ballistae. Faulke had intensely drilled them over several days and nights and barely pounded the basics of using war chariots, ballistae, and

catapults into them. As such, they weren't too skilled, especially under the pressure of a chaotic battlefield. The lingering scent of death and blooded steel affected the speed at which these soldiers operated the equipment.

Kaka... kaka...

A strange noise suddenly came to Han Shuo's attention. He looked around, puzzled, until his eyes came to land on little Fatty Jack. The latter's lips were trembling, and his teeth were chattering at an astonishing rate to create that noise.

Little Fatty Jack stood beside Han Shuo as he looked into the battlefield where flesh and blood flew. He saw boulders smash bodies into a blurry meat paste. He witnessed limbs flying from the explosions created by the war chariots. He was transfixed as the frenzied storm of bolts literally flung the bandits into the air as they tore through them. He couldn't restrain his trembling.

"Wuu wuu, this is too terrible!" The little fatty's voice was a bit muffled, his small eyes bloodshot. He cried out involuntarily with trembling lips, his entire being caught in a strange, dull state of helplessness.

"Ready! Pour down the oil!" Han Shuo flicked his eyes away from Jack. He didn't say a word upon seeing the latter was still next to him. Instead, he loudly shouted to the soldiers around him.

Han Shuo had already known before the battle began that little Fatty Jack, having never experienced such a scene, would definitely be frightened by the cruelty of war. Jack's expression of terror was well within Han Shuo's expectations, so he wasn't the least bit surprised.

The Demonslayer Edge could no longer resist the temptation, and shot out from the back of Han Shuo's neck to hover high above the battlefield. Unseen from the battlefield, it started to forcefully absorb souls from the cacophony of agonized and despairing screams below.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

The bandits finally fired their ballistae. A rain of bolts began to furiously assault the defenders atop Brettel City's wall. Surprised by the sudden hail

of death, several archers aiming at maelstrom below were immediately killed. The actions of the soldiers controlling war chariots and stone-throwing catapults also grew a bit frantic.

A low whistling sound accompanied one of the bolts, aiming straight for little Fatty Jack, who was leaning against the wall and watching the tragic scene below. When he heard the screeching whistle, Jack was scared witless as he screamed raspily, "Bryan, save me!"

Han Shuo reached out with his left hand. Bloody lights shot out from his five fingers like he'd suddenly grown sharp claws. When that bolt was only roughly ten meters away from Jack, the bloody light from Han Shuo's five fingers clenched around it, grinding the bolt into splinters.

"Step back, don't stand too close to the edge of the city wall!" Han Shuo shouted lightly, waving his right hand and sending the shield of a fallen soldier abruptly crashing down in front of Jack, covering most of his plump body.

Creaking sounds suddenly fell into Han Shuo's ears. He wheeled around to feel surges of magic ripples gradually converge in the distance, the sound of the magic incantations growing more audible. Several mages on the slowly approaching tower had begun to chant the magic spells of their respective elements, guarded zealously by the shield wielding bandits.

"I've been waiting for you to arrive!" Han Shuo said derisively. He reached out with his mind, and a bloody halo dropped from the heavens.

The Demonslayer Edge was executing "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" under Han Shuo's guidance. The Demonslayer Edge, looking only a little longer than a dagger, spun a breakneck pace as it dove straight down. Each rotation of the Demonslayer Edge caused a dagger-like bloody light to shoot out.

The Demonslayer Edge's high-speed rotation caused it to gradually blur into a ball of crimson light as it descended. Scarlet slivers, rapidly increasing in number by the second, coalesced around it as they formed thousands of blades. The countless blades swirled into a huge orb, swirling around the Demonslayer Edge in wide arcs as they crisscrossed without

interfering with each. The light they gave off was a deep rich ruby, an awe-inspiring sight spilling down onto the mages on the tower below.

From afar, it looked like a small, disc-sized sun had come into existence, except that this sun was brimming with sharp, rotating barbs of bloody light. As the vermillion sphere continued its descent, its rotation grew even more ferocious. A palpable surge of slaughter emanated from it even before it landed, causing terror to sprout in the heart of onlookers.

The dazzling orb of slashing light landed in the midst of the mages on the tower. Despite being protected by iron shields and magical barriers of various strengths, the tower was instantly macerated. The wood it was made of became splinters, then dust amidst the agonized screams of the bandits and mages. Mangled flesh, blood and steel painted a scarlet portrait as the fragile mages and the heavily armored bandits were torn apart, the rotating blades of light resplendent as they dealt death with equal parts beauty and ruthlessness.

No one on the tower had the strength to do anything in the face of Han Shuo's "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts".

The ten thousand sanguine rays of the Demonslayer Edge had vaporized everything it had touched, whether it be the humans, the wooden tower, or the iron shields. Fass had spent a great deal of money to form this team of bandit mages, and now, they lay scattered across the battlefield, too mangled even to be recognizable as human remains anymore.

Having been injected with thirty percent of his magical yuan, one strike of the "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" through all those people and the tower was far from enough to consume its power. The orb transformed into an enormous scarlet spinning cactus, hurling blades of crimson light at the bandits around the tower. Like a hurricane, the Demonslayer Edge's "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" raged unchallenged across the battlefield. A storm of blood in every sense of the word, everything it encountered was obliterated, be it human, ballistae, or sturdy shields.

An unnaturally beautiful red drizzle of blood began to pour down on the



field. None out of a hundred bandit corpses were whole after the Demonslayer Edge made a circle, no piece of meat larger than an ear . Since even iron shields couldn't defend against the Demonslayer Edge, it was no surprise to find even bones minced finely as well.

"Damn it! Where's the tower? Where are the mages?" Fass had been paying attention to the Brettel City wall, and had missed the events around the tower. Only when the crimson orb of light had made its way over to him did he discover that the tower was gone.

"Dead, all dead! It was that thing! It was all because of that thing!!" A bandit by Fass' side had witnessed the entire thing. He pointed at the blood orb that was responsible, his voice shrill with terror.

The horror of the blood orb wasn't quite over yet. Ear-piercing screams once again echoed across the battlefield. They belonged to the bandits who'd been approached by the drifting blood orb. To no avail, all of them desperately attempted to dodge by rolling and jumping. However, every bandit that was touched by the blood orb instantly turned into a shower of mangled flesh, blood, and bones. No one was lucky enough to escape.

"Attack that thing, attack it!!" Fass' heart was beating violently, panic barely kept at bay. He hastily roared commands to the bandits around him.

Dozens of sharp axes were fiercely hurled at the quickly approaching, whirling Demonslayer Edge. However, just when they almost neared the Demonslayer Edge, the magical yuan powering the "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" was exhausted, and it vanished into thin air. Like a star of death returning to the universe after completing its mission, its disappearance sent the bandits reeling with relief.

"What is that thing?! Curse that necromancer! He must've used some sort of necromancy magic to create that damned monster. Don't be afraid, keep attacking! I think they're almost done for!"

Humans were always fearful of the unknown, and Fass was no exception.

When he had spotted the death dealing orb disappear from the sky, Fass'

heart unclenched slightly. He then roared madly at the frightened bandits, as if to comfort himself.

It was as Fass said. Even though the Demonslayer Edge had thrown the battlefield into disarray by wiping out the magic users, the bandits still held the advantage in numbers. Moreover, they had begun to use their iron hooks and wooden ladders to gradually scale the city walls.

There were only three hundred soldiers manning Brettel City's walls in total. Of those, twenty had died up until now, mostly due to the ballistae attacks. The remaining two hundred odd soldiers were frantically hauling boulders to load the stone-throwing catapults and reloading bolts for the ballistae. As a result, those soldiers who had been assigned the task of transporting boulders were now deprived of energy, sprawled flat on the ground.

Several soldiers could barely manage to bring themselves to pour oil down the city walls, but they were also heavily panting, with little strength left. However, there were still roughly twelve hundred of the original two thousand bandits left, of which five hundred had already reached the foot of the city wall, trying to climb up the walls.

"My Lord, our men are really not enough!" Seeing the ferocious bandits about to climb up, a captain almost burst into tears, "What do we do? What do we do?"

"Light the fires. We won't be losing as long I'm alive today. What are you all so worried about?" Han Shuo harrumphed coldly.

"Light the fires, light the fires! Burn those bastards to death!" The captain shouted loudly to the soldiers, who'd been waiting for the signal for quite a long time now. They ruthlessly tossed burning torches onto the city walls that were now drenched with oil.

Boom...

The sparks instantly set the slick oil aflame, turning the surface of the city wall into a blazing pyre for any bandits unfortunate enough to be caught on the walls. Harrowing screams dyed the air as the bandits were slowly incinerated.

Some of the bandits quickly jumped off the ladder when they saw the soldiers on the city wall wielding torches. The more experienced ones managed to pull the ladders from the city, allowing the bandits to slowly clamber down to safety.

However, that safety was short lived, as the soldiers immediately loosed a volley of arrows at the surviving bandits. Some sharpshooters managed to pick off the bandits supporting some of the ladders, causing the bandits on their respective ladders to plummet to their deaths.

However, the amount of oil they had on hand was limited, while the walls were too wide. There simply wasn't enough ground they could cover, and sure enough, a cadre of bandits had almost reached the top of the wall in one of those oil free corners.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

Han Shuo finally took out the bone staff and chanted the bone spear incantation. Bone spears shot out like arrows, tearing through the dozens of bandits who'd scaled the wall at one of those lightly guarded points..

The bandits at the foot of the city wall also raised up bows with flaming arrows. Once the four hundred bandits steadied the rate in which they could release the arrows, the exposed soldiers from the city wall couldn't hold up beneath the onslaught. Some of the more careless ones were killed under the rain of flame tipped shafts. Even Han Shuo couldn't have saved them, he'd already blocked as many of the arrows as he could, otherwise, there might have been even more casualties.

"My Lord, is it time yet?" Another captain was still relatively calm in the face of such odds. He'd personally seen Han Shuo summon a massive undead army, but as he saw his comrades gradually succumb under the unending assault, he finally opened his mouth to ask Han Shuo.

At this moment, the initial two thousand Greenfire cannon fodder bandits were still blindly charging forward. A portion had been burned to death by the fires, and another two hundred died from the dozen soldiers who still had the strength to keep the ballistae firing.

There were less than eight hundred bandits remaining from the original

two thousand, from which roughly six hundred had reached the foot of the city wall.

The war chariots on the city wall had also used up their goblin explosives, with only a hundred bolts or so remaining. All the colossal boulders within the city had been catapulted into the enemy ranks. Finally, the number of soldiers on Brettel City's wall who could stand straight didn't even number fifty.

If Han Shuo still refrained from making his move now, the Brettel City gates might actually fall to the bandits. Therefore, upon seeing the bandits reveal their fanatical excitement after finally reaching the foot of the city wall, Han Shuo clutched the bone staff and calmly said with a nod, "It is indeed time."

Fass of the Greenfire Bandits licked his lips as he looked at the weary defenses of Brettel City. A low sinister laugh bubbled forth and his voice grew cruel as he said, "Young city lord, you will pay a painful price for your arrogance! I will peel your skin, remove your bones, and torture you so badly, you'll feel a pain worse than death!"

"Boss, he's also a necromancer, you should be a bit more careful!" A bandit next to Fass suddenly remembered the rumors about Han Shuo and hastily reminded him.

"Haha, necromancer? A mage who can only summon useless skeletons? What can that sort of mage do in a head on battle?" Fass turned to that bandit and continued, "Command a thousand more men to rush forward. Bring down Brettel City in one swift move!"

The minor leader waved his hand after Fass' orders and said, "Tuku, you guys rush forward, flatten this damned Brettel City as soon as possible!"

Tuku had originally been Fass' personal guard and the leader of the thousand strong brigade. This brigade was different from the previous two thousand strong cannon fodder. Sharper weapons, sturdier armor, and even a special five hundred man team in their ranks who rode fierce warhorses similarly bedecked in full body armor. This was obviously a standard knight brigade.

The brigade charged across a ground full of corpses towards Brettel City with a wave of Tuku's spear. Amongst them, the five hundred man squad riding fierce warhorses reached the foot of the city wall as fast as the wind. Brettel City's soldiers were completely worn out, only managing to fire a disorganized volley of a dozen arrows at the incoming force. This simply wasn't enough to injure the fully armored knights and warhorses.

"Heh heh, they're done for! I knew it!" A cold sneer stretched Fass' face. The light of victory was already dawning in his eyes.

He'd even started to mentally imagine how he would slowly torture Han Shuo after capturing him?

"Eh? Where's the sun? Why can't I see the sun?" Upon reaching the city wall, the bandit knights suddenly felt the sky strangely darken. A gloom that verged on creepy, uncharacteristic for a day only barely past noon, covered the sky. There was no reason for it to become dark so quickly

The originally clear and bright sky now had thunderheads blotting out the sun like a verdant ink. Appearing from who knew where, these green-black clouds created a layer that was impenetrable to sunlight, choking the battlefield of any light it could find. As these clouds gathered, an eerie atmosphere descended on the battlefield, and a grim premonition began to sprout in the hearts of the bandits.

"Don't make a fuss. The weather here has always been creepy. It's just about to rain."

"The oil and fire will lose their effect if it rains. We must be blessed by the gods! Let's use this opportunity to massacre them!" Leader Tuku absentmindedly comforted his subordinates. He pointed at the group of bandits who were still crazily climbing the city wall and shouted, "Hurry up! Wipe out all of those weak, cowardly soldiers!."

"You really run your mouth too much!" Han Shuo had finally finished chanting his lengthy incantation. He swiped at the air with the bone staff, releasing a thin layer of ash-gray mist. The mist, thick with the stench of death, slowly drifted down to the foot of the Brettel City walls.

The battlefield now reeked of a barren, morose smell. Thin, ash-gray

mist slowly drifted from the center of the battlefield, slowly creeping between and over the corpses. Several carrion crows, circling the battlefield, took one whiff of the corpse scent blown over by the faint, ash-gray mist, and took wing instantly, as if something in the gray mist struck a deep chord of fear in their hearts.

“Damned weather, black clouds and gray mist! It seems like it’s really going to rain! Hurry, hurry up! Ah, one of you is up, hah!” Tuku lifted his head to look up at the city wall. He happily shouted on, as if encouraging the bandits.

A crunching sound accompanied his words. The bandit who had painstakingly avoided arrows and burning oil had his neck casually twisted into an inhuman direction by Han Shuo. Like tossing out garbage, Han Shuo chucked him at the bandits grouped below.

Crash...

The body of the first bandit to climb up the city wall and had his neck twisted for his efforts made a huge sound as he was thrown down. The bandits below, who were about to desperately surge up the ladders, were greatly shocked.

Then, an even more terrifying sight captured their gazes, something that happened right in front of them!

When the gray mist drifted across the corpse in front of them, they first saw a finger twitch. Then, twisted neck and all, the body slowly and jerkily rose to its feet. The pupils that’d lost the light of life had given way to a dead gray color. Despite being somewhat stiff, the corpse’s next action left no room for doubt as to its intentions. It leapt on a nearby bandit and repeatedly stabbed him to death.

The hysterical scream that tore its way out of the bandits was like they’d encountered demons in the light of day. In the face of such an illogical situation, the courage of this bandit squadron melted away like water in a desert. Fueled entirely by instinctive fear, they fled.

At the same time, more frantic screaming spread from all corners of the battlefield, as if the screaming was contagious. Bandits all over saw their

dead brothers open their fish-like, gray eyes one after the other and numbly struggle to their feet. Moreover, their dead brothers even waved weapons and aimed to kill them. Mass hysteria had infected the living.

“This, this is, this is the lost legendary necromancy magic ‘Corpse Reanimation’! My god! How did that damnable evil necromancer master it?!” The leader of the Greenfire bandit group was aghast as he saw the scene from afar. He’d also heard of this ancient legend. His scalp began to tingle at the sight of corpses rising to their feet.

While Fass screeched in horror, more and more corpses stood up with the last lingering desires they had in life. They began to ruthlessly assault any living being nearby, never knowing that the targets of their attacks were once their close comrades who’d drank, chatted, and laughed with them last night.

The terror from the resurrected corpses instantly spread through the entire army of bandits attacking the city. The terrified bandits had no intention of carrying on with their siege. Their only thought was to escape from this evil place as quickly as possible. Incredibly, some bandits with bloodstained hands even started to sing holy hymns of the Church of Light, as if being instructed to do so by the gods and spirits. It seemed that they thought doing so would be enough to purify the power of darkness around them.

It was a pity that the God of Light would never extend an olive branch to these atheists. When a zombie used its weapon to stab a hole into a singing bandit, the rest of the bandits who were singing the holy hymn immediately stopped their futile efforts. With incredible alacrity, they wheeled and bolted, trying to escape.

“Want to run? Not gonna be that easy!” Han Shuo grinned like a madcap up on the city wall. He floated above the city wall like a sovereign of evil descending upon his kingdom, waving the bone staff in his hand. Acid bogs appeared along the path Fass and his people were taking.

“Shoot him dead, shoot him dead now!” Fass pointed at Han Shuo and roared madly, trying to suppress the fear in his heart. He also took out a

valuable bow, taking aim at Han Shuo.

“Poor Fass, so what if I played you? See how many gold coins you’ve left for me, and all these weapons and armor all over the ground. Maybe there are even some gold coins on the dead bandits. How should I thank you?” Han Shuo laughed cutely as he squinted at Fass. He lifted his right palm towards the sky as a radiant crimson light shone from the heavens and onto his palm. The beauty of the “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts” was slowly gracing the bandits with its presence again.



# Chapter 333: Something unforeseen

Dozens of arrows whistled through the air as they hurtled towards Han Shuo like raindrops. However, the arrows had yet to arrive when the life-reaping light expanded in his palm and shot out once again.

As the Demonslayer Edge was infused with another thirty percent of Han Shuo's magical yuan, countless resentful wails hissed out. The fresh souls, that the Demonslayer Edge had just absorbed, still yearned for life. They emitted an air of unwillingness and grievance that rose into the sky.

However, the bandits' souls were tightly bound by the power of the Demonslayer Edge. They were simply unable to escape this eternal prison. Instead, the resentment and hatred made the "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" even more powerful. Each blade of light was brilliant like blooming, colorful fireworks, charming and beautiful.

The Demonslayer Edge shot out of Han Shuo's grasp and once again waltzed through the sky, creating a spiky, glaring red sun. None of the arrows reached Han Shuo as they were ground to dust by the "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts". The attack didn't lose one iota of momentum. It stretched the endless resentment and murderous intent into a dazzling, beautiful arc in the sky, aiming directly at Fass' group.

"No! Boss, retreat quickly!" A bandit next to Fass cried out loudly. As soon as the shocked scream rang out, everyone turned their horses around, fleeing with their tails between their legs like defeated dogs.

Fass had originally wanted to scold the underling when he saw the latter frantically fleeing. However, he suddenly recalled the brutal scene from earlier created by the slashing, bloody lights and couldn't help but tremble with cold chills. Fass no longer dared to put on a heroic front. He yanked on the reins of his horse and fled.

The rotating, brilliant, bloody light was a ferocious life-reaping spectre for every person it shone down upon. Everything was disintegrated. Six minor leader bandits were first smashed to pieces. Then, the Demonslayer Edge roiled forth with its billowing murderous aura, spinning mid-air with

a savage screech under Han Shuo's control. The weapon pursued after Fass' group, slowing down for no man.

The corpses below Brettel City wall were resurrected one by one whilst under the Canopy of Necromancy, blindly attacking all beings in their surroundings. A corpse strutted around with its intestines hanging out, wielding its weapon and dripping with blood. This was obviously a major blow to the bandits, who'd been relentlessly rushing at Brettel City.

A human's most instinctive reaction in the face of fear would be to escape as far as possible. These bandits fully illustrated the depths of this reaction. The elite bandits on warhorses, under Tuku's command, fled at a much faster pace than what they'd charged forward with. Some had taken the opportunity to dash out like lightning before Han Shuo had created the acid swamps. It was quite the mystery where such potential had come from.

Of course, the majority of the bandits were taken out by the acid swamps. Puffs of deadly air drifted from the swamps, filling the atmosphere with the smell of corrosion. A dozen bandits, who'd risked their lives to rush straight into the acid swamps first, were instantly dissolved into a dozen skeletons. The remaining bandits, who'd yet to escape suddenly came to a complete stop.

In front of them was a multitude of acid swamps capable of granting an instant death, whilst at the rear, corpses of their former allies were drawing closer with each step. The bandits very much cherished their lives. They desperately considered which of the two sides would grant them the higher chance of survival.

After a short while, the desire to live won over the fear of corpses. Unlike Han Shuo, the bandits had no way to fly. They could only suppress the fear in their hearts, tightly clench their weapons, and face the slowly approaching corpses. These formerly dead bodies might have been their good friends in the past, but the bandits knew what had to be done under the threat of death.

“Kill them!” It was unknown which bandit had let out this cry. The still surviving bandits no longer hesitated. They used the sharp weapons in hands against the corpses who’d been comrades not long before, in order to protect their own lives. They cut off the heads of the corpses, letting their comrades die with a complete body.

The combat strength of the resurrected corpses wasn’t particularly strong; it was half of their strength when they’d still been alive. They weren’t as flexible as the zombie warriors summoned from the other dimension either. These corpses existed only to create fear in their opponents. Once the other party overcame the fear in their hearts and took action against these corpses, they’d discover that, not only were the latter’s actions quite slow, but their strength had also been negatively affected. These corpses couldn’t feel pain, but as long as their heads and hearts were destroyed, they wouldn’t be able to stand back up.

The bandits quickly discovered the weaknesses of the corpses. They were no longer scared after destroying a few of them. Their fear gradually subsiding, the bandits started to act together and annihilated the reanimated corpses.

These corpses no longer seemed too terrible compared to the acid swamps blocking the retreating path. As long as the bandits tried not to think about how the dead were once their friends, they would be able to deftly and neatly dispose of the corpses. The bandits weren’t kind folk to begin with, most of them were cruel and unscrupulous. They consoled themselves with the fact that the people facing them were already dead, as they wielded the sharp weapons in their hands to cut off the heads of their former comrades without hesitation.

Standing proudly in the sky, Han Shuo skillfully utilized his mental strength to manipulate the Demonslayer Edge, making it pursue Fass. Looking down upon the bandits, who were slowly calming down, he let out a light exclamation and mumbled, “I’ve underestimated their ruthlessness. No wonder they could become bandits. Soldiers wouldn’t be able to do that to their former comrade in arms.”

After muttering to himself, Han Shuo mused for a bit. He then revealed a

cruel grin and said, "It seems like I have to give them a strong shot!"

When Han Shuo intended to use the bone staff to summon the undead army with his remaining mental strength, he suddenly heard an earth-shattering roar. The entire Brettel City seemed to shake after that huge rumbling sound.

That direction of that sound had come from behind Han Shuo. He blanked for a moment, before lightly exclaiming, "The magic crystal cannons are finally in use!"

Taking in a deep breath, Han Shuo planned to once again chant the lengthy magic incantation when he suddenly caught sight of a group in white outfits right where Fass' group was fleeing towards. It was a team of roughly a hundred people who were slowly approaching. Amongst them was Kosse, who'd once fought against Han Shuo. There were also the Templars of the Church of Light, as well as several others in white ritual outfits.

Han Shuo was inwardly shocked. The Demonslayer Edge originally chasing Fass suddenly changed its direction to charge directly towards Kosse's group. The weapon shot out bloody light in all directions as it fiercely targeted the Templars surrounding Kosse.

With his divine weapon "Revelation" of the Church of Light, Kosse could easily turn the tables. Under the holy light of "Revelation", not only would the corpses, but even the undead army summoned by Han Shuo would become useless.

In the middle of this enormous battlefield, the defenses of Brettel City now completely relied on the undead creatures. Once this support was lost, Brettel City would officially embark down the path towards its doom.

Therefore, upon seeing Kosse appear in the distance, Han Shuo was determined to destroy this person above all else. Otherwise, the difficulty of winning would be akin to reaching for the heavens once Kosse opened "Revelation" to sing the divine hymns of blessing.

The "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts" spun rapidly and spewed out fatal bloody light straight at Kosse's group with enormous murderous

intent. Several low rank Templars at the front had yet to even unsheathe their weapons and make their move when the great, prickly orb collided with them.

The Demonslayer Edge was as if thousands of spinning sharp blades. It whirled right into the midst of the low rank Templars, once more displaying its destructive power as it ground everything to dust. Several Templars at the front had their armors shattered, with even the bodies inside being crushed as well.

However, the Templars' armors were obviously much more sturdy than that of the bandits. The bandits' armor hadn't even made a sound when they were transformed into powder, as if it was as delicate as the flesh of their owners.

But of course, these were the Templars of the Church of Light. The alchemists must have forged their armors using a special method, adding a magic resistance effect. Even though the Templars also transformed into a bloody rain like the bandits upon being crushed by "Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts", it actually took five times the amount of time when compared to the bandits.

It was because this process took five times the amount of time that it gave the six high ranked Templars around Kosse time to create a hexagonal formation. They quickly surrounded the rapidly spinning Demonslayer Edge in the center. Their six longswords, which had been blessed by baptism in holy water, burst out with a pure, divine light, shooting all at once at the Demonslayer Edge erupting with a thousand rays of bloody light.

A string of pleasing, metallic sounds rang out, followed by sprays of flying firebrands. The longswords possessed a certain purification effect after being baptized in holy water. The portion of soul energy that the Demonslayer Edge had just absorbed but had yet to fully assimilate was actually released back into the heavens and earth.

The remaining power of the holy light stopped the Demonslayer Edge from its continued rotation. It seemed that the sword formation of the six

high ranked Templars had indeed some miraculous effect. The Demonslayer Edge's speed became increasingly slower due to gradually exhausting its supply magical yuan. The weapon ultimately shot from within the sword formation into the sky under Han Shuo's mental control.

The six high ranked Templars with the cross insignias on their chests were panting a bit after the Demonslayer Edge disappeared into the sky. Their eyes followed the weapon's disappearance with lingering fear in their hearts, as if afraid that it would return again.

Red Archbishop Kosse was inwardly trembling in fear at the happenings before his eyes. He held "Revelation" and prayed over and over. Only when he saw that the Demonslayer Edge had truly disappeared, did he turn to speak to Han Shuo, "Heretic, your sins cannot be forgiven! Being burned by the holy flame shall be your final destination!"

Kosse had tried to patiently persuade Han Shuo last time, but he no longer had any patience with the latter today. In Kosse's eyes, Han Shuo was a genuine demon through and through, even more evil than the Calamity Church. He must be exterminated at all costs, so as to free more people from his evil.

"I'm actually waiting to be burned by your holy flames, but I'm afraid that you won't have the opportunity to do so!" Han Shuo coldly snorted with disdain. He suddenly set his right hand on fire, wrapping his entire right arm in the flames. Han Shuo glanced at his blazing right arm before glaring coldly at Kosse, asking, "Isn't the color of your holy flame also something like this?"

"Heretic who dares to blaspheme the holy flame? Ye shall be judged by the God of Light!" Kosse held his head high and shouted loudly. He then sang the holy hymn within the careful protection of the six Templars.

Along with the melodious hymn that Kosse was singing, the Church of Light's divine artifact, "Revelation", began to quickly flip its pages quickly, even though there was no presence of wind. Circle after circle of light spread out into the surrounding with their holy presence. The corpses resurrected by Han Shuo instantly turned to dust under the shining of the

holy light.

Even the green-black Canopy of Necromancy that blotted out the sky was torn apart by rays of dazzling golden radiance, the acid swamps evaporated as well. In just a moment, the vast empire of death that Han Shuo had poured a great deal of mental strength into to build, had crumbled under the enclosure of the holy light.

It was indeed correct to say that the Church of Light was the natural enemy of necromancers. Han Shuo obviously didn't think much of low ranked light mages. However, Kosse, who could use the power of the divine weapon "Revelation", truly posed a great threat to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had originally been certain of his victory, but now had his momentum disrupted due to the emergence of Kosse and his group. If he had no way to use his undead creatures to defend the city, protecting Brettel City with Han Shuo alone would be as hard as ascending to the heavens.

"I hate this light!" Han Shuo spoke with disgust when he saw the halos of holy light spreading out. However, his mind rapidly spun for a way to deal with them.

This was because he'd suddenly discovered that upon Kosse's appearance, the desperately fleeing bandit leader Fass had led his underlings to return again.

The holy light cleared away all dangers given by the corpses and acid swamps. The several hundred bandits below the Brettel City walls once again began eyeing the sparsely scattered soldiers.

# Chapter 334: I really feel ashamed for you, blech!

Since things had already reached this point, Han Shuo could only summon the fire elite zombie, wood elite zombie, earth elite zombie, as well as the little skeleton. Otherwise, he had no chance of defeating the bandits and the Church of Light.

Ripples of divine light slowly spread out from “Revelation” as Kosse stood surrounded by six Templars and chanted. These ripples slowly purified the land of death that Han Shuo had created with so much mental strength. Han Shuo no longer remained in the air to chase after Kosse. Instead, he slowly floated backwards.

Han Shuo threw out the Bloodlust Fang with a wave of his hand. The moment it flew out, it brought forth a dense mist of blood. This demonic treasure that Han Shuo had meticulously refined didn’t have an aura of death on it. Thus, he was naturally not afraid that the holy light would purify it.

The bandits touched by the mist of blood from the Bloodlust Fang began to let out terrible howls. The Bloodlust Fang could quicken the circulation of blood in their body, causing them to explode and die once their bodies couldn’t handle the speed anymore.

Bandits clenched their chest and roared in pain everywhere the mist of blood spread to, but they were unable to change the fact that the blood within their bodies was flowing too quickly. Clear cracking sounds rang in the air, their bones breaking under the horrific acceleration of blood. Before the pain could completely register, the snapped bones forced themselves through the soft skin, causing the trapped blood to rush towards the exit. Like a punctured boiler, the bandits would literally be ripped apart by the pressure of the accelerating blood, dying instantly within the mist of blood.

While this happened, Han Shuo concentrated and waved the skeletal staff in his left hand. Soon enough, the little skeleton, earth elite zombie,



wood elite zombie, and fire elite zombie appeared. Under the cover of the mist of blood from the Bloodlust Fang, the earth elite zombie sank into the ground and snuck silently towards Kosse.

The little skeleton grabbed the wood elite zombie and soared high into the sky, directly landing on the city walls of Brettel City.

Under Han Shuo's orders, the little skeleton and the wood elite zombie took charge of securing the ramparts of Brettel City. If a bandit managed to scale the city wall, the little skeleton and wood elite zombie were responsible for killing them.

The moment the fire elite zombie appeared from the other dimension, he caused pillars of fire to shoot up into the sky. As he manipulated the flames, the fire lotus sigil on the fire elite zombie's forehead gradually grew clearer, finally reaching the brilliance of a burning flame. As it flickered on his forehead, flame lotuses started to detach and drift out of it.

The fire elite zombie had gradually grasped how to control the fire lotus, which was a supreme treasure of fire. The flaming lotuses that drifted out from the fire lotus were initially only the size of a fingernail. Yet, this clearly wasn't their true form. The flaming lotuses increased in size as the wind blew, eventually causing each one to become the size of a large bowl.

As the flames on the fire elite zombie burned, larger and larger lotuses floated out the sigil on his forehead, growing in size till they reached the size of the largest lotuses drifting in the air. They then flew towards the surrounding bandits. Any bandit that even had a spark land on them was instantly incinerated.

This ferocity of this sort of flame was beyond their imagination. Even if they quickly used their pouches of water to try and douse it, they were unable to extinguish the little sparks. Anything that came into contact with the little fingernail sized sparks would burn, regardless of what it was. Skin, clothes, even armor and weapons all seemed to fuel the flames in burning even more brightly.

In the span of a few breaths, these bandits who were unwary enough to

have sparks land on them howled. The sparks grew to great conflagrations, wreathing them in flame. The terrible smell of burnt flesh began to dominate the battlefield, as their bodies were incinerated.

The people on fire were completely turned into charcoal, the living transformed into the dead. The process was just that short. Under the extremely painful incineration of those strangely beautiful flames, several scores of bandits near the fire elite zombie were transformed into charred cinders.

On the other side, the earth elite zombie, who was deep in the ground, used his ability as the favored child of the earth to steadily make his way over to Kosse and the others during the chaos above.

As the red archbishop of the Church of Light, Kosse did still possess some mercy when dealing with heretics. As he saw the bandits ignite and turn into charred pieces of meat, Kosse took a breath from the sacred hymn he was chanting and to yell at the surrounding Templars, "Save them!"

Han Shuo continued to use the Bloodlust Fang to harvest lives on the battlefield whilst keeping his attention on Kosse. When he saw that Kosse slowly approach, still within his circle of protection from the Templars, Han Shuo immediately gave the earth elite zombie, already in place underneath them, the order to attack.

The ground rumbled, vibrating like an earthquake as the earth elite zombie started his attack. Earthen spikes shot up, towards the Templars and white priests of the Church of Light. Their attention wholly on what was in front of them, they were completely caught off guard, instantly killing approximately ten people.

Those earthen spikes accurately penetrated the feet of the horsed Templars. When this unprotected part of the foot was suddenly drilled by the earthen spike tips, the attack had marvelous results. Despite their excellent armor, the Templars tumbled from their warhorses with howls.

The priests in white, who were purifying the souls on the battlefield, were the target of Han Shuo's hatred. Their purification of the deceased

souls had stopped the Demonslayer Edge from gaining more power. It meant that they were indirectly obstructing the Demonslayer Edge's evolution.

The Demonslayer Edge still did not truly have a soul of its own at this point in time. The Demonslayer Edge would only evolve and gain its own soul once it absorbed enough soul energy from others. Only then would the Demonslayer Edge become a truly unparalleled tool for murder.

Had Shuo had felt like a fish in water amidst the countless battles that had occurred after he'd arrived at Brettel City. As the Demonslayer Edge absorbed the souls of the deceased, its growth had accelerated. Han Shuo could even feel that the Demonslayer Edge was barely a step away from evolution. He would not let those pesky priests from the Church of Light put an end to it!

Thus, when Kosse and the others approached him, Han Shuo ordered the earth elite zombie to prioritize the white clothed priests. The priests, who normally weren't in the thick of battle, naturally weren't wearing armor. Each earth spike managed to impale a priest through, killing them instantly. After the earth elite zombie was done his first wave of attacks, aside from Kosse, well protected by the Templars, none of the white priests had been able to escape Han Shuo's wrath.

"Demon! I must get rid of this demon!" Kosse tightened his grip on "Revelation", then roared furiously towards Han Shuo as he watched the white priests die.

"You asked for this! I've never offended your Church of Light. It was you who relentlessly pursued me! Heh, any believers of the Church of Light who dares to offend me from now on, I'll kill every one I see! I don't believe that I can't kill all of you," Han Shuo yelled coldly as he looked down at the trembling Kosse from his vantage point high in the sky.

"Shoot him down! Axes, spears, polearms, hurry!" Fass roared with a pained heart as he watched his subordinates being consumed by the sea of flames.

The remaining two bandit ballistae turned towards the fire elite zombie

in the center of the sea of flames. At the same time, a multitude of sharp weapons was flung at the fire elite zombie. The lotus armor on the fire elite zombie rang out multiple times as he manipulated the fire lotuses with complete abandon.

Every arrow, blade, and sword shot at him was melted into slag or incinerated to dust by the scorching flames before they even landed on the fire zombie. When the remains finally landed on him, the impacts were utterly negligible. The fire elite zombie had the natural ability to reconstruct his body after taking damage, and had already done so once already. This body was already quite tough, the soft blows on his skin did hardly any damage.

However, even though the elite zombies of the five elements were nurtured in the five absolute elemental locations, the power in their bodies was not endless. Nothing truly possessed eternal power. After twenty to thirty lotus flames floated out of the fire elite zombie's forehead, he also grew tired and sent a signal to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo could clearly sense the fire elite zombie's thoughts. The fire elite zombie was not yet mature and so would naturally feel tired after releasing so much power at once. Sparks flew everywhere the twenty to thirty lotus flames went, while the bandits that were grazed by even a tiny spark were burned to death.

Approximately three hundred burnt black corpses were forever fossilized on the ground. This had been caused by the fire elite zombie alone, who had not yet learned to fully control the power of the fire lotuses. Once the fire elite zombie matured enough to the point that it could control the fire lotus more deftly, his deadliness would become infinitely more terrifying.

Furthermore, when the elite zombies of the five elements were born, each one of them would possess their own natural way of cultivating. That meant that the elite zombies of the five elements were at their weakest when they first emerged. Once they slowly ascended using their cultivation method, their strengths would gradually increase over time, and they would be able to use their natural talents and abilities with far

more ease.

Han Shuo did not doubt that when the elite zombies of the fire elements evolved to the final stage, they would absolutely be able to destroy the world. Furthermore, they would be capable of working together in a formation too. Since the water elite zombie was also being nurtured at the moment, Han Shuo would easily be able to practice setting up the formation once he created the most elusive metal elite zombie.

Having used up all of his energy in one go, the fire elite zombie was beginning to show signs of exhaustion. He disappeared amidst the raging flames into the other dimension with a wave of the skeletal staff in Han Shuo's hand.

When the fire elite zombie disappeared, the fire lotuses gradually dispersed into the air after losing their source of energy. However, they still managed to take the lives of fifty more bandits before they did so.

The screaming, crying, and dodging bandits all breathed a sigh of relief when they saw the life-reaping lotuses dissipate. They secretly cursed and criticized the boss in their hearts. What was “not too dangerous” here? The previously defenseless Brettel City had suddenly become a terrifying demon castle. Anything amazing or weird they could imagine—this place had them all.

At this point, more than half of the six thousand Greenfire Bandits led by Fass had died in battle. Thirty-two hundred of them had died an inexplicable death, and roughly a thousand of those belonged to the elite troops.

Fass wanted to cry but had no tears when he saw the corpses littering the ground. Brettel City was like a demon city that had exposed its fangs. It was a tireless killing machine thoroughly displaying its violence and brutality.

The elite bandits, who'd painstakingly climbed the Brettel City wall, were assaulted by the two strange undead creatures. They fell down one by one, breathing their last in mid-air while tumbling down.

That was to the credit of the little skeleton and wood elite zombie.

Fass had initially thought that the Red Archbishop would easily break through Brettel City's defenses when the bane of necromancers – the Church of Light – appeared. Now that Fass saw the little skeleton and wood elite zombie easily slaughter the bandits after they scaled the city wall with great difficulty, while the two capered madly beneath the holy light. Fass cursed eighteen generations of Kosse's ancestors in his heart.

What natural nightmare of necromancers? What envoy of the Light on the Profound Continent? Complete bullshit!

The Red Archbishop and divine artifact "Revelation" combined can't even purify a puny skeleton and a few zombies? You'll be the death of us!

Fass cursed inwardly. He saw bandits spontaneously explode when enveloped by the drifting bloody mist emitting from the Bloodlust Fang. Simultaneously, he saw men and horses of Kosse's team from the Church of Light unable to protect their own. Fass tried to think of a countermeasure in a hurry.

At this point, Fass had also figured out that Brettel City was relying mostly on Han Shuo's support. Too many brothers had died or retreated in dejection. If word of this spread, the fame of the Greenfire Bandits would fall into a bottomless abyss.

However, if they didn't leave now, who knew how many more astonishing methods the horrifying city lord of Brettel still had up his sleeve? Fass was now truly scared of Han Shuo deep in his heart now. He privately cursed the bastard who had brought him the intelligence and encouraged him to attack this city a hundred times.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

The distant ballista began to once more shoot bolt after bolt. Flames suddenly shot out again from the war chariots, falling directly onto the Church of Light's Templars. Three Templars, along with their horses, were instantly sent flying.

The tired soldiers on Brettel City wall had rested for enough time. Having slowly recovered their strength, the soldiers resumed their control over the defensive weaponry to barrage the enemy.

“F\*ck! Retreat! Retreat!” Fass no longer hesitated when he saw the flames surging through the sky from the war chariots. A million gold coins was indeed worth attempting a raid, but given this situation, he might not even live to enjoy it. The war chariots coming back to life again meant that the soldiers on the city wall had the strength to continue fighting.

Recalling the terrifying lethality of the war chariots and ballistae from before, and turning to see less than half his men remaining, Fass painfully issued the order to retreat.

The bandits had long since been scared witless and were only awaiting this order from Fass himself. They didn’t dare to remain in place as soon as they heard the angelic word “retreat”. They followed Fass, beating a hasty retreat as fast as they could.

“Useless Church of Light! How the hell are you people the messengers of Light?! You can’t even purify four dark creatures, I really feel ashamed for you, blech!” Fass stopped his horse just before he ran past Kosse and the others. He glared furiously at Kosse,, in the center of the Templars, spitting out a thick wad of phlegm to vent his rage and contempt before actually leaving.

Fass had been toyed with by Han Shuo from the start. When he’d seen the Church of Light appear and purify the corpses with holy light, Fass had thought that he’d seen the light of victory. Who would have known that the purification power of the holy light wasn’t strong enough? In addition, some more undead creatures appeared and caused even more damage. Fass then felt that he’d been toyed with by Kosse, so it was easy to imagine the grievances in his heart.

Had Fass not taken the Church of Light’s influence over the Continent into consideration, had he weighed the fact that the Templars were the trump card of the Church of Light; given his brutal nature, Fass would definitely have ferociously charged forward with his underlings and chopped these incompetent Church of Light believers into pieces already.

“Shoot! Aim at the people in white outfits!” Floating in the sky, Han Shuo had withdrawn the Bloodlust Fang, now dripping with blood. He shouted

an order to the distant soldiers on the city wall.

The soldiers had restored their strength. Upon hearing Han Shuo's command, they immediately turned the war chariots and ballistae to shoot what little firepower they had left at the Church of Light's group. The Templars and their horses staggered, with even Kosse almost being struck by the goblin explosives.

"Bishop, what do you think of this situation?" A Templar with a cross insignia on his chest, desperately protected Kosse whilst asking hesitantly, as if he wanted to say something but stopped himself.

Kosse had been insulted by Fass before leaving and was wearing an ugly expression on his old face. Kosse's sorry figure dodged the goblin bomb, before closing his eyes and commanding in a low voice, "I've failed, again. It seems that I will need to personally see the Pope this time. Let's go, we leave immediately!"

The Templar waved his sword to point behind him as soon as Kosse's order was given. The Templars grouped up, rushing forward to collect their thirty seven corpses, placing them on the warhorses. They then left the battlefield that was smoking with explosive residue, not leaving behind a single item of the deceased.

"They're gone, they've all retreated!" An exhausted soldier looked at the gradually disappearing enemies and revealed an ugly, but sincere smile.

Some soldiers, who could still barely stand straight, saw the distant Han Shuo standing proudly in the sky above the battlefield like a demon god. They felt that, as long as this city lord was still alive, Brettel City would never be attacked by anyone from now on.

Han Shuo used the yin demon to carefully watch the leaving enemies. When he had made certain that they'd truly withdrawn, his eyes swept over the scattered corpses that littered the vast pockmarked battlefield in front of Brettel City and loudly shouted, "All soldiers with any energy, defend this place well. Don't relax for even a moment!"

These people were truly tired to death already. When Han Shuo's ears caught the deafening rumbles from the other two city gates, he understood



that the battle with the two other sides had yet to wrap up. However, the soldiers on his side had no energy left to reinforce the other sides, thanks to it being the most devastating battlefield. Han Shuo knew that they were spending every bit of effort just to remain on their feet, so he intended to personally go to the other battlefields.

The anxious civilians of Brettel City heard the weak cheering from the soldiers over on Han Shuo's side. These residents had been paying close attention to any changes from this side, for fear of being slaughtered, along with the massacre of the entire city. Some bold folk had even climbed onto the city wall to watch the entire battle.

Therefore, when the Templars and Fass' bandit horde retreated, the civilians in this area immediately began to jubilantly cheer. The people here had always been living a life full of fear, but now felt an intense sense of excitement and happiness filling their hearts. Being able to retain their lives in the face of the threat of a massacre made them extraordinarily happy.

For so many years, the city lords had always been the first to flee.

Han Shuo had finally broken this tradition with his arrival. He had seemingly turned the tides with the power of one person alone.

Han Shuo had used all of his miraculous powers to firmly guard the vast Brettel City.

Victory came full of hardship through twists and turns, but its fruits were sweet beyond belief. They had been limping along in life for all this time and now felt an unvarnished excitement at this moment of victory, because they were the ones to personally witness it.

When the civilians on Han Shuo's side erupted in cheers, the people on the three other sides also gradually smiled. At the city gates defended by Faulke, some civilians even took the initiative to join the struggle against the foreign enemies. These civilians didn't know how to use defensive equipment, but they could join forces by helping to move the huge boulders onto the stone-throwing catapults. Then, they saw with their own eyes how the boulders they personally loaded fell on the bandits, causing

horrifying fatalities.

On Faulke's side, when the prepared boulders were used up, the civilians volunteered to move household items from the nearby houses and place them onto the stone-throwing catapults. This gave the desperate invaders an even more unforgettable blow.

The side defended by Dick, Chester, and Fabian were facing the Flying Dragon Bandits.

This gate had two magic crystal cannons, four war chariots, seven ballistae, six rows of stone-throwing catapults, and a thousand elite soldiers. Dick and the others had no experience in commanding an army, so Faulke had arranged a thousand skilled soldiers for defense. Han Shuo had placed a huge amount of firepower on this side precisely because he was worried that they couldn't withstand being overwhelmed.

The leader of the Flying Dragon Bandits, Afie, was a petty, sinister man with a vicious heart. He'd already had another plan in mind from the beginning. When Fass shot the signal into the sky, Afie didn't immediately rush forward to assault the gates. Instead, he waited for a while for the signals from all of the three other sides before he gave the order to attack.

Afie was somewhat frightened from the responding signals from the three sides. He'd had his underlings categorize the signals into three colors: red, blue, and yellow. Yellow signaled that the attack was going smoothly, blue meant there were some difficulties, and red meant that the assault in that area had encountered a fatal blow.

Of the responding signals from the three sides, those from Han Shuo's and Faulke's sides were both red. This showed that the attack on those two gates had met with a fatal blow from the beginning. Because Dorcas had just begun to lure his enemies inside and hadn't violently erupted with overwhelming firepower from the start, the Flying Dragon bandits on this side only released a blue signal.

Two red and one blue signals didn't really look too optimistic. Afie planned to preserve the bulk of his forces, so he let some of his underlings outside attack the gate guarded by Dick and Chester.

Chester had never faced such a battle before. Upon seeing Afie's bandits rush over, they immediately issued orders to launch an intense bombardment.

Because Han Shuo was worried they would be unable to bear the attacks, the firepower on their side was the fiercest. The two magic crystal cannons and war chariots spat out surges of flames at the same time as the ballista and catapults let loose their lethal barrage. Half of the several hundred low rank bandits sent out by Afie were killed instantly.

Afie jumped in fright. He immediately gave an order to hold and observe, his heart somewhat chilled in fright.

When his enemies were successfully lured into his trap, Dorcas unleashed devastating firepower. Those closest to the source died instantly and the few hundred bandits who'd reached the walls didn't leave behind enough for a grave by the time Dorcas was done.

When the bandit who'd released the blue signal saw the originally calm firepower become violent, he hurriedly released two red signals in a row out of shock.

Afie had already been a little worried in his heart when he saw the sudden two red signals in a row after the blue signal. He instantly ordered a retreat of a hundred meters, not allowing anyone to continue attacking.

Afie didn't mobilize a single soldier until the moment Fass withdrew. He only remained on his warhorse and glared at the enemies on the distant city wall, as if trying to cow the opponents with his presence alone. Afie was waiting for the other bandit groups who'd attacked Brettel City to gain some footholds first. Only then would he make a move against those bastards on the city wall.

When the news of Fass' failure was delivered one step ahead to him, the frightened Afie knew that they wouldn't be able to reap any benefits this time. He immediately issued an order to retreat without another word. The bandit group, who always advanced fiercely and bravely, now quickly retreated far away, leaving behind roughly two hundred corpses.

It was the first time Chester and Fabian had experienced such a battle.

Seeing Afie dejectedly leave in resentment, they thought complacently,  
“Our side is indeed powerful. We’re only fighting from a distance. Could it  
be that we already scared them off with just our momentum alone?”

# Chapter 335: The Fruits of Victory

Han Shuo was most concerned about the gates that Chester and Dick were responsible for. But when he reached the gates, he found the soldiers safe and sound. The vestiges of their battle didn't seem too prominent. The two hundred bandit corpses indicated that the bandits' losses hadn't been too severe, either.

"Are you alright?" Han Shuo descended, an aura of victory swirling around him, and looked at the immeasurably self-satisfied Chester and the others, letting out a sigh of relief as he did so.

"We're fine, my lord. Those cowardly bandits charged us only the once, and then just stayed in the distance and observed the gate. They suddenly retreated just now." Chester gave a relaxed smile, pointing in the direction that Afie had run off in.

Looking into the distance, Han Shuo nodded, saying "That's good. Leave three hundred to defend this gate; the rest of you, go help Dorcas."

"Alright, we'll depart immediately!" Dick and Chester responded in tandem, turning to give spirited orders to the idle troops, haranguing them to get various appendages in order and head out to aid the other two sides.

Rumble...

A deafening explosion sounded from the direction of the other two walls. Han Shuo flew directly over to Faulke's defensive perimeter. Dorcas had already demonstrated his military genius during the merchant kidnapping incident, and was now once again doing so in exterminating the bandits. Han Shuo trusted that he was fine.

On the contrary, it was the high-born, stronger Faulke who needed help. Although it may have been because of his status as a knight, but he was bound by a code of conduct that limited his effectiveness. On the battlefield, his formations weren't flexible enough, and Han Shuo was worried that he might fall into trouble.

When Han Shuo arrived at the city wall under Faulke's command, he

found bandit corpses lying everywhere. Looking at the walls, the bandits seemed to have exacted their revenge in kind, leaving countless soldier corpses riddled with arrows. Han Shuo immediately understood that the battle here must have been very intense.

The bandit group Faulke was fighting was the Battleaxe Mercenary Group. The towering leader of the Battleaxe Mercenary Group, Bynam, wasn't good at commanding troops like Fass, nor was his head filled with crafty schemes like Alfie. This single minded simpleton had been blinded by the prospect of a million gold coins and had just committed all his troops in a frontal assault.

Defending the wall, Faulke fought against the assault as if his life depended on it. With the battle devolving into a war of attrition, the barbaric Bynam, who'd sustained severe casualties, did not appear to know the definition of "retreat". He yelled madly at his soldiers to continue attacking the walls. Faulke's side had lost a hundred men, with around four hundred more with various injuries. The remaining soldiers were all bone deep exhausted.

If it hadn't been for the citizens of Brettel City joining the fray against the bandits at the tipping point then Faulke's side would have been in severe danger. When Han Shuo arrived, the battle had once again reached a critical juncture. Tens of ferocious bandits had already stormed the city walls, entangling the soldiers in furious battle.

The exhausted soldiers used their last vestiges of energy to hack, slash, and cut their foes down. A few citizens, unafraid of death in the face of the bandit threat, had willingly joined the fray. Wielding spears and javelins, they furiously stabbed and thrust at the bandits climbing the city walls.

Like a bolt of lightning, Han Shuo slammed into the city wall like a tornado of death.

He whistled loudly and charged the bandits on the wall alone. Like an unstoppable boulder, he tore through bandits using his bare hands, leaving behind a trail of what could only be described as vivisection specimens.

As these bandits died at his hand, there was nothing to stop Han Shuo from starting his loud, long chant with his bone staff. A horrifying army of undead gradually gathered beneath the city walls.

With a single stroke from the evil knight's killing aura infused bone spear, several bandits were mutilated and swept away. Flocks of gargoyles hurtled by like ravens, unhorsing and carrying off the bandits that had come galloping in on horses. The bandits that were carried off would be torn to pieces by the gargoyles' claws long before they hit the ground.

This time, when acid marshes appeared amidst the bandits, the sounds of screaming never stopped. Under the corrosion of the acid marshes, scores of bandits became brand-new, snowy white skeletons.

Han Shuo's actions had completely turned the situation around. Surging waves of magic rippled out whenever the demon-like Han Shuo waved his bone staff. Groups of undead soldiers would rise up, or mind-bogglingly destructive acid marshes would appear. From time to time, a few corpses would even explode. The Battleaxe Mercenary Group's casualties soared exponentially with every passing second.

The battlefield was a complete rout by the time Han Shuo was done. The furious leader of the Battleaxe Mercenary Group, Bynam, was roaring nonstop. In his fury, he completely overestimated himself, jumping on a horse and boldly charged towards Han Shuo. However, a shake of the bone staff sent a blast of magic towards him. The blast turned into rows of bone lances that flew through the air, a dense rain that blotted out the sun.

There were no flukes. Every part of Bynam and his horse that weren't covered by armor was pierced through by bone lances. Two bone lances found his eye sockets. Bynam died on the spot without even uttering a sound.

"Boss! The boss is dead!" Han Shuo's arrival caused panic amongst the bandits. The shocked and fearful bandits began shrieking loudly upon discovering that their leader was dead.

The remaining Battleaxe bandits all bolted as if using this as an excuse, recklessly running from this area. An audacious yet careful bandit

pretended to retrieve Bynam's corpse, secretly taking off the latter's space ring and pocketing it.

Han Shuo loved looting the dead and discovered the bandit's actions with a glance. He laughed lightly, flying from the city walls like a specter, silently catching up to the ecstatic bandit who was hurriedly running away. He said, "Sometimes, the wealth of the dead will also cause you to lose your life!"

The bandit who had taken Bynam's space ring thought that it was an avaricious compatriot who desired a share of the wealth upon hearing those words coming from behind him. He turned around and struck out with a battleaxe with an ominous glint in his eyes.

The battleaxe heading towards him flew away with a "Ding! " upon meeting a flick of Han Shuo's right forefinger. The reverb travelled down the bandit's arm, sending him staggering backwards. . He turned around, finally seeing who the person behind him was.

Once he saw who was behind him, the bandit didn't dare hold back. He threw himself into a roll and tried to crawl through the underbrush to escape. Unfortunately, in front of the airborne Han Shuo, the bandit's actions were as transparent as a clear spring. Han Shuo easily impaled the bandit from behind, relieving him of Bynam's space ring and laughing as he flew back to Faulke.

"Some more unexpected revenue!" Han Shuo laughingly said to the panting Faulke.

Faulke understood that the danger he was facing was gone with Han Shuo's arrival. Faulke was also fully aware of the magnitude of Han Shuo's astounding power, and that the battle would be over the instant Han Shuo appeared. The facts proved Faulke's judgement correct.

The bandits did not dare to linger after Bynam's death, especially in the face of the undead army's terrifying combat ability. As such, they retreated from the city like a tide, leaving behind a thousand or so corpses.

The rumbling of the magic cannons from the other side of the city gradually subsided as well.



No longer hearing the sound of the cannons, Han Shuo understood that Dorcas' battle must also be drawing to a close. This was the first trial that Brettel City had faced, and they'd managed to pull through with everyone's cooperation.

Having witnessed Han Shuo's frightening strength, all of the citizens who'd participated in the battle looked at Han Shuo with reverence. When the last bandit disappeared over the horizon, this reverence gradually grew into trust. Loud cheers suddenly broke out around the city walls.

"Today, all citizens who participated in the battle shall be rewarded five gold coins. Faulke, you'll be responsible for the distribution of the rewards." Han Shuo instructed, smiling slightly as he looked at the citizens who were revelling in the joy of their survival.

The cheering citizens let out even more excited cheers as soon as the words left Han Shuo's mouth. The look in their eyes as they looked towards Han Shuo became even more ardent. How grandiose the city lord of Brettel City seemed!

"Rest assured, my lord. I won't unfairly treat the civilians who have aided us." Faulke bowed respectfully and looked at the bandit corpses outside the city. The armor and weapons left behind by the bandits will certainly be worth a pretty penny. Also, their money pouches will likely contain plenty of gold coins?

"Yeah, the bandits really have left. You clean up the battlefield, I'm going to go check on Dorcas!" Han Shuo gave instructions to Faulke and then streaked across the sky towards the section of the wall left to Dorcas.

The cannon fire gradually subsided, and Han Shuo looked through the distant, thick smoke from the magic cannons. In the distance, the bandits were beating a hasty retreat. The battlefield was littered with corpses, and the numerous pockmarks were a direct indicator of a battle just as fierce as the other two. Dorcas had not let Han Shuo down.

Arriving at the wall beside Dorcas, Han Shuo found him making a list of their casualties. Taking a glance, Han Shuo found the bodies of tens of soldiers neatly arranged towards the side. Dorcas and the rest of the

soldiers were standing in front of the corpses, solemnly saluting the fallen after they had finished their count.

End of part 1 of the chapter.

Han Shuo walked up to Dorcas, not saying anything. The bodies of the young soldiers lying in front of them were all riddled with arrows. There were more who were killed by flying battleaxes, some even missing limbs. They must have suffered considerably prior to dying.

A grief-stricken aura emanated from the saluting Dorcas and soldiers. Han Shuo copied them, and saluted to pay his respects to the deceased. After a while, Dorcas opened his mouth and said, "There will certainly be casualties in war. Nobody has the power to change this. The only thing I can do is make sure that our casualties are as few as possible, and make sure the enemy suffers as many of these tragedies as possible."

Nodding his head in agreement, Han Shuo said "That's right. Sometimes, being cruel to your enemy is being benevolent to yourself. I think we need to upgrade our soldiers' equipment, with sturdier armor and weapons. This will make it easier for our soldiers to survive."

"My Lord, how are the conditions of the other three walls?" Dorcas took a deep breath, finally taking his eyes off the soldier's corpses.

"Apart from Dick's section, the others are more or less the same as yours; though we all held out." Han Shuo gave a gratified smile as he answered Dorcas's question.

Nodding his head, Dorcas heaved a sigh of relief and said "That's good!"

Clop, clop, clop.

At this time, Dick, Chester, and the others had finally dashed all the way across the city. Upon discovering Han Shuo already standing there, they understood that the battle must have already ended.

It had turned to dusk at some point. The last ray of sunshine gave birth to a fiery sunset. Under the glow of the sunset, the drifting smoke painted the world in blood, adding a touch of desolate beauty to the battlefield that looked like hell on earth.

Flocks of crows cawed as they flew, swooping down on the corpses of the bandits. They gleefully tore at and swallowed that beautiful flesh, giving off cries that disgusted people. As the sun set, the dense mass of crows grew more numerous, their grim screeches a bitter end to the unbearable scene.

“It’s over. It’s finally over!” Han Shuo mumbled a few words to himself, returning to the governor’s manor.

Smoke continued to billow outside Brettel City for three consecutive days. The citizens who resided close to the city gates all smelt the strong, pungent odor of burnt flesh.

A total of fifteen thousand bandits had attacked the city. In the end, they’d left behind eight thousand corpses, four hundred thousand gold worth of armor and weapons, as well as roughly two hundred thousand gold as loot. In addition, the Battleaxe leader’s spatial ring also contained three hundred thousand gold.

The four large bandit groups had arrived greedy for gold. Unfortunately, not only did they not receive a single gold coin from Brettel City, but they gifted a large amount of gold instead. Just as Han Shuo had predicted.

In this battle, Brettel City’s city guard death toll was three hundred and twenty seven. The injured numbered seven hundred and sixty nine. Those who had survived had essentially all suffered some form of injury. Furthermore, the magic crystals for the six magic crystal cannons were all depleted.

The goblin explosives and the more than ten thousand crossbow bolts that the merchants had transported over had also been almost completely consumed. There was not a drop remaining in the dozens of fire oil barrels, while the giant rocks used by the catapults had run out.

The few bandits who’d managed to scale the city walls had managed to destroy two war chariots, four ballistae, and a cumbersome catapult. The bandits also knew the astronomical prices of the magic crystal cannons and the specially refined magic ores they were made from. However, the six magic crystal cannons had been left untouched.

Han Shou finally gained the respect of all of Brettel City's residents after this battle, with army recruitment at an unprecedented high as enthusiastic young citizens flocked towards recruitment centers. Han Shuo's god-like power and influence had spread through the entirety of Brettel City. In the span of just three days, these residents who were at first filled with doubt towards Han Shuo had deified him.

To the younger generation, Han Shuo had become an unreachable myth and legend. There were a few pretty girls and beautiful women, who in the last three days had lightly powdered and gorgeously dressed themselves, coming up with excuses to hover around the city lord manor's main door. Each one of them looked flirtatiously in every direction, carrying who knows what thoughts in their heads.

The previously despised Brettel City city guard had also seemed to become hot commodities. Some residents excitedly introduced their beautiful daughters to the soldiers that were dressed in shiny armor. Brettel City had dramatically changed overnight.

Han Shuo, Jack, Chester and the rest were chatting with the merchants led by Fabian at the city gate leading to Seamist City. Of these merchants who had dared come to Brettel City, every one of them were true merchants, daring risk to obtain fortune. They had gained a new understanding of the city after experiencing the defensive battle of Brettel City.

The siege munitions escorted by the merchants this time had been utterly depleted. Yet, the larger threat of the seven duchies still existed. Therefore, when the corpses were cleared and the roads slightly repaired, Han Shuo immediately spent large amounts of gold to purchase even more munitions. Apart from unending war arsenal, he purchased even larger amounts of food and daily necessities.

Merchants would never rest as long as there was money. When the large deposit was handed over to them, the merchants were similarly anxious to leave the city to handle their affairs, emboldened by the trust that Brettel City and Han Shuo was placing in them. In addition, Fabian held a letter that Han Shuo had passed to him. Within the letter was a list of special

ingredients that Han Shuo required, as well as a few warm and sweet words for Phoebe.

“Jack, have you truly decided to stay?” Fabian looked at his distant nephew, asking one more time.

Little Fatty Jack nodded his head, a surprisingly firm answer following, “Yes, I think this city needs me more. Furthermore, Bryan will be giving me the position of finance minister.”

“Don’t worry Old Fabian, I’ll take good care of Jack. Let him stay and try since this fellow is so persistent.” Han Shuo laughed as he spoke to Fabian.

When Han Shuo found Jack two days ago, the latter had been still hiding in his room vomiting nonstop. Having witnessed the defense of the city from beginning to end, Jack’s appetite for meat decreased drastically, continually vomiting as he revisited the experience over the past few days. At that time, Han Shuo thought that Jack would leave, shellshocked after experiencing this gruesome battle. Surprisingly, this fellow had an amazing perseverance, insisting on his continual presence in Brettel City.

Han Shuo had found out from Fabian that Jack was talented in resource management and finance. Under the guidance of a few Boozt experts experienced in trade, Jack displayed a level of financial management that moved even Phoebe. The reason why Phoebe gave such consideration for Jack, apart from the relationship between Jack and Han Shuo, was because of his performance in management.

Knowing this situation and seeing Jack insist on staying in Brettel City, Han Shuo did not continue persuading him and instead gave Jack the position of finance minister. He did so in front of Faulke, Dorcas and the rest. The gold that had previously been obtained from Redbeard Tuoba, the four hundred thousand from Helen Tina, and all the gold that was obtained from the battle were all handed over to Jack, placing him in charge of managing this large amount of wealth.

Han Shuo wouldn’t dare to hand such a large sum of gold to any other person. He trusted only Jack, someone who’d grown up with him at

Babylon Academy.

Han Shuo was finally Brettel City's true master. He could appoint any personnel for any areas without need for any other approval. Faulke, Dorcas and the rest had no authority to interfere or intervene.

Jack was silent for a long time as he struggled between excitement and panic at holding such a large sum of wealth. Only after Han Shuo's continual reassurance did he slowly adapt to the role as finance minister.

Fabian's words to Han Shuo were truly accurate. With such a large wealth in Jack's possession, Jack systematically started to clearly allocate the usage and distribution of the gold once he'd gotten over his initial panic. Every amount was thoroughly recorded, causing Han Shuo to have a whole new level of respect for Jack.

Faulke and the rest initially doubted Jack, but were all shocked after receiving their stipend from Jack and hearing him clearly name the price of each armor and weapon. When Jack initiated contact with several merchants to help Faulke and Dorcas purchase some war equipment that were in high demand, both gradually relaxed when Jack bought the equipment at a price much lower than they'd imagined.

Busy Jack displayed the brains of a qualified finance minister in three short days. The young Jack was gradually accepted by Faulke and the rest. The few of them felt in their hearts that such a young finance minister was perhaps not a bad thing.

"Alright then, you all take care!" Fabian looked at the two youthful faces in front of him, as if seeing that Brettel City regain its vitality under their care, emerging brightly onto the chaotic stage that was the eastern region.

The merchants were escorted towards Seamist City by guards led by Chester amidst the farewells of Han Shuo and the others, gradually disappearing from Han Shuo's line of sight.

Han Shuo knew that Brettel City would definitely be even more powerful and prosperous the next time they came.

# Chapter 336: The mountain chiefs

Today was a beautiful, sunny, and mild day in Brettel City. The four city gates had been properly repaired and cleaned up. Aside from the potholes in front of the city gates that temporarily couldn't be restored to their original state, the terrifying scenery from several days ago had vanished without a trace.

The five mountain chiefs in the surrounding areas brought some of their brothers and sisters to Brettel City under the warm sunshine.

The earth-shaking happenings in Brettel City a few days ago had spread throughout the surrounding area for dozens of miles. It was easy to see how fierce the battle had been from the deep scars on the city gates when the mountain chiefs arrived. Through the information they had received from Dick, who was also a mountain man, they instantly understood the situation that had arisen several days ago. They were now in awe and more respectful towards the newly appointed, young city lord of Brettel.

Among them, Fulkin of Mount Taki had long since witnessed Han Shuo's powerful might. He'd even made a gesture of goodwill before the fighting had started. Otherwise, Faulke wouldn't have been able to easily transport the large amount of siege equipment back to the city that night. As for the other four mountain chiefs, they all behaved and came docilely to the city lord's mansion under Dick's guidance.

The new changes in appearance of Brettel City along the way left a deep impression on them. The magic crystal cannons, war chariots, and other equipment carried overwhelming momentum and looked much fiercer after enduring the terrors of battle.

The soldiers welcoming them along the way may have been the same soldiers of Brettel City, but the presence these soldiers exuded now gave them a strange feeling. Having survived such a brutal battle, these soldiers were no longer timid and cowardly like they had been in the past. Their armor shone brilliantly, and their bearings were cold and calm with a faint brutal, killing air.

“Are these people the same tattered soldiers in the past who ran even faster than the civilians?” Some mountain chiefs couldn’t help but inwardly wonder when they saw the drastic changes in these soldiers.

As they stood before the main gates of the city lord’s mansion, the mountain chiefs saw some smiling civilians take it upon themselves to clean up the surrounding roads. There were also some beautiful girls and women shyly gathered around the front of the city lord’s mansion, chattering and laughing in low voices. The mountain chiefs felt that Brettel City had become extremely different.

“His Lordship isn’t someone who can be provoked. Zack, you shouldn’t run your mouth, it won’t end well if you offend His Lordship!” Dick was quite familiar with the mountain chiefs. Knowing that Zack was the most rude and careless of the bunch, Dick had constantly warned him along the way.

“Dick, old pal, you’ve been running your mouth more and more nowadays. I remember that you used to be a man of few words before. When did you become so long-winded?” Zack was a short, sturdy man. It was unknown whether or not his skin was as black as charcoal due to year round mining.

“Elder cousin Dick, is this city lord truly as powerful as you say? Or are you deliberately exaggerating?” A female mountain chief called Delia spoke up. She had inherited the leadership of Mount Silk from her father. Delia had a high nose – a typical feature of the mountain people, and a beautiful pair of straight, long, and slender legs. She was around 173 centimeters tall, quite a bit taller than the average woman.

Delia’s appearance was just as charming as her body. Her wheat colored skin shone with a healthy luster, her eyes wild while still preserving the curiosity of a young girl. Her curvy body was covered simply by some leather armor at the important parts of the chest and belly. However, her arms and legs were both exposed, with a valuable dagger sheathed on her left calf. She very much had her own sense of style.

Both Zack and a young mountain chief Kent next to him revealed traces



of a fervent expression upon hearing Delia's words. It seemed that they were very interested in Delia.

In a place where beautiful women were scarce, like Brettel City, Delia quickly became the focus of many men's attention. However, Delia was a senior swordsman, in addition to holding the mining rights to Mount Silk. No ordinary person would have the right to capture her.

Delia had the frank personality of a mountain woman and was like a thorny rose. In a place where she was the focus of local men, Delia liked to use her advantages to play off the men who lusted for her. However, she never spoke encouragingly to any man, nor did any man have the ability to take advantage of her.

Dick was Delia's distant relative. He could only smile wryly at this wild cat of a distant little cousin of his and warn her, "You'd best behave! Don't try your tricks in front of His Lordship, he's not someone you can handle!"

"Humph! Just a young man, what's so great about him?!" Delia pouted and snorted gently. That's what she said, but she had actually become even more interested in Han Shuo.

"Alright, alright. Hurry up, don't keep the city lord waiting for too long!" Adleman, the oldest mountain chief, abruptly opened his mouth with a light scold.

Adleman held the most prestige amongst the five mountain chiefs. He belonged to the same generation as the grandfathers of Delia, Zack, and Kent, and they'd always banded up to resist the bandits' assaults. They had also kept in touch with each other over the years. Whenever the mountain chiefs fathered together, Adleman often gave guidance to the rest as their senior.

The others had no more words to say upon hearing Adleman's words. Only Dick was summarizing some of Han Shuo's recent matters to the others in a low voice, particularly Han Shuo's personality. Dick narrated in detail about how Han Shuo had personally killed a soldier who'd dared to defy him when he'd just arrived in Brettel City.

The mountain chiefs understood very well from Dick's previous

messages that this new city lord wasn't one to be trifled with. When Dick described Han Shuo's cruel and ruthless style, they all felt some apprehension in their hearts. As for Delia, she became even more curious about Han Shuo.

"Everyone best not to provoke this person. I don't care what you do, our Mount Tali will definitely have a good relationship with him anyway. We don't have any intention of making things difficult for him." Fulkin had planned to get along with Han Shuo after personally seeing Han Shuo destroy Troda in a fight. Otherwise, he wouldn't have had taken the initiative to descend the mountain and help Faulke, doing Han Shuo a favor.

Fulkin was the most stubborn amongst the five mountain chiefs. It had been years since he'd been willing to serve someone. When even Fulkin had made his stand before he'd met Han Shuo, the fear and awe in the others' hearts instantly increased.

They'd walked past broad, stone steps after a while as Dick finally led the five mountain chiefs to the banquet area in the city lord's mansion.

Han Shuo had retained all of the chefs that he'd recruited in the city lord's mansion last time. The banquet was held in the merchants' living room. Dorcas, Faulke, Chester, and Jack had arrived ahead of time to wait for the five mountain chiefs.

"Let me introduce to you all, these are my five fellow mountain chiefs of the mountain mines around Brettel City!" Dick pointed towards the five mountain people before introducing Dorcas and the others as well.

After Dick finished the introduction of both sides, Fulkin, who'd helped Faulke resist the bandits last time, laughed heartily as they gave each other a hug full of heroic spirit.

Fulkin said in a loud voice, "Faulke, my brave brother, I have heard of your amazing exploits even in Mount Tali!"

As a true knight, Faulke gave Fulkin a courteous, small smile, his voice warm and friendly, "You overpraise me. I gladly welcome your visit."

“Oh, where is your city lord?” Zack shifted his gaze around. He was waiting for Dick to introduce the young, miraculous city lord only to find that Dick wasn’t playing along.

Dorcas swept a cold glance at Zack, shouting in a low, somewhat sinister voice, “‘Your’ city lord? Do you mean that you people aren’t under His Lordship’s jurisdiction?”

Although Dorcas’ strength wasn’t strong, the presence he’d accumulated through the intense slaughter of battle couldn’t be looked down upon. His low shout was dark and chilling. like a sharp sword edge.

“Shut up Zack!” Ever since Dorcas had been brought back by Han Shuo, he’d gradually revealed his talent during the several battles. Dorcas had become the soldiers’ object of trust, his deterrence of his presence slowly outstripping even that of Faulke’s. Dick understood full well that this person’s loyalty to Han Shuo was somewhat blindly unreasonable, so he hurriedly scolded Zack.

The mountain chiefs around Brettel City had always looked down on the city lords. Thus, they naturally wouldn’t show any respect in their usual conversation. Old habits died hard, immediately angering Dorcas.

With his 190 centimeters tall body, Dorcas stood there like a sharp unsheathed sword. No one could ignore his presence. It was a pity that his determined face currently wore cold indifference, an expression that rejected people from coming within a thousand mile radius of him, making him unapproachable.

“Our apologies, we haven’t been respectful enough because the previous city lords had been incompetent. Zack’s mouth is unable to adapt so quickly, I think that he didn’t mean to offend His Lordship. I hope you will overlook this.” The old Adleman hurriedly spoke up in an effort to mediate, surreptitiously giving Zack several eye signals.

Dick and Fulkin also winked and glared fiercely at Zack, motioning for the latter to quickly show a respectful attitude so as to avoid making Dorcas unhappy.

Zack was crude, but not stupid. Even though he still held some

grievances in his heart, Zack ultimately bowed when the three looked at him and said in a small voice, "I'm sorry!"

Dorcas threw Zack a glance and snorted coldly, not saying another word. He picked up his wine glass before going to seek out Jack to discuss about needing more war equipment, not continuing to pursue Zack's disrespectful manners anymore.

"Faulke, where is His Lordship?" Dick inwardly heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing that the most unsociable Dorcas had taken his leave. He then turned to ask Faulke, who'd been chatting and laughing with Fulkin.

"Ah, His Lordship said that it was rare for him to have guests, so he wanted to personally prepare some good food, telling us to stay here and wait for him for a bit." Faulke explained laughingly. He stared fixedly at Delia, not hiding his interest for her.

"Another stinky pervert!" Delia curled her lips somewhat pridefully. She threw Faulke a glare before turning her head away, inwardly coming to this judgment about him in her heart.

When Delia turned her line of sight away from Faulke, her eyes followed the indifferent Dorcas with some interest. She discovered some interesting points in his seemingly forever unapproachable face. It seemed Delia paid more attention to men who didn't pay any attention to her.

The smooth tongued knight Faulke, humorous Chester, and Dick chatted with the five mountain chiefs. All of the five mountain chiefs were both fearful and respectful towards the new city lord. No one dared to be carelessly unfriendly in their manner of speech. They sipped from their wine glasses while gathering more information about the city lord from Faulke and Chester.

The young Zack and Kent were still extraordinarily curious about the rumors regarding Han Shuo's kidnapping of the grand duke Helen Tina. Chester and Dick were no gentleman either and paid no heed to Han Shuo's heroic image, narrating their self-confirmed true understandings to the two with low, perverted laughs.

Delia, who wasn't very far from them, was also very curious. Upon

hearing the four perverts' dirty laughs, Delia paid attention to their conversation and "accidentally" heard some things she shouldn't have heard. She couldn't help but blush to her ears, spitting in contempt and scolding in a low voice, "I didn't think this city lord would be so lewd. Humph! It seems he's much more lustful and perverted than the men in Brettel City!"

"Heh heh, His Lordship is truly an expert!" In this aspect, the dirty men seemed to think nothing of being brutal to a notoriously vicious woman. It wasn't something despicable, and they even felt some glory in it.

After Dick and Chester described it once over, the two young mountain chiefs all revealed looks of awe, the kind of awe that was much greater than when they had heard about Han Shuo killing many bandits. This made the eavesdropping Delia despise the four of them. She inwardly cursed that men were nothing good.

"My apologies to you for being late. The ingredients in Brettel City are too rare. Although I'm a little late, we will be able to enjoy some exotic food!" A hearty laugh resounded from within the room suddenly. The handsome, refined Han Shuo stepped out leisurely from inside.

TLC of an advance GDK chapter going on right abouuuuut now. 😊

# Chapter 337: Complete acceptance

Even in front of the uncommonly tall mountain people, Han Shuo's stature of over 190 centimeters exuded a natural deterrence that made him stand out like a crane among a flock of chickens when he walked out of the house. Practicing demonic magic had also given him an evil aura, making him even more attractive.

Smiling lightly as he approached, Han Shuo took out plate after plate of gleaming, roasted shiny golden meat from his space ring and placed them onto the table in front of everyone.

"Ladies and gentlemen, these are some very rare meats from distant lands that I've taken pains to hunt and prepare. Would you like to have a taste?" Pulling all the dishes out, Han Shuo smiled as he invited everyone to try a piece.

Jack was pulled to the other side by Dorcas to discuss military budgets. But when he smelled the mouthwatering fragrance of roasted meat, something he hadn't tasted in so long, his belly couldn't control its desire for good food. Jack quickly threw off the pestering Dorcas and came running over.

Dorcas was a fanatic with a fiery thirst for war. His only interest was slowly polishing his training methods to create an even more powerful, explosive force out of the soldiers under his command.

Therefore, Dorcas became especially interested in Little Fatty Jack, since he was in charge of the budget. Dorcas used all the tricks at his disposal to pry more and more money for equipment out of Jack. To be sure, Jack was a little scared at first, but after a while grew used to Dorcas. Now, he gave as good as he got in those little discussions with Dorcas, leaving him with just what was required.

"You little brat, heh." Han Shuo shook his head when he saw Jack quickly run over, then spoke to the five mountain chiefs in a relaxed manner, "No worries, everyone hurry up and try some, these things aren't delicacies you'd find normally."

Even Fulkin, who was the only one among the mountain chiefs who knew Han Shuo, felt some fear and trepidation when he saw that the latter wasn't aloof and lofty as they'd imagined. He actually became even more cautious.

Jack was most familiar with Han Shuo since he'd been Han Shuo's only friend over the years. Therefore, he wasn't as polite as others. He used a fork to stab into a large piece of fragrant, tender meat, and chomped down on it. As he chewed, he let out a surprised exclamation of praise, "Mmmm, so tasty, what is this meat? It's really so fragrant!"

"This is a Manticore's forelimb, tastes good, doesn't it?" Han Shuo answered, with a smile. He pointed to the dishes one by one as he introduced them, "This one here is the tail of a Deepwater Venom Python, it's the most chewy. That dish over there is the brain of a Harpy, you have to try to know how it tastes. And this is....."

Let alone the five mountain chiefs, even Faulke, Dorcas, and the others grew wide-eyed and openmouthed with astonishment as Han Shuo's introduction went on. They couldn't understand how the meat in front of them could possibly come from high ranked magic creatures like those described. Hunting magic creatures of that rank would require a team of experienced, skilled adventurers. If any ordinary person attempted to do so, they would only face death.

"Furthermore, there are no such creatures around Brettel City. Where on earth did he go to hunt? Ohh, these creatures are not something an ordinary person could hunt, the city lord really is an incredible freak!"

No one needed to look at each other to know that everyone present was feeling the same, gracing Han Shuo with a strange look.

"What!? This is the forelimb of a Manticore!?" Jack jumped in fright, the fork in his hand still holding a large piece of jiggling meat. He'd heard once that a single swipe from a Manticore could tear a person in half. He couldn't help but cry out when he linked that image to the lovely piece of meat he was chewing on.

"Indeed, how does it taste?" Han Shuo laughed out loud, staring at Jack.

“The taste is no problem, but when I imagine the scene of the Manticore tearing up people and the ground using its front claws, I’m still scared!” Jack had some lingering fear, his eyes rolling as he looked over at the delicious dish. He seemed to want to eat, but couldn’t overcome the pressure in his heart.

Han Shuo glanced at the others and discovered their odd expressions. He let out a laugh, amused, “What, can it be that you guys don’t dare to eat? Hehe, I hunted these specifically to serve you, are you not giving me face?”

Dorcas silently walked towards the Harpy dish under Han Shuo’s watchful eyes. He forked a large piece of charred, black meat and swallowed it with a heavy expression.

“What’s the big deal, humph!” To Han Shuo’s surprise, Delia snorted, pouting as she picked up her knife and fork to start on the Deepwater Venom Python. She chose a piece of short rib with some cartilage in it, chewing it carefully.

As she chewed that morsel, Delia’s brows began to relax. She began to excitedly waver her cutlery, cutting a bigger piece. As she chewed, she praised, “It tastes really good!”

“Heh heh, the Deepwater Venom Python is extremely poisonous, even I don’t know if I’ve prepared it properly. Big trouble could come my way if by chance something had gone wrong!, Han Shuo’s lips curled as he muttered to himself, looking at Delia chew voraciously with her small mouth.

Delia had thrown her image to the wind as she ate heartily. Her small ears happened to catch Han Shuo’s mumbling. Her lively actions immediately froze stiff. Her delicate red cheeks paling, she stared at Han Shuo and her voice trembled, “What did you say?”

“Nothing, hehe! The Deepwater Venom Python is extremely poisonous. If I hadn’t prepared it properly, you probably wouldn’t be conscious by now” A loud laugh escaped Han Shuo as he explained it.

“Damn it! You even scared me!” Delia glared ferociously at Han Shuo but didn’t pursue the matter. She focused all of her attention on the



Deepwater Venom Python dish.

The other four mountain chiefs as well as Faulke, Dick, and Chester had reacted by now, particularly little fatty Jack, who took off with an entire plate.

These rare dishes were originally hard to even catch a glimpse of, let alone savor like this. Yet, Han Shuo had brought forth quite a large amount of these delicacies. However, there were more than enough people present. With the mountain people's famously large appetite, Delia was afraid that the others would wipe out the remaining dishes while she wasted time talking. Therefore, she no longer paid attention to Han Shuo and instead rejoined the tussle over the food.

The six dishes were spotless after some time, the maniacs having cleaned off the entire table. Some even held onto their forks, as if they hadn't gotten enough. On one hand, the food was delicious beyond belief, causing them to eat quickly. But the rare ingredients were also delicacies in their own right, which was an additional incentive to devour the food.

When the servants hired by Han Shuo set up the food that the chefs had diligently cooked, the guests felt them to be dull and bland. They now despised the ordinary food.

Their palates satiated after food and drink, the bunch followed Han Shuo to the meeting chamber, leaving the mess for the servants to clean up.

Unlike the antisocial image that the five mountain chiefs had expected, Han Shuo always maintained a smile, occasionally cracking jokes. Everyone was now a bit less cautious and more warm when they sat down now. The exotic food had undoubtedly played a large role in this.

Han Shuo sat in the center, as befitting his position. He smiled and glanced at the five mountain chiefs. Seeing them settle down properly one by one with restrained smiles, he nodded and said, "Don't be nervous. I've invited you here to discuss a matter of mutual benefit. You are all people from Brettel City. Maybe the former city lord couldn't hold your trust, so you gradually severed your connections with the city."

"This time, his Majesty has bestowed Brettel City to me, and I will not let

the city bear the brunt of the ravaging from the seven grand duchies and other bandit groups. Not only Brettel City, but the five mines of your group will be protected as well. From now on I hope that we can join forces and develop the city.”

“Your Lordship, I believe you can bring peace to Brettel City. I, the chief of Mount Tali, am willing to be at Your Lordship’s disposal. I know that you will not treat us poorly.” Fulkin had already made his decision. He knew that Han Shuo alone could severely injure Mount Tali. Seeing the impressive array of defenses that Brettel City boasted had simply solidified his decision.

Han Shuo had already expected Fulkin’s goodwill. When he heard these words, he said with a smile, “Many thanks to you, Fulkin. When Faulke faced the threat of the bandits last time, your Mount Tali had lent a helping hand. This lord has remembered this in my heart.”

“Your Lordship is too polite. I held the former city lord in disdain because he ignored his own citizens. However you are completely different from him. As an original member of Brettel City, this is what I should do. Not to mention since Your Lordship helped us break the siege against Mount Tali last time, Troda will never come back to disturb us again.” Fulkin was very sensible. Since he had decided to cooperate with Han Shuo, he spared no effort in forming a better relationship.

Seeing Fulkin make his stand, the other four mountain chiefs couldn’t help but look at each other. They knew in their hearts that this newly appointed city lord excelled in all aspects. Their only concern was that Han Shuo would take over their mines. This was the reason why they weren’t ready to compromise.

The mines were their main source of income and also the basis for their survival. According to what Han Shuo had said, everything around Brettel City belonged to the city lord, did that not mean their mines also belonged to him?

Han Shuo slightly smiled, he looked at the four mountain chiefs and said, “You four, are you willing to support me?”

Their four hearts jumped when his words resounded. The three young mountain chiefs didn't speak and focused their gaze on the oldest, Adleman. Adleman was silent for a while, then bit the bullet and spoke respectfully to Han Shuo, "Your Lordship, we are your people. We certainly want Brettel City to develop, but we do not know how we could be of help to Your Lordship. We hope that you will clarify this for us."

Han Shuo smiled, nodding his head, "Since you already admit to be the citizens of Brettel, this is now easy to handle. To be honest, Brettel City currently is not lacking anything except for manpower. The merchants deliver a steady stream of materials, I also have enough gold coins to support the city's operation. Only the problem of the lack of population can't be solved in a short amount of time."

"I know that there are thirty to forty thousand people around the mines on your mountains. Miners excluded, that total includes a large portion of elderly, women and children. Their living conditions near the five mines are not ideal. They only left Brettel due to the incompetence of the former city lord. They did so because Brettel wasn't secure. But now that Brettel is very safe, if you five are willing to, let them come down from the mountain. There are a lot of vacant houses in the city and living conditions are much better for them. What do you think?"

Adleman was moved listening to Han Shuo's words. He knew in his heart that it was indeed difficult to live in the mountains. Except for the variety of ores from the five mines, the trees were sparse, the wildlife had long been hunted, and water needed to be hauled from the foot of the mountain.

The miners worked day and night in the mountains just to exchange for some food transported by the merchants. The mountain people lived in the caves all year round without seeing sunlight in order to prevent raids from the bandits. If not for wanting to ensure their own lives, who would want to live like a savage on the mountain?

Adleman was genuinely touched for Han Shuo to first think of the pitiful mountain people's well-being. He suddenly kowtowed towards Han Shuo, speaking in a thick voice as tears spilled without end from his eyes, "I

thank the city lord for your good intentions on behalf of all the mountain people. I won't say any more unnecessary words. As long as Your Lordship can guarantee they will not lack for food and clothing and give them a stable living environment, I will do so without a word even if Your Lordship wishes us to hand over the mines."

"Elder, please rise. They are also my people, giving them a good living environment is what I should do. The five mines are the basis for your survival, from now on they are still under your control. There is only one thing, even though we have a lot of siege equipment, there isn't enough manpower to operate them. Once the official army of the seven grand duchies invade, I'm afraid that with just three thousand city guards, we won't be able to control the situation even with many equipment."

"My only request of you is that you will join us when facing common enemies and help stop them. We will provide enough siege weaponry. As long as we have enough manpower on the city wall, the seven grand duchies can never even dream of breaking our defenses. Are you all willing to work alongside me, fighting for the safety of Brettel City and her people?"

There were no longer any rifts when they'd spoken to this point. Adleman had worked hard all his life to resist the constant plundering of the seven grand duchies and bandit troops, trying to provide the mountain people with a better life.

Han Shuo's approach didn't conflict with his ideals. Adleman no longer held any traces of hesitation towards Han Shuo's proposal. He immediately shouted at the three young mountain chiefs, "You three little babies, why are you not with me thanking his Lordship for his grace?"

The three young people also no longer held any doubts at this point. Even Fulkin, who'd previously expressed his allegiance, bent one knee down to Han Shuo. Each made a vow that they would use their everything to defend the safety of Brettel City.

Helping each of the mountain chiefs to their feet, Han Shuo said with a smile, "The last time I went to Mount Tali, I saw that your equipment

wasn't very good. The bandits left behind tens of thousands of equipment this time. They would occupy too much warehouse space in Brettel City. Why don't you take them and equip yourself?"

The mountain people were hard at work mining ores for many years to trade them all for food and daily necessities, maintaining the basic livelihood of their elderly and children. They simply couldn't spare gold coins for weapons and armor. Some people only had rough iron bars of inferior materials to use.

Hearing this, the five mountain chiefs remembered the three thousand shiny armored city guards holding sharp, cold glinted weapons on their way here. They were red in the face with embarrassment when they compared that memory to their own shabbily dressed subordinates.

"Many thanks to My Lord, many thanks to My Lord!" Fulkin was first to react, once again falling down on his knees.

As Fulkin willingly paid obeisance, the other four mountain chiefs did the same with complete willingness. Each were full of excitement and admiration as their eyes looked at Han Shuo, increasingly convinced.

"Haha, everyone please stand up. This is just the beginning. I think with gradual development, the future of Brettel will bloom for the better!" Han Shuo once again lifted the five mountain chiefs up, chuckling merrily.

"Wuuu, there goes hundreds of thousands of gold coins." Only Jack, the finance minister, was sighing painfully. However, his cry didn't garner any attention amidst the joyful cheering of the crowd.

# Chapter 338: Exploring the underground world again

A large portion of mountain people who had lived around the five mines for many years already came down from the mountains under the arrangements of the five mountain chiefs, and once again returned to Brettel City.

The news of the four bandit groups' defeat had inadvertently spread throughout the seven grand duchies. The smaller bandit groups wouldn't dare rob Brettel City again. Even the seven grand duchies who were still locked in conflict were shocked by this news. Overnight, Brettel City had transformed from a city anyone could bully to a taboo existence, its new status paved by the corpses of ten thousand bandits.

When Brettel City was busy preparing for the mountain people, Han Shuo left Dorcas and the others a few instructions, then soundlessly disappeared.

All of the magic crystal ores had been used up. These weren't easily acquired either. Although they were unlike the goblin missiles for the war chariots where they were extremely rare and monopolized by the various empires for use in magical formations. Han Shuo had already instructed Fabian to acquire some more crystal ores, but now the former also began to think of other ways to obtain crystal ores.

Han Shuo first thought was of the underground world. The last time he was in the Dark Forest, he'd heard that this world possessed magic crystal mines. Now that Brettel City had temporarily calmed down, Han Shuo once again set out for the Dark Forest by himself.

Arriving at the Dark Forest, Han Shuo didn't tarry and went straight to the entrance of the underground world.

He didn't immediately rush in, but released a yin demon to sweep a five mile radius. After the yin demon covered the area, Han Shuo didn't find any traces of the Redbud Knights, which meant they had either stopped

probing the underground world or had gone in.

He didn't spend too much time hesitating. Han Shuo hadn't informed the forest trolls this time either and ventured into the underground world alone. After a long winding underground tunnel, he gradually reached the depths of the world. Since his power had greatly expanded since the last time he was here, Han Shuo only needed one hour of uninterrupted flight before officially entering the underground world.

There weren't many changes compared to last time. According to the division of the underground world's layers, the lizardmen were one layer above Han Shuo, while the Dark Dragon City seemed to be a layer below.

The underground world had a clear hierarchy. The weakest races lived in the upper layers, and the lower a race lived, the more powerful it was. According to legend, some races at the very bottom of the underground world resided were so powerful that they were even headaches for the gods. However, those races were said to be cursed. They were bound by an unknown force, forever unable to leave the underground world that was bereft of light all year round.

"If I knew sooner I'd have summoned Gilbert here. He's from the underground world and must be familiar with the lizardmen. I could save much effort with him here." Han Shuo couldn't help but lament after entering the underground world. He'd forgotten that he had no clue where the lizardmen lived.

The underground world was just as vast as the world aboveground. The roads were endless, numerous and complicated. If one didn't know the way around here and became lost, they'd be hard pressed to find the way back. Fortunately, Han Shuo's memory was astonishing after his brain had been developed by his magic cultivation. He slowly walked along the road where he encountered the lizardmen previously.

Last time in the underground world, Han Shuo had gotten into a conflict with the dark elves. It was due to Gilbert's presence that he'd become familiar with the lizardmen. Just as humans saw the lizardmen to be all alike, in the eyes of the lizardmen all humans looked the same. Han Shuo

didn't know if the lizardmen could still recognize him.

Relying on his memory, Han Shuo walked back to where he'd met the lizardmen. He encountered many strange races along the way. There were goblins with grey blue skin, dark batmen who liked gloomy humid places and even dark elves, but he didn't see any lizardmen.

The yin demon released by Han Shuo was also floating around to find traces of the lizardmen to no avail even after a long time.

When Han Shuo entered a dark, humid area, an ear-piercing screech suddenly assaulted his ears. He looked up to discover a mass of black shadows flying towards him, which turned out to be a group of men who could transform into bats. Astonishingly enough, they were trying to attack him.

"Human, leave everything you have here and we will consider giving you an easier death!" A batman in the front of the group spoke awkwardly in the common tongue, heading straight for Han Shuo's head.

The batmen's bodies were smaller than that of an average human. However, they had umbrella-like pair of wings and sharp claws that humans didn't have. These batmen liked to live in flocks and were just as infamous as the forest trolls aboveground. They wouldn't hold back once they encountered easily bullied individuals and would bare their fangs to tear their prey apart, looting their targets.

Han Shuo wasn't terrified and instead rejoiced when he saw the batmen fly out from the spacious, gloomy and damp cave. He sneered evilly, bloody lights shooting out from his ten fingers that were dancing in the air as if playing an invisible piano. Each light was as sharp as a blade, crisscrossing to form an unavoidable streak of light. As they sunk into the incoming mass of flapping batmen, agonized, piercing shrieks echoed through the air as they fell.

Han Shuo actually didn't touch the talking batman. The latter's small, beady eyes gleamed with fear's light as he watched his companions massacred by Han Shuo without even the slightest hint of resistance. He turned around quickly, trying to get away from this fiend of disaster.



“And where do you think you’re running to!?” Han Shuo lightly shouted, releasing his mental strength. His recently practiced demon spell “Soul Tremor” immediately surged into the batman.

The batman’s body plummeted like a plane fresh out of fuel. He vainly tried to flap his way out of his uncontrolled fall, but smashed into the ground with a thundering impact, leaving him dizzy and disoriented.

When the batman managed to come to, he was greeted with the face of a human smiling diabolically. The batman’s individual power was almost negligible, so he swept his small, beady eyes around to see none of his brethren. His wings trembling in his fear, the batman shrieked in common continental language, “Powerful human mage, please forgive the offense of this lowly petty bat, I beg you to forgive me!”

“You speak human language very well, otherwise you’d be dead already.” Han Shuo kicked the batman into the air when it’d just gotten up. Han Shuo laughed heartily and didn’t wait for the latter to land before kicking the batman around like a rubber ball.

“Good, I now forgive your offenses!” Han Shuo stopped his torturing when he saw that the batman was on the verge of falling apart, smiling merrily, “Now, you’ll answer each question I ask. I don’t mind dismantling your fragile skeleton if your answers aren’t good enough.”

The best way to deal with these batmen was to be brutal and domineering. This kind of race bullied the weak and feared the strong. They would bite the weak without a care, but would be meek and honest in front someone stronger. The way Han Shuo handled this batman made him toss away any idea of fleeing or lying. It responded in a shrill voice, “Powerful human mage, my answers will definitely satisfy you. Us batmen are aware of all happenings in this underground world!”

“Very good!” nodded Han Shuo. He smilingly asked, “Did a large group of humans recently enter the underground world? If so, where did they go? Where are the lizardmen? I heard the lizardmen recently discovered a magic crystal mine, do you know its location?”

Just as the scared stiff batman heard Han Shuo’s question, he

immediately answered, "So you are also a treasure hunter. The lizardmen have indeed discovered a magic crystal mine. There were many humans entering the underground world recently, but the biggest group seems to be a knight brigade, and their goal is definitely the lizardmen's mine. Are you with that group?"

"Cut the nonsense, just answer my questions!" Han Shuo secretly rejoiced. The Redbud Knights had already entered the underground world indeed. This might be related to the threats from the golden dragon, otherwise Celt wouldn't have been in such a hurry.

"Yes, yes, Lord Mage please ask!" The batman started in fright and spoke up hastily.

"Any other humans besides that group of knights? Also, where are the lizardmen and the magic crystal mine? Has anything major happened recently?" Han Shuo continued his line of questioning.

"There were also several human groups in addition to those knights, but their members didn't number many and their occupations were too random, so us batmen don't know the specifics."

"Only the lizardmen know the magic crystal mine's location. I only know where the lizardmen live, honest!" The batman quickly answered.

Staring sharply at the batman for a while, Han Shuo realized that this batman only seemed to know so much. He casually asked some more questions. The information the batman knew was limited indeed, so Han Shuo ordered after a short interrogation, "Good, take me to the lizardmen's place, and I will spare your life."

The batman didn't dare to mess around after being threatened by Han Shuo. It led him through the complex, winding roads straight to the area where the lizardmen lived. One had to admit, the roads underground were winding with countless twists and turns, and even Han Shuo with his astounding memory was confused along the way. Had it not been for the batman, a native to this underground world, leading the way, Han Shuo simply couldn't have found the lizardmen.

After more than an hour, through who knew how many deep caves,

twists and turns, the batman finally stopped at a valley. He pointed to a densely caved area ahead and said to Han Shuo, "That's where the lizardmen live, they like caves even more than us. The large and small caves you're seeing are their houses."

"The underground world lizardmen really live in such a place?" When he saw the batman's beady eyes flicker, Han Shuo was suspicious again and asked for confirmation.

"Powerful Lord Mage, most of the lizardmen gather in this place. The total number of lizardmen far exceeds your imagination, they are scattered in thousands of such areas all over the underground world. You won't make me take you to every single one, would you?" Seeing Han Shuo squint at him, the batman hastily yelped as it couldn't stop chills from running down its body.

Han Shuo had actually harbored this idea. However, the yin demon suddenly discovered a human sneaking around. This human's outfit was a bit familiar, so Han Shuo turned to the panicked batman, waving his hand as if swatting away a fly and said, "Scram, your role here is done."

The batman felt that it had been pardoned when it heard Han Shuo say this. However, its movements were awkward, tiny eyes staring fixedly at Han Shuo while it cautiously flapped his wings backwards.

Seeing this odd action, Han Shuo asked with surprise, "I already told you to leave, why are you still here?"

"I'm afraid you'd kill me to keep me silent. The whole underground world knows you humans are the worst at keeping promises!" Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, this pathetic batman looked at him pathetically, answering fearfully.

Han Shuo was stunned, then snapped, "You are worthless to me, I won't waste my mental power if killing you don't bring me the slightest bit of benefit."

The batman finally heaved a sigh of relief when it heard this. Not daring to stay next to Han Shuo anymore, it flapped its wings and turned its body, quickly fleeing far away.

The sneaky human was hiding behind the boulders. Han Shuo was certain they were from the Dark Mantle when he saw their outfits and hoods. Dark Mantle members usually wore this concealing, loose outfit whenever they were conducting missions.

Han Shuo jumped out like an arrow towards the colleague hiding behind grey boulder after the batman had left. They were blending in perfectly, one with the rock. Han Shuo didn't make a sound to alert this person as he approached. When his big hand patted the colleague, the latter was startled like birds scared by the twang of a bowstring and jumping from their dormant position. They quickly started chant out two fireballs.

This colleague was wearing a hood which concealed their face, but the magic chanting exposed their identity as female. The only thing visible were her eyes, which were full of horror. As the fireballs blasted out, she suddenly exclaimed, "Bryan?!"

Han Shuo waved his hand. Two inconspicuous purple flashes shot out in the blink of an eye and the two fireballs were scattered into sparks. Han Shuo assessed this concealed fire mage with some astonishment then asked with surprise, "You know me?"

Pulling off the hood to reveal a familiar youthful face, it was the fire journeyman mage Chrissie whom he'd met last time in the Dark Mantle headquarters. The short haired Chrissie gave a surprised cheer, then waving her hands around as she quickly explained, "I'm Chrissie, we met last time at Dark Mantle headquarters, have you forgotten me?"

With Han Shuo's memory, even a glance was enough to never forget someone's face. Chrissie was no exception. Hearing her words, he nodded his head with a smile and replied, "So it's you. Ah, I didn't expect to meet you again here in this underground world. What a coincidence."

"Yes, yes, really a coincidence. I heard you are the city lord of Brettel. Woah, you are really formidable, already a count! Mm, right, shouldn't you be at Brettel, why are you here? Can it be you are also in on this mission? If so that's really great, I heard you even defeated Leah Cain..."

Chrissie wouldn't stop once she opened her mouth. Question after

question were asked quick succession in her sweet, crispy voice. As the fully excited Chrissie seemed to have no intention of stopping, Han Shuo had no choice but to give a slight cough, cutting off her endless interrogation.

“Eh, Chrissie, can you take me to the person in charge first? Oh, if you know where lady Emily is, it’s best to take me to see her directly.” Han Shuo finally got the chance to ask when he saw Chrissie’s blabbering take a pause.

Han Shuo had known that Cecilia was in charge of this mission last time in the Dark Forest. Emily was acting as her assistant, and he’d be able to obtain all the necessary information if he found her.

“No problem, I know where Madame Emily is, I will take you to see her right now!” Chrissie readily agreed after she took off her hood.

“Then many thanks to you, Chrissie.” Han Shuo said smilingly.

Chrissie didn’t continue to probe around for the lizardmen’s movement, but cheerfully acted as Han Shuo’s guide, turning left and right on the complicated roads while telling him about the current status of the underground world.

Han Shuo smiled lightly as he listened to Chrissie talk. Every now and then he asked some questions about a few things he was interested in, gradually grasping the current situation in the underground world.

# Chapter 339: It was indeed me

Han Shuo learned from Chrissie that the Redbud Knights had indeed traveled to the underground world, and the Celt had already launched one attack against the lizardmen already. The lizard men naturally couldn't stand up to the attacks of the Redbud Knights, but there was an extraordinary presence living in the magical crystal ore mine that the lizardmen guarded.

A dreadfully fierce battle had seemed to take place when Celt and the Redbud Knights entered the mine. A strange entity living within the mine had suddenly turned very terrifying, and even one of the top ten knight troops on the Continent hadn't come off on top in the exchange.

The Redbud Knights decided to furl their banners and cover their drums after failing three times. They were now hiding in some cavern, and not even the Dark Mantle knew where they were holing up. They had concentrated their attention on the area that the lizardmen were living in and was observing every move that occurred there.

"Bryan, why have you come to the underground world? Are you also part of this mission?" Chrissie asked Han Shuo excitedly after describing the current situation to him.

Han Shuo shook his head with a smile, "I was passing through the Dark Forest and happened to fight with Celt of the Redbud Knights earlier. I've come for him."

Even Celt's green dragon had been killed, so he must hate Han Shuo to the bones, not to mention that the latter had chopped off one of Celt's ears. This was the kind of grudge that demanded retribution no matter what. To Han Shuo, Celt was an enormous threat who controlled the Redbud Knights. Not only was his strength uncommon, but he was an important national figure as well. There would be no end of trouble once Celt learned of Han Shuo's identity.

Therefore, Han Shuo had come to the Dark Forest this time from Brettel City to see if there was a way he could obtain more magical crystal cores,

and also to see if he could fully uproot the problem that was Celt to prevent future troubles for him after he walked out of the Dark Forest.

“What, you’ve fought Commander Celt of the Redbud Knights?” Chrissie suddenly shrieked and looked at Han Shuo incredulously. She immediately followed up with, “I heard that someone killed Celt’s green dragon, and even one of his ears was sliced off! Was that you?”

The light of intense curiosity shone in Chrissie’s eyes as she fixed her gaze onto Han Shuo. She seemed to have guessed something. It was rather Han Shuo who hadn’t anticipated that the news would spread so quickly. He was quite surprised by Chrissie. They were both hiding behind some red plants with enormous banana-shaped leaves. This was likely the temporary meeting place of the Dark Mantle for this mission.

A low shout traveled in before Han Shuo had time to respond, “Who is it?”

Chrissie snapped out of her curiosity when she heard this voice and also called back in a low voice. “It’s Three Dark Star Chrissie. Is it Wallace?”

“So it’s Chrissie! Mm, come on over.” The voice wasn’t as nervous as before. It laughed softly instead, with a young face popping out from behind a few red leaves. When the boy lifted his head and saw Han Shuo, he was immediately a bit unhappy. “Why is it you? What are you doing here?”

The last time Cecilia had tried to use the forest trolls to block the pursuit of Celt and the Redbud Knights, Han Shuo had forcefully prevented her from doing so. The other Dark Mantle members with Cecilia then had expressed their furious dissatisfaction. The one called Wallace was likely one of the shrouded figures then, which was why he was immediately unhappy upon seeing Han Shuo.

When Chrissie saw that Wallace’s expression had changed for the worse, she thought that Wallace didn’t know who Han Shuo was and hastened to explain, “What are you doing Wallace? Bryan is one of us! Haven’t you heard of his name before?”

“Hmph! He tripped up our plans at a critical moment, I don’t think he’s

one of ours at all!" Wallace was quite loyal to Cecilia as he snorted derisively.

"Chrissie, take me to Emily." Han Shuo wasn't overly concerned with an angry Wallace and only spoke to Chrissie at his side.

"Apologies, we don't welcome people like you here!" The young man named Wallace suddenly drew himself straight from beneath the red banana-shaped leaf and blocked Han Shuo's path with a cold face.

Han Shuo flicked a glance at Wallace and went on his way, not caring about Wallace's obstruction at all. When he reached the latter's position and saw that he had no intent of moving out of the way, Han Shuo slowly reached out a hand to send a surge of strength into Wallace's body.

The force behind the strength caused Wallace to stagger. He backed up a few times in a bedraggled fashion before finally falling on his butt on the ground. There were a few traces of humiliation mixed in with the anger on his face as he shouted, "What do you want to do?"

"Whether or not I can go in isn't up to you. You're just a small Dark Star envoy and have no right or strength to stop me. Just don't try then!" Han Shuo expressed the most direct kind of contempt and looked back at Chrissie, who was coming over to try and smooth things over. He smiled, "Let's go and see Emily."

Chrissie was stunned in her tracks by Han Shuo's display of strength and then turned her head with an exclamation of surprise, "It must be you! The mysterious person who killed Celt's green dragon and sliced off his ear must be you!"

Wallace had been about to stand up and challenge Han Shuo again when his face suddenly went as white as paper. His knees weakened, as he was so frightened he fell into a sitting position.

Han Shuo chuckled softly and flicked his eyes contemptuously at Wallace, urging Chrissie onwards, "Speak no more of this, I need to see Emily urgently."

Han Shuo's lack of denial was a subtle admission to things. Chrissie's



gaze at Han Shuo was full of worship as she ran over excitedly to Han Shuo. When she passed by Wallace on the ground, she said a bit apologetically, "Sorry Wallace, you don't have much at the moment either, so I'll be going now."

Chrissie no longer looked at the ashen faced Wallace after she spoke, hopping over to Han Shuo's side and saying enthusiastically, "Let's go, I'll take you Madame Emily. Oh Bryan, how did you slice off Celt's ear? That was too amazing!"

Han Shuo discovered that the Dark Mantle had chosen their hideout quite carefully along the way. The leafy fauna grew everywhere, and there were plenty of random rock outcroppings to hide behind. This place was perfect for the Dark Mantle members who were adept at concealing themselves.

All sorts of alarm mechanisms were set up starting from where Wallace had been stationed. These were made by hand and employed some magic elements in them as well. They appeared very adorable and practical. Han Shuo learned that these had all been made by Cecilia.

Although the curious Chrissie kept asking about Celt's destroyed ear, Han Shuo didn't say much more on this matter. He took the attitude of neither confirming nor denying things. When he saw Emily, the latter repressed the agitation in her heart with great effort and spoke with the dignity befitting her situation, "Thank you, Chrissie. I'd like to discuss with Bryan the matters of this mission alone."

"Alright then, Madame Emily." Chrissie responded with disappointment, casting a longing look at Han Shuo before she left. "Remember to tell me the details next time, I really want to know what happened with that!"

"No problem, I'll tell you next time. Thank you Chrissie!" Han Shuo responded with a friendly smile and then walked with Emily towards a cave.

Apart from the lush growth of the red, banana-shaped leaf plants around this area, there were also some small caves. It looked like Emily was temporarily taking residence in one of the caves. Perhaps she didn't

want other people to see them as she avoided some of the caves with sounds coming out of them and walked to a remote corner.

“You little bastard has started tempting other girls again. You have me and Phoebe, isn’t that enough for you?” Emily immediately pinched Han Shuo halfway when she saw that there were no other voices, cursing him in a low voice.

Han Shuo felt quite aggrieved as he laughed wryly. When he saw Emily let go out of fear of hurting him, he explained, “It’s not like what you think! I only met her on the way and had her take me to come find you!”

“Hmph!” Emily looked at Han Shuo distrustingly. “Then what was she talking about, what details and what explanation?”

“Eh... she wants to know how I killed Celt’s green dragon and sliced off his ear?” Han Shuo responded honestly.

“What! You did it?!” Emily was startled as she looked at Han Shuo incredulously.

Nodding, since Han Shuo had no secrets in front of Emily, he said, “It was indeed me.”

# Chapter 340: The upside down Gourd Mountain

“No wonder, Celt has captured and killed three of our members during this time. He must have heard from Kassel that it was you who saved us last time. Celt should already know your identity by now.”

The traitor druid, Kassel, had been pursuing Cecilia and her group when Han Shuo had suddenly rushed out to block him. After returning to the Redbud Knights, Kassel must have reported the situation to Celt. As many members of the Dark Mantle knew of Han Shuo, the three captured must have revealed the truth under Celt's torture.

“If that's the case, I'd also like to use this opportunity to kill Celt. I'm sure he has yet to recover from his injury. Now is the best time to go for it.” Han Shuo's voice was as cold as the tundra wind; he was determined to destroy his enemy at the roots.

“You're right, Celt indeed hasn't recovered, but because of this he is now heavily protected by the guards. The Redbud Knights are one of the top ten knight troops on the Continent, and Celt and Kassel aren't its only experts. This time, I heard that the fire grand magus Marceau had also come along. That old woman's too powerful, and extremely difficult to deal with.” Fearing that he had taken this matter too lightly, Emily hurriedly told Han Shuo everything about the Redbud Knights.

Han Shuo's lips curved into a disdainful smile as he replied, “That fire grand magus is already dead, so she won't be posing a threat anymore. No worries there!”

Emily was once again stunned when she heard these words. She stared blankly at the confident Han Shuo, trying to feel him out, “You killed her too?”

Nodding his head, Han Shuo said, “Yup, still me!”

Emily was speechless.

Pulling Emily into his embrace, Han Shuo whispered with a grin, “I

haven't seen you in a long time, and I've really missed you too much. Bringing me to this remote corner, is it that you want me to... heh heh....."

Han Shuo's hands started misbehaving as he clung to Emily. Panting softly under his skillful hands, her eyes turned soft as she petulantly proclaimed, "I only intended to discuss business quietly, don't misunderstand!"

"I've already misunderstood!" Han Shuo let out a low growl, picked up Emily, and ran straight into the cave. The sound of suppressed panting and moaning echoed out from inside moments later.

After a long while, the two walked out from the cave, their clothes still a little messy. Emily's eyes were watery, moist with a charming subservience. Her soft body leaned on Han Shuo as she spoke with a hint of worry, "Cecilia is in charge of this mission. She seems to have some prejudice against you; what should we do?"

"It doesn't matter. My mission and yours don't conflict, and I have no intention of taking credit from her. I only need to kill Celt, then go see if I can get any magic crystal ores." Han Shuo didn't care about Cecilia's impression of him, nor did he hold any goodwill towards her. If it wasn't for Emily being on her team, he wouldn't have blocked Kassel from pursuing them last time.

"Aii!" Emily heaved a sigh and said to Han Shuo, "Cecilia is actually a very nice person. She is friendly with everyone, and my private relationship with her is even better. I don't know why she would be like this towards you."

"Let's not talk about this anymore, I need to go to the mine. If anything happens, as long as I know you're still here, I'll come for you. Rest assured that no one will find me if I don't want them to." Han Shuo had obtained all the necessary information from Emily and didn't intend to stay any longer. He was ready to go explore inside the magic crystal mine by himself.

The Dark Mantle's purpose in taking a trip to the Dark Forest this time was to observe the movement of the Redbud Knights of the Brut Merchant

Alliance. The higher-ups of the Empire naturally needed a clear grasp of what the Redbud Knights were doing at the border of Lancelot Empire. Cecilia was in charge of matters outside the border, so she had taken on this important mission. Her reports were needed to slowly unravel the intentions of the Redbud Knights.

Magic crystal mines were a scarce resource for any country. However, the underground world held all kinds of races, and their numbers were countless, almost beyond imagination. As such, the higher-ups of the Lancelot Empire didn't intend to keep their knowledge of this mine to themselves. They only hoped to disrupt whatever the Redbuds Knights were planning and gain enough of an advantage to obtain some magic crystal ores.

When the Redbud Knights advanced into the underground world, they'd vanished without a trace after a tragic defeat at the magic crystal mine guarded by the lizardmen. However, according to Emily, they had yet to leave the underground world and seemed to have started plundering the other races down here.

Various races held sway over different regions in the underground world. The dark elves possessed a great number of dark magic equipments, the merpeople territory was rich with a variety of beautiful crystals, and other strange races had various rare resources.

Exploring the underground world was the same as entering a hunting ground to Celt. All of the races of this world had become his prey Except for the setback at the magic crystal mine where the lizardmen hindered his army, the valuables of the other races were all his for the taking.

The vast underground world covered an enormous area. Even the Dark Mantle, with its large manpower and secure base, couldn't find any trace of the Redbud Knights; Han Shuo naturally wouldn't waste his time on them. He was interested in the magic crystal mine and even more curious about the powerful entity that lived within it. He wanted to know how it could force Celt, a foe armed to the teeth, to retreat empty handed.

Han Shuo nimbly made his way through the lush shrubs of the

lizardmen territory like a lightly flying insect. Numerous caves were hidden in the various crevices of the area. Thanks to his powerful consciousness coupled with a yin demon covering the area, Han Shuo didn't rouse the attention of a single lizardman. He flew all the way to the innermost line, and stopped only when he reached a reddish-brown mountain with a bald top.

The underground world didn't go without light all year round. Various glowing plants grew on top of the thousand-meter high rock wall, covering the underground world in a soft, dim light. The reddish brown bald mountain was roughly two hundred to three hundred meters high. No other plants or animals resided on it except for some reddish brown rock.

Looking from afar, this mountain was like an upside down gourd, wide at its peak and leaner further down. This made one worry if the slender mountain foot could bear the weight of the two heavy, gourd-shaped spheres of rock. Many large and small caves could be seen dotted across this bald gourd mountain. None of them betrayed their depths, seemingly bottomless and leading to who knew where.

Several reddish-brown lizardmen with weapons in hand were cautiously guarding the caves, alert against the possibility of the Redbud Knights invading them again. There were many messy footsteps, several uneven potholes, and some shrubs with scattered leaves around the mountain as if they had been cut across by a sharp knife.

Looking at this scene from the outside, Han Shuo understood that this place must have been the location of the battle. He examined the area minutely, brainstorming a method to infiltrate the magic crystal mine. Finally, he summoned the earth elite zombie and had the zombie take him to the depths of the bald mountain, to feel out the situation. If he couldn't reach the center of the mine through the earth elite zombie, he would have think of other ways.

As long as the ground was soil, it wouldn't hinder the earth elite zombie. The earth elite zombie appeared along with Han Shuo's magic incantation, then disappeared into the earth in the blink of an eye. Through his spiritual connection with the earth elite zombie, Han Shuo knew he was

slowly advancing to the mine as per his orders.

End of part 1 of the chapter.

However, the earth elite zombie had yet to draw near the area when suddenly, a howl came from within the magic crystal mine. It shook the mountain, as if a sleeping monster had been awoken. A strange energy swept into the earth from the mountain, heading straight towards the earth elite zombie.

Han Shuo could immediately sense the powerful presence within the bald mountain. He quickly assessed the situation and concluded that this was a powerful creature comparable to the Lord of the Flames. The earth elite zombie was still far from the mountain, so Han Shuo hastily ordered him to retreat.

The earth elite zombie retreated nimbly, like a little eel, to Han Shuo's feet. He jumped out of the earth to Han Shuo's side without waiting for that strange energy to draw near.

Han Shuo waved the white bone staff in his left hand. A mass of black mist appeared, wrapping around the emerging earth elite zombie, and the white bone staff issued a light breeze. As the breeze gradually dispersed the black mist, the earth elite zombie had also disappeared without a trace.

Upon reaching Han Shuo's feet, the strange energy suddenly lost its target, and returned to the bald mountain's depths. After the mountain-shaking howl, hundreds of lizardmen sprang out from the various caves with weapons in hands, cautiously prepared and ready for any incoming attack.

"No wonder Celt failed multiple times. With such a powerful creature guarding the magic crystal mine, this would certainly give him a headache." Han Shuo muttered to himself, slowly retreating to a darker, more remote corner. He watched the now alert lizardmen from afar, knowing that they had received news of his invasion with the help of that strange creature.

With such a powerful creature entrenched in the upside down gourd

mountain, it would be somewhat difficult if Han Shuo wanted to advance into the mine. This creature had a terrifying spiritual presence, it had even discovered the earth elite zombie sneaking in from beneath the earth. As such, Han Shuo couldn't guarantee if he himself could enter the mine by suppressing his presence.

Han Shuo naturally wouldn't risk it as long as there was a single shred of uncertainty. Not to mention the powerful creature, just the hundreds of lizardmen endlessly appearing from within the mine would leave him hard pressed.

After hesitating for a bit, Han Shuo temporarily dispelled the idea of sneaking in. He'd wait for the Redbud Knights' to arrive to aid Celt, and then decide his next course of action accordingly.

Be it Celt or any other person, as long as their final goal was the magic crystal mine, they would appear again. Han Shuo fully understood this, so he wasn't in a hurry to leave. Instead, he remained hiding beneath the rocks, silently meditating while awaiting the arrival of those people.

Upon reaching the separate demon realm of demonic magic, one would reach a bottleneck, and future progress would become increasingly harder. However, with each realm's breakthrough, the cultivator's power would immediately increase ten, a hundred fold compared to before. Chu Cang Lan was able to fly to the moon at the mere peak of the nine changes realm. Reaching that realm in this world could be comparable to the gods.

Han Shuo only needed to make a breakthrough from the realm of "separate demon" to "carnal", and then take one more step to reach the "nine changes" realm. Unfortunately, starting from the "separate demon" realm, each realm would composed of many obstacles. Without fortuitous encounters during their cultivation, demonic practitioners would have to spend year after year in hard training before they could take another step forward.

According to the memory of Chu Cang Lan, Han Shuo knew that without fortuitous encounters, it'd take at least a hundred years to advance from the realm of "separate demon" to the "carnal" realm. Even



five hundred years wouldn't necessarily be enough to go from "carnal" to "nine changes". No one could say if the cultivator wouldn't go mad with obsession midway through their practice either. As for breaking through from the "nine changes" to the "omen" realm, even Chu Cang Lan had no clue. Otherwise, he wouldn't have kidnapped t Han Shuo, taken him to the moon and fought the three strong experts to seek a chance of breaking through in the decisive battle.

"One hundred years is really too long. I need to find other ways to do this." Han Shuo murmured, silently imprinting the information regarding "fortuitous encounters" from Chu Cang Lan's memory in his heart. He would be ready for any opportunity in the future.

The so-called "fortuitous encounter" was simply a place with an enormous amount of demonic qi suitable for his magical cultivation or swallowing a treasure nurtured by heaven and earth for hundreds of millions of years. It could also mean refining magical treasures and then using those to nourish the demon infant. There was also the method of devouring fellow demonic cultivators.

Sitting cross-legged behind a rock, Han Shuo considered the feasibility of these "fortuitous encounters" as well as some other things, such as the way to cultivate both magic and demonic magic together. After a few days passed unknowingly, Han Shuo's mind brightened as he suddenly thought of a new idea.

The last time he fought Kosse, the latter had destroyed much of Han Shuo's necromancy magic with his divine artifact "Revelation". The undead creatures and Acid Bog had all dissipated after being purified under the holy light. To a necromancer like Han Shuo, this was simply a fatal blow.

Had it not been for Han Shuo's practice of demonic magic that allowed him to use mysterious methods to create five divine elemental zombies, he would have lost the fight against Kosse and the knights.

The reason why the Church of Light and the Calamity Church were so afraid of Han Shuo was that his little skeleton and creatures didn't fear

light magic. Han Shuo was planning on honing in precisely on this point.

High-ranked undead creatures such as the evil knight possessed frightening lethality and attacking abilities, so they weren't too afraid of normal light magic. However, if Kosse used "Revelation" to release the holy light, Han Shuo knew that even evil knights would be hard pressed to avoid serious injury.

Necromancers and the Calamity Church actually possessed a long and illustrious history, but due to the effect of holy light on undead creatures, they'd always been at a disadvantage against the Church of Light. Once this rule was broken, Han Shuo believed the Church of Light wouldn't be able to hold onto their absolute advantage forever.

The Church of Light fears this the most, so I really should leverage this. I have the high-ranked evil knight and soon I will be able to summon bone demons and old fey zombies. I don't expect them to have the same ability as little skeleton or the earth elite zombie. However, if I refine them again with the demonic magic secret bone method, then they shouldn't fear the corrosion of light magic anymore right?

High-ranked undead creatures such as the evil knight, the bone demon and the old fey zombie would be frighteningly lethal without the weakness of holy light. When the Church of Light has to face a never ending stream of undead creatures fearless in the face of their light magic, won't they be scared to death then?

The more Han Shuo pondered, the more he understood that this was the fastest way to improve his strength. As long as he successfully created anti-light creatures, Han Shuo believed Kosse would meet his maker no matter how many knights he had backing him up.

"It looks like I need to start experimenting with how to rid the undead of their weakness to holy light upon my return to the Cemetery of Death this time." Han Shuo thought to himself as he made up his mind.

At that moment, the yin demon around Han Shuo sensed a big group of living creatures coming near. It looked toward their direction and saw some familiar dark elves, in addition to the brightly armored Redbud

Knights. Even dark elf Dana, with whom Han Shuo had dealings with before, had brought her tribe to follow Celt.

“Interesting, all of my enemies have gathered!” Han Shuo muttered, standing up from his cross-legged posture. He was ready to see how this group would deal with the powerful creature residing inside the mountain.

# Chapter 341: An ancient magical formation

Celt certainly felt like his luck had run dry lately. Really, it was almost like he was the epitome of bad luck! This trip to the Dark Forest should've been a rich experience, fat with loot and rewards. There was no way he would've expected to encounter setbacks by the dozen.

To begin, the Dark Mantle had seemingly set their eyes on him the second he'd set foot in the Dark Forest. They stuck to him like a bunch of irritating flies, never leaving him or his group unwatched. When he'd finally managed to loot the den of a golden dragon, an elusive expert had come along to pursue him. That battle had cost him his steed, as well as his ear.

Even that fire grand magus Marceau, who he'd taken great effort to invite, had inexplicably disappeared. Her two disciples wouldn't stop nattering about her all day either, so that hadn't helped his mood.

Finally when he'd reached the underground world, Celt had assumed that he could take advantage of his superior forces to easily subdue that creature. Yet once again, he'd encountered a severe setback. Even after three consecutive attempts, they'd failed to occupy the magic crystal mine. Other than three hundred injured men, they'd gained nothing.

In the end, his low numbers had forced him into an alliance with the dark elves that disgusted him so. His pride and arrogance had taken a severe blow in the last few days, and he intended to rectify that shortly. He would vent all his ill humor by seizing the magic crystal mine and thoroughly torturing any lizardmen who dared to block his path.

"Mister Celt, I hope you can appreciate and cherish this opportunity that you've been blessed with. It's not very often we dark elves are willing to work with others." A refined, elegantly attired male dark elf was speaking to Celt. A natural intricate web of creases and folds decorated his left cheek, and a tuft of a beard grew from his chin. All in all, the effect made him look a bit sinister.

This male dark elf's outfit was that of a noble, gorgeous and luxurious. A black magic staff was lazily gripped in his left hand as his slow words reached Celt.

Celt's face clouded over. He ordered the knights to stop when they were about to reach the gourd-shaped mountain guarded by the lizardmen. Turning his head to glance at the elegant male dark elf, he said in a neutral tone, "Distinguished Sir Arlen, you should know that we are acting in mutual benefit this time, and not that I've begged you to come with me."

"Our aim is the magic crystal mine, while you dark elves would be equally happy to see large numbers of the lizardmen eradicated. If that strange creature continues to protect the lizardmen, it won't be an easy matter for you to occupy their territory. That creature is afraid of flame, so I hope you've prepared enough goblin missiles, or we can just turn back right now."

"Mister Celt, rest assured that the sage dark elves are the true masters of this layer. Those cowardly goblins offer us an astonishing number of missiles in tribute every year. That enormous creature will surely be blasted into smithereens." The dark elf Dana was as flirtatious as ever, smiling obsequiously at Celt. Her limpid eyes that were capable of drawing people in, were sweeping up and down his body. Celt secretly swallowed a mouthful of drool that was threatening to leak out the side of his mouth. This wanton woman is alluring alright! However, he naturally wouldn't reveal the unbridled side of him that "gone to war" with a naked Dana in front of his subordinates.

Celt solemnly revealed a charming smile and nodded, "Then I'm relieved. We have gone in thrice and have some understanding of this creature. It seems unable to leave the foot of the gourd mountain. If not, we would have absolutely incurred a much bigger loss in our last three attempts. As the lizardmen are protecting the magic crystal mine, we don't know whether or not that strange creature has evolved from the lizardmen. It looks like an enormous lizard a thousand times larger than the lizardmen and occupies a large area underneath the gourd mountain.

You should be careful when you go in, it's best to immediately retreat from the gourd mountain if there's anything you can't handle."

"Well then, what are we waiting for? Let's send those lizardmen to hell!" Dark elf leader Arlen waved the dark magic scepter in hand, gesturing for his dark elves to begin the assault.

Celt hesitated no more upon hearing his words. He nodded to the several knight captains to his rear. He himself drew out a bright sword, but it wasn't the divine artifact "Starry Sky". Celt headed straight for the gourd mountain together with the traitor druid Kassel.

"So that fellow is afraid of fire, huh? Celt's finally provided some useful information!" Han Shuo secretly thought as he eavesdropped through the yin demon.

Han Shuo didn't immediately rush into the gourd mountain the lizardmen were guarding. Instead, he used the yin demon to determine Celt's course of action, hiding himself in a dark corner and waiting to take advantage of the ensuing chaos to silently sneak in.

The Redbud Knights and the dark elf invaders advanced openly towards the gourd mountain, accompanied by Celt's long and loud howl. Arlen stood forth as their obvious leader as even matriarch Dana, who'd attempted to take advantage of Han Shuo last time, followed Arlen's lead.

Arlen led several several bow or staff wielding dark elves to stroll leisurely up to the gourd mountain. He watched the lizardmen, running out of their caves after receiving the alarm, and spoke with a voice dripping with disdain, "You base and vulgar lizardmen! You have neither the qualification nor the rights to enjoy this fertile land. I will give you a one last chance. As long as you get the hell out of Paparlia, we noble dark elves will let you go."

Each race had its own unique language in the vast underground world. However, they still used the common human language when conversing, as the human language was concise and simple. Moreover, after so many years of development, human civilization was undoubtedly the leader of the entire Continent.

Many lizardmen walked out of the mountain caves. They stared in anger at Arlen and his lackeys touting their own nobility. A lizardman with a relatively coarse big tail pointed a weapon that looked like a cross between a knife and a fork at the extravagantly clothed Arlen. He shouted shrilly in the common tongue, "Despicable, greedy dark elves, this land is protected by the guardian god of our race! No one can even dreaming of intruding! If you dark elves dare to wage a war with our true god, we will fight this bloody battle with you till the end! Our true god shall destroy you despicable, dirty offenders!"

"Hmph, just an enormous lizard; how did it become your true god?" Arlen snorted dismissively, creating an odd hand seal in front of his chest. He spoke with a somewhat pious expression, "We are blessed with the protection of Goddess Rose, and will sweep out all the races in this layer. The dark elves shall unify all the great races in the world, and no one can stop this!"

"How dare you greedy dark elves look down on our mighty true god!! You will pay the price!" The lizardman's shrill voice became even sharper. He raised his tail high as he bellowed, snapping it in the air like an enormous whip.

The lizardmen possessed strong, fleshy bodies with incredible raw battle strength. However, they were unable to grasp the profundities of magic, so their culture was far more crude and vulgar compared to the illustrious history of the dark elves.

The dark elves proclaimed themselves the most ancient and noble race of the underground world. They considered the lizardmen as wild beasts that only knew to use physical strength. With their magic at the forefront of every assault, the dark elves often won the battles against the lizardmen, forcing them to scatter across the underground world in a desperate attempt to survive over the years.

However, every race of high intelligence had a common problem – civil war. From the self-styled most ancient dark elf race to the human race, they all suffered from this strange disease. Different dark elf tribes constantly fought among each other in immense battles. If it wasn't for an

inability for them to unite, they could have long since conquered this layer of the underground world.

Although the lizardmen couldn't compare to the dark elves in terms of overall fighting capability as they didn't know how to use magic, they possessed amazing unity. They had survived by virtue of this unity as well as physical combat effectiveness for the longest time. This was why they hadn't been conquered by dark elves up until now.

When the lizardman cracked his tail in midair, his brethren flung out numerous crude spears, heading straight for the boasting Arlen.

The spears did appear quite simple to Han Shuo. They were essentially only sharpened, durable wooden sticks. This greatly limited their lethality.

In sharp contrast to the lizardmen, the dark elves obviously knew how to utilize sharp weapons. Not only were their bows and swords abnormally sharp, but they were also engraved with intricate patterns. Their weapons did indeed far surpass those of the so-called savage lizardmen in terms of practicality and aesthetics.

The two young archers behind Arlen twanged their bows, shattering the oncoming spears in midair.

Completely unruffled, Arlen looked coldly at the lizardmen and mocked, "Lowly lizardmen who don't know their place! All your race knows is brute strength. The likes of you can only serve as our domestic animals!"

Celt could not be any less interested in the bickering between the dark elves and the lizardmen. As the leader of the Redbud Knights, he held the title of marquis in the Brut Empire. He'd lost all patience by now as he interrupted Arlen's speech, speaking to Kassel, "We're familiar with the inside, lead the way."

Kassel nodded. He understood that as a traitor to the druids, joining the Redbud Knights meant absolute devotion to the leader. Kassel charged forward as soon as Celt finished speaking, his body shifting into the form of an enormous eagle in mid-air.

The Redbud Knights abandoned their horses and followed Kassel to



charge towards the gourd mountain caves. When he saw his men already deployed, Celt turned to dark Arlen with some displeasure, “Distinguished Sir Arlen, shouldn’t you be taking action already?”

“I don’t need you to remind me.” Arlen didn’t put on a good face either for humans. Although he admitted that humans was more advanced than the dark elves in some areas, humans were still known for being despicable and shameless. Their notorious reputation in the underground world was more infamous than even the batmen.

“Let’s move!” Dana smiled charmingly as she gave the order to her lackeys. The branch of dark elves answering to her rushed out ahead, aiming fine arrows straight at the lizardmen.

Just as Dana’s elves took action, the numerous dark elves behind her divided into teams and charged the gourd mountain. A part of them stayed behind with Arlen.

Frowning as he watched at the conflict break out, Arlen felt something was amiss. He spoke to Celt nearby, “As long as that damned creature appears, our goblin missiles will end its life along with the gourd mountain.”

“I hope so!” Celt didn’t respond much to Arlen’s egoism. He too looked down on the lizardmen just as Arlen did, and included the dark elves in this disdain as well.

In the human world aboveground, be it the dark elves or the forest elves, they were all enslaved objects. Human claimed themselves to be the center of all things, raising the dark elves as domesticated help. Aristocrats such as Celt even had one or two young and beautiful dark elves serving at them at home.

The vigorous lizardmen immediately retreated back to their caves just as the Redbud Knights and the dark elves mounted their assault. Several dark elves carried enormous bundles on the backs. Han Shuo surmised that those must be the goblin missiles he’d seen before.

Looking at their postures, it seemed that they intended to throw those massive bombs directly inside the gourd mountain, trying to blow up that

enormous creature along with all of the lizardmen in one go.

Han Shuo's spirit could sense the seething anger of the creature inside. He knew it wouldn't be able to worry about too many things at once, so he once again summoned the earth elite zombie and commanded it to sneak into the gourd mountain.

The earth elite zombie sank into the ground, and was no longer obstructed and chased back by that strange force this time. As there was a very high number of Redbud Knights and dark elves inside the gourd mountain, it was impossible for the strange, powerful creature to sense and scan every single one.

In addition, its rage had reached the peak and finally boiled over. The piercing sound of its howling cry rumbled out from the depths of the mountain. The whole gourd mountain seemed to shake beneath its howl. Han Shuo was worried that the thin bottom of the mountain would not be able to support the upper part of the mountain and crumble away.

Han Shuo attached the only yin demon he had to the earth elite zombie. He could see the situation underground through the earth elite zombie's vision, but since it had yet to reach the main combat area, the zombie couldn't send any useful information. Han Shuo could only place his attention on the Redbud Knights and dark elves alliance.

In Han Shuo's view, the strength of the Redbud Knights far exceeded that of the dark elves, be it their equipment or individual power. They wore bulky armor, yet their speed still outstripped the sparsely dressed dark elves even without the support of the horses.

The knights all possessed cold and confident looks, having been through various battles. Their bodies were that of true warriors, sturdy with restrained viciousness. Each knight formed either triangle or diamond shaped formations as they charged, complementing their comrades while helping themselves run swiftly. This helped them avoid ambushes from the sides and the rear.

The arrogant dark elves fell far behind in this aspect. They still messily charged forward like a swarm of bees, their tactics unchanged in the last

thousand years. The dark elves had resided in the underground world for who knew how long, yet had never fought hand in hand in proper formations like the humans, let alone coordinating skillfully with each other.

As Han Shuo observed the battle, he suddenly saw a scene on his mind. He immediately understood that the earth elite zombie had cleared all the underground obstacles and had reached that powerful creature's location beneath the gourd mountain.

The earth elite zombie was showing Han Shuo his line of sight from beneath the enormous creature. The first thing it conveyed was a huge, ancient octagonal magical formation up above. A much smaller, also octagonal array lay in each corner of the formation. Each small array was filled with magic elements.

A ten meter long, enormous reddish brown tail was in the center of the formation. The tail itself was like a small hill entrenched in the formation. Circles of colorful lightning shot out of the formation, as if restricting it, whenever it struggled.

“Can it be that the huge creature is being sealed beneath this gourd-shaped mountain by this formation? If the goblin missiles destroy this mountain, won't the imprisoning formation be broken?” Han Shuo's heart spasmed with shock as he thought worriedly.

# Chapter 342: The Ancient Lizard King

The yin demon circled around the enormous ancient octagonal formation, taking note of every detail. Through the yin demon, Han Shuo saw chunks of large, clear magic crystal ores piled on the surface of the formation, obscuring the intricate details of the formation. These miniature hills obviously provided an endless source of energy for the formation.

As the earth elite zombie and the yin demon drew near the large creature, they saw that the large creature's lower body, as well as the base of its tail, were sunk into the center of the formation. The creature seemed to sense the two as it snapped the end of its ten meter long tail in the air. The dark red tail whipped through the air like a giant metal chain as it sought to smash the earth elite zombie into the ground.

Half the earth elite zombie's body was still underground. When he saw the python-like tail slapping down, he quickly dove into the depths of the earth. He could hear an enormous crash as the ground started shaking above his head.

A strange force shot out from the tail, shooting directly at the earth elite zombie as it dove into the ground. The earth elite zombie was given a huge fright when he sensed this force following him, and quickly tried to flee back to Han Shuo. He was only halfway there when the strange force caught up and surged into his body!.

The earth elite zombie began to thrash as the strange energy passed through his body. When the wave of force completely passed through him, he came to, utterly disoriented. Fortunately, Han Shuo had refined him using magical yuan as well the energy from the place of extreme earth. He was also surrounded by his natural habitat of earth as well, so the strange energy didn't leave any damage behind as it passed through him.

When the strange creature sensed that the earth elite zombie was alive and well even after the force wave had hit him, it flew into a rage. It furiously slammed its tail into the ground several times, sending a

multitude of force waves at the earth elite zombie.

Even though the earth elite zombie was still dazed from earlier, his perception was heightened beneath the earth. When he felt more waves of force coming his way, he instinctively drew on the power of the earth to defend himself. Using himself as the epicenter, he started to vibrate the earth around him.

As they broke their way through the vibrating earth, the force waves were gradually weakened. The attrition of their energy meant that when they finally surged through the earth elite zombie, he didn't show the slightest reaction.

The earth elite zombie had been disoriented by the blast of strange energy because he hadn't managed to use his natural talents in time. Otherwise, he wouldn't have ended up in such an embarrassing predicament straight off the bat.

"Eh?!" Han Shuo was astonished, then muttered thoughtfully, "It seems the five divine element zombies need to face dangers more often, otherwise they won't even know how to use their own natural powers. The earth elite zombie most definitely didn't know that this earthquake type ability could withstand the energy attacks, but magically mastered this ability when faced with danger."

As Han Shuo pondered silently, the strange creature restrained by the formation was being driven mad by the repeated failure of its attacks. However, as restricted as it was, there was nothing more it could do to the safely ensconced earth elite zombie at the moment.

Instead, it switched its attention to the Redbud Knights and dark elves, seemingly venting its frustration with the earth elite zombie on them. The entire mountain trembled as it howled. The piercing howl was accompanied by force waves like those aimed at the earth zombie, except this time aimed at those petty ants who dared to step foot into its domain.

The Redbud Knights and dark elves were completely caught off guard by the bizarre force waves. The Redbud Knights fared better than the dark elves, since they battled while enclosed by their fighting aura. They only

bled from their noses and mouths when they were hit, slowing down as they fought through the effects. However, the dark elves didn't fight under any such protection, and their weak fighters died or were severely injured by the dozen when the force waves hit them out of the blue.

However, their total force numbered at least a thousand. The powerful creature was restrained by the ancient confining formation, and even its force wave attacks couldn't keep the invaders from swarming the mountain, eventually invading the entrance caves.

Even as the dark elves died in droves, they still managed to place a large amount of goblin missiles in various key regions of the mountain. On the other hand, Kassel led the Redbud Knights in teams to flush the dusky narrow caves, slaughtering every lizardman they could find.

The lizardmen possessed strong bodies, but wielded crude weapons. They were no match for the highly trained Knights, not to mention the existence of a powerful shapeshifting druid like Kassel. As they retreated further into the caves, the lizardmen left a trail of corpses behind.

The dark elves followed closely behind the Redbud Knights, busily burying goblin missiles in every corner of the caves. The running battle drew closer and closer to the ancient creature as the Redbud Knights and dark elves trailed the lizardmen to the location of their "true God".

The terrific casualties that the lizardmen fielded caught the eye of the powerful creature. At the bottom of the gourd mountain, the strange creature howled in fury as it completely lost interest in the earth elite zombie. It roared as it mobilized several force waves to simultaneously smash into the Redbud Knights.

Even the uncommonly strong Redbud Knights couldn't withstand the impact of multiple force waves hitting them simultaneously. They died as they fought, the strange energy savaging their bodies. The weaker dark elves endured worse casualties, with several hundred dying before they reached the innermost area.

By this point, Han Shuo could determine that whatever the Redbud Knights and dark elves alliance planned to do, it was a risky and daring

plan .He was sure that the powerful creature was currently being restrained by the formation. In fact, it was restrained to the point where it could only reveal half its body.

The Redbud Knights could only see the upper half of the great lizard's body and the chunks of accumulated magic crystal ores scattered around it. They simply couldn't see the buried lower half of its body or the ancient magic formation.

It was one thing if the goblin missiles blasted the mountain apart and killed the strange creature. However, if the creature managed to survive the blast, then the destroyed mountain would no longer be able to contain it. Han Shuo was sure that once it was released from the magic formation that had imprisoned it for aeons, the Redbud Knights and dark elves were bound to bear the brunt of its horrifying rage. However, this wasn't something Han Shuo needed to worry about.

For Han Shuo, his only purpose was to kill Celt, as well as to obtain as many magic crystal ores as possible. For the strange creature to survive would be the most ideal outcome.

He mused for a bit, but was immediately struck with a wonderful idea.

Calling the earth elite zombie to him, the two headed for the strange creature, tunneling into the depths of the earth. Yet when Han Shuo emerged from the tunnels right outside the ancient magic formation, he was greeted by the ten meter long python-like tail.

It was certainly impressive that the creature could accurately locate Han Shuo while its head was up above. Han Shuo swiftly dashed to a remote corner. The tail chased him until it stopped seven meters from him, thrashing furiously but unable to reach Han Shuo at all.

"Hey, I mean no harm, I just want to offer some help." Han Shuo shouted up to the ten meter long tail, disregarding whether it could understand him or not.

"Tiny feeble presence, you will pay the price!" A message sent purely via consciousness shook the space around Han Shuo, seemingly issued by the strange creature.

Normally, the higher ranked a creature, the more intelligence they possessed. The dark dragon Gilbert or the gold dragon could both speak human tongue, and even the Lord of the Flames had the ability to directly communicate with its mind. Being able to communicate with humans meant that this creature was no less powerful than the Lord of the Flames.

This was indeed within Han Shuo's expectations. The creature had immediately responded as soon as Han Shuo shouted. Communicating directly with one's mind was even clearer than using spoken language.

"Powerful being, I'm not with those people above, I've come to help you! I can use their power to break the formation while not harming you in the slightest. I only want the magic crystal ores at the bottom of the gourd mountain. What do you think?" Han Shuo immediately put forth his proposal after learning they could communicate.

"Pathetic creature, those stupid fellows would still help me blast open this gourd mountain even without your help. I fed them false information that I'm afraid of fire and missiles. Now they are acting right in accordance with my plan, helping me destroy the mountain! No one can stop this anymore. Even if you are not with them, they won't believe you if you inform them either. Your proposal holds no value!" The creature laughed proudly, completely out of Han Shuo's expectations.

Han Shuo expression changed slightly as he heard the ancient creature boast. Who would have imagined that this creature was actually so cunning? It didn't appear to fear flame and missiles like Celt speculated. It had faked disadvantages in the previous battle just to create this situation.

Han Shuo suddenly looked befuddled and responded, "If that's the case, why didn't you ask the lizardmen to get you out? It wouldn't be difficult for them to gather goblin missiles. Since they believe you to be their 'true God', they would help you even more willingly. Why use enemies to help you?"

"I would have long since left this damned place already if they could communicate with me! They are cursed by the gods to forever be bound in their body, unable to break through their shackles. They can't use



anything else other than the power of the flesh to communicate. They simply don't understand me."

"Those poor creatures only know the crudest of methods, and that is to remove all magical crystal ores around me. They thought it was the only way for me to leave this damned cage." The creature seemed to have been imprisoned for far too long, talking nonstop with Han Shuo.

When he heard this, Han Shuo suddenly remembered that the lizardmen indeed only knew how to use their bodily strength. The power of their souls and depths of their wisdom were pathetically shallow. Maybe this was the reason why they were unable to obtain information from the enormous creature in this space, and could only call upon their determination to surmount every obstacle and remove the last bit of each magic crystal ore from the mountain.

End of Part 1 of the chapter.

So it seemed that it was not for their self-interest that the lizardmen occupied the gourd-shaped mountain and tirelessly mined the ore, but to help release their "true God" from bondage! Come to think of it, they didn't even know how to forge complex weapons, how would they possibly understand the true value of magic crystal ore?

From this strange creature's explanation, Han Shuo knew that it was now impossible to prevent it from escaping the ancient formation. Celt was on the verge of blowing the entire mountain sky high, and all it needed was a single damaged corner to break free from its age old imprisonment.

Thinking quickly, Han Shuo began to think of another way. Looking at the ten meter long, dark red tail, he remembered Arlen's words of the lizardmen's true god being just a large lizard. Inspiration struck, could this strange creature be protecting the lizardmen?

"Mighty presence, there are still hundreds of lizardmen who worship you trapped within this mountain. Once the invaders blow up the mountain, a mighty being as you would be able to survive, but the poor lizardmen would be wiped out to the last man." Han Shuo paused for

effect. He could sense the creature's hesitation clouding the atmosphere. He continued, "However, I can ensure their survival. As long as you promise me the magic crystal ores in this mine, I will lead them to a safe location before the explosion."

"Lowly tiny being, I, the great Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, agree to your request. As long as you can ensure their safety, you can take as much of this ore as you can carry." After a brief silence, the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi gave Han Shuo his promise.

Han Shuo didn't linger after receiving Dagassi's promise. He immediately ordered the earth elite zombie to dig a tunnel to the surface. The earth elite zombie complied, earth readily parting for him. However, halfway through, the zombie sent him a message of helplessness. Han Shuo had already guessed the root of the problem and quickly shot towards the half finished tunnel.

Apart from the large space that the ancient magic formation occupied, the earth was just compacted soil from the outskirts of the mountain to Ancient Lizard King Dagassi's enormous tail. The earth elite zombie discovered that magic crystal ores harder than iron ores stood in his way as he started digging upwards.

Even the earth elite zombie's natural powers were useless against magic crystal ores. He stopped halfway, at a loss of how to proceed. After all, the earth elite zombie was just an earth elite zombie. He didn't have the power of the metal elite zombie to level and ravage mountains.

"My poor children are dying in droves. Little human, hurry up and act." Ancient Lizard King Dagassi sent a surge of urgent messages into Han Shuo's mind.

Pressed for time, Han Shuo took out the peerless Demonslayer Edge. The weapon spun like a drill in his hand as he thrust it upwards. Large chunks of magic crystal ore vanished into Han Shuo's space ring before they'd even had time to touch the ground. Although his speed was a bit slower than the earth elite zombie's use of his natural talents, Han Shuo was still able to drill upwards at the rate of several meters per second with the help

of the Demonslayer Edge.

As the Ancient Lizard King hurried him on, each rotation of the Demonslayer Edge brought with it a large chunk of magic crystal ore into Han Shuo's space ring. Within a few moments, he arrived where the upper body and head of the Lizard King was located, above the magic formation.

Han Shuo looked up and couldn't help but give a low exclamation. This Ancient Lizard King did indeed look like an enormous lizardman, but for a few differences. A sharp horn grew from the top of his head, and a line of red, sword-like sharp spikes sprouted down its back from the horn.

The Ancient Lizard King was even bigger than the green dragon. He resembled a towering mountain of reddish-brown muscle. At the height of twenty meters, his body seemed to be made of thick, reddish-brown boulders.

His deep red eyes shone like two lanterns high in the air. He stared down at the ant-like Han Shuo beneath him, once again sending out urgent messages.

"Understood, understood. I will help your children survive." Han Shuo replied to the Lizard King's impatient nagging. He quickly rushed into the complex network of caves whilst admiring the Ancient Lizard King's massive form.

"I'm a messenger from your 'true God'! According to his command, I am here to lead you to a place of safety!" Han Shuo's shout came right when the lizardmen were desperately engaged in a rearguard action. They were fiercely resisting the Redbud Knights' onslaught while retreating towards the Ancient Lizard King.

"Despicable human, why are you here?" The leader with the big tail suddenly panicked, crying out in an awkward version of the common tongue as he pointed at Han Shuo as if wanting to initiate attacks.

"I'm helping you as the messenger of your 'true God'. You'll know if you come with me!" Han Shuo explained then immediately shouted, "Don't do anything unnecessary! They have laid explosives over the entire mountain. All you have to do is hurry to your God's side."

Without staying back to see if the lizardmen believed him or not, Han Shuo flew straight back to the Ancient Lizard King. When the retreating lizardmen heard his words, they sped up their retreat to the Ancient Lizard King, possibly because they believed Han Shuo, or possibly because they were worried about the safety of their ‘true God’ and didn’t want to fight with the Redbud Knights.

Only when the remaining lizardmen saw that Han Shuo standing unscathed next to their ‘true God’ did they somewhat believe Han Shuo. They first kowtowed to the Lizard King before the leader looked up at him and asked humbly, “True God, what are we to do? The enemy has already invaded!”

The Ancient Lizard King thrashed a bit and let loose a long howl. Sounds of explosion spread throughout the entire space and the gourd-shaped mountain began to shake violently.

“Human, lead them in, time is running out!” The Lizard King’s consciousness permeated the air, but it was a pity that the lizardmen couldn’t understand the message.

“There is a passage here. All of you can hide inside and be safe from the explosion. Your ‘true God’ said the missiles won’t be able to hurt him. He will handle the rest.” Han Shuo quickly shouted after seeing the Redbud Knights enter to place the explosives in the cave.

The leader glanced at Han Shuo, still safe and sound at the feet of their “true God”, and seemed to believe his words. The leader rapidly fired something off in the lizardmen tongue to his brethren. They stopped hesitating and followed behind their leader to travel further into the ground via Han Shuo’s tunnel.

After all of the lizardmen had safely made their way into the tunnel, Ancient Lizard King once again filled the space with his words, “Human, don’t let those damnable invaders throw explosives in here. Even though I won’t die from the explosion, it will still injure me. Besides, that smell is highly unpleasant.”

There were seven caves leading from the mountain’s depths to this area.

The Redbuds Knight and the dark elf invaders also seemed frightened of the mountain-like Lizard King as they hadn't charged in here. Instead, they stood at the entrance and threw down the explosives.

Han Shuo summoned roughly a hundred dark creatures after hearing the Lizard King. They were everywhere, throwing back every missile that was thrown in. When the Redbud Knights and dark elves outside discovered that their bags of explosives had been thrown back out, they all fumed with rage.

The skeletal warriors naturally couldn't understand the rage outside the caves. They only knew that they should obey Han Shuo's every command, and continued to diligently throw out the missiles. The situation of the entire area had turned somewhat comical.

The remaining yin demon had been slowly trailing the Redbud Knights all along. As Han Shuo observed them for a while, he suddenly sneered, "Since you guys have set foot here, don't dream of escaping. Enjoy the craziness of the goblin missiles together with the mountain!"

Another incantation brought several bulky hate warriors into existence. They too joined the zombies and the skeletal warriors in throwing the missiles out of the cave. The hate warriors and zombies slowly moved forward, creating a blockade at the cave entrances. Once they'd sealed off the cave entrances, Han Shuo shoved some of the remaining goblin missiles into his space ring.

The knights and dark elves furiously attacked the dark creatures that had suddenly appeared. They picked up the goblin missiles on the ground and prepared to throw them back down at the Ancient Lizard King below, while vigorously cursing the dark creatures.

These goblin missiles were intricately made. They wouldn't explode unless ignited with a fierce flame, but once lit, they turned into a veritable ocean of flame. The invaders had strategically placed explosives so that they could chain the whole explosion. The mountain would be hard pressed to withstand such a large amount of goblin missiles going off all at once and would inevitably collapse.

The Ancient Lizard King was to be the main bearer of the explosion's brunt this time. Only when the explosives filled the area around him would the destructive effects be maximized. That was why the Redbud Knights were working so tirelessly to penetrate the dark creatures' blockade.

After all the lizardmen had evacuated through the tunnel and the caves were blocked by the undead creatures, the Ancient Lizard King became even more impatient, sending another message, "That's enough. Help me ignite a large fire and bury all these knights inside."

"Pleasure to be of service!" Han Shuo snickered coldly, a red flame shooting out from his hand. A zombie suddenly turned its body sideways, letting the flame pass through the gap.

"Fire, it's fire! Extinguish it!" The Redbud Knights, still fighting the dark creatures, suddenly lost their wits when they saw the fiery stream. Their loud screams turned into wails as they realized precisely how many goblin missiles had been placed around the mountain. They would be in dire straits if the explosion occurred before they withdrew from the gourd mountain.

A few more flames flew out from Han Shuo's hand, shooting through the gaps between the zombie warriors like arrows. They landed on the knights and dark elves who had yet to catch on fire.

Han Shuo's mind suddenly moved with a thought, a flame arcing directly into a goblin missile held by a hate warrior.

# Chapter 343: Landslide

A loud crack followed Han Shuo's strategic retreat down the tunnel. Like a fuse, the first explosion led to a chained set of blasts. The entire mountain shook as the explosives shattered every corner, earth and rock shifting in the wake of the goblin missile detonation.

As explosions ripped through the air above it, the ten-meter long tail of the Ancient Lizard King danced like a python. Its colossal body struggled intensely, trying to break the imprisonment of the ancient formation.

Celt was still waiting for his subordinates outside when the blasts violently shook the mountain. Unprepared for the sudden explosion, it felt like his heart had been pounded by a gigantic mallet, even sending his breathing into chaos.

When he heard the thunderous explosion and saw the gourd mountain crumbling, the pupils of the gorgeously dressed noble dark elf Arlen dilated violently. He turned to grab Celt by his lapel, roaring, "How can this be, why did the goblin missiles explode now?! Damn it, you set us up, didn't you?"

Celt was even more furious than Arlen. Celt threw the latter away with such force that the dark elf stumbled. Celt's handsome visage was twisted into a ferocious grimace as he bit off, "Have you no eyes?! Do you not see my people inside too?"

Rumble.....

With one last rumble, the mountain finally collapsed in on itself. Dust wreathed around the rubble, slowly settling in the wake of the blasts. Celt and Arlen began to argue furiously, but was quickly interrupted by a series of loud cracks. Something deep within the mountain exploded upwards, throwing the gourd shaped mountain sky high into the distance until it smashed into the ground far away.

A new cloud of dust once again settled over the region. No longer did the landscape have a silhouette of a gourd-shaped mountain, just a pile of reddish brown rubble, a monument of ruin. The only other aftermath of

the explosion was the scattered pieces of what was left of the Redbud Knights and the dark elves.

Celt shoved Arlen away rudely. The latter staggered back a step, staring blankly at the ruined gourd mountain, muttering, "Those were my most elite tribesmen! How could this be, how could this be!?"

Celt, on the other hand, was completely clear-headed. His expression was a vicious scowl as he shouted in fury, "Someone must have been stirring up trouble, otherwise that big lizard wouldn't have been able to escape the mountain and keep my knights from retreating! This matter is not that simple."

A light went off in Arlen's head when he heard Celt, following up with a shout, "Indeed, there must be something wrong! Those lowly lizardmen would have been no match for my brave tribesmen by themselves."

However at that moment, the object of Celt and Arlen's suspicions, Han Shuo, stood witness to an incredible sight. Creaks echoed around the chamber as the ancient magical formation started to collapse. The explosion had finally destroyed a key component of the formation while reducing the mountain to rubble. As the Ancient Lizard King thrashed like a being possessed, an enormous snap resounded. The ancient magical formation that had bound him for eons... had finally cracked open.

"Aowuuuu....."

An unearthly howl, unlike anything unleashed before, ripped out of the ruined remnants of the mountain. The Ancient Lizard King Degassi exerted every iota of his tremendous strength to further break the formation. The formation had already passed its breaking point from the goblin missiles, and the first crack spread like an errant spiderweb, reaching six of the eight corners.

The Ancient Lizard King brought his massive presence crashing down on every corner of the octagonal magic formation. As each corner crumbled, Dagassi's aura grew one bit stronger. There was a moment of silence when the last of the corners shattered, and Dagassi erupted from underneath the thousands of pounds of rocks that had previously buried



him.

A mountain of corded muscle broke free from the rubble, accompanied by a roar that shook the earth and skies. The Ancient Lizard King took a moment to beat his chest and stamp his feet, giving full vent to his innumerable years of accumulated resentment.

Han Shuo, hiding within the tunnel, suddenly grew aghast. As each formation corner was destroyed, the presence of the Ancient Lizard King had become one notch corner. He had originally estimated the Ancient Lizard King to be as powerful as the Lord of the Flames, but he had been badly mistaken. With the formation in ruins, it seemed his true ability was far more terrifying.

“The ancient magical formation not only confined his body, but also suppressed his power. I didn’t expect this Ancient Lizard King to be so powerful. It may be that only demigods could defeat him!” Han Shuo was strangely terrified when he sensed the Ancient Lizard King’s power.

The lizardmen next to him were gibbering rapidly with excitement, each with an extremely fervent expression. The lizardmen all kowtowed when they saw the Ancient Lizard King’s thick thighs pull free from the cracked ancient formation like towering old trees.

Han Shuo no longer wanted to remain anywhere in the vicinity of this terrifying creature. He shot out from the tunnel that had been torn apart by the Ancient Lizard King. At the same time, his sharp eyes caught sight of a small ground pangolin sneaking out. It was carefully avoiding the furious Ancient Lizard King.

Han Shuo felt something odd when he saw this incredibly small pangolin. The pangolin suddenly shapeshifted into a hawk and put on a burst of speed, clawing frantically at the air to move faster. Han Shuo instantly identified it to be Kassel in disguise.

Standing at the feet of the mountain-like Ancient Lizard King, Han Shuo looked at the stunned invaders. He discovered that Kassel was flying back to Celt’s side, so he held off on dealing with him just yet.

Both the two leaders of the invasion, Celt and Arlen, had oddly colored

expressions on their faces. Their lips grew dry when they saw the enormous monster climb out of the ruins, at a loss of what to do next.

“Human, didn’t you say the creature feared flame and missiles?! Why is the mountain gone, but he still alive and well?” Arlen suddenly felt that he had been toyed with. Truth be told, if it wasn’t for the Redbud Knights suffering a loss as big as his, he would’ve already thrown caution to the wind to attack Celt.

Celt was also at a loss for words when confronted with the massive creature who was embroiled in venting its anger amidst wild howls. He weakly stammered, “I, how would I know?”

Kassel flew over and shifted back to human form in a hurry. Before the two invaders could begin arguing again, he pointed at the nondescript figure that was Han Shuo, standing at the feet of the Ancient Lizard King. Kassel’s face was black as he said, “It’s him! He helped the old Lizard King escape! Otherwise, that big lizard would’ve definitely been finished.”

Only then did Celt, Arlen and the dark elf matriarch Dana notice the inconspicuous Han Shuo. Celt and Dana immediately recognized Han Shuo. Their blood hatred of Han Shuo nearly sent them charging straight at him, regardless of the consequences, when they saw him.

“It’s him again! His name is Bryan, a nobleman of the Lancelot Empire. I must personally kill him!” Celt growled between gritted teeth, his eyes fixed on Han Shuo as he explained to Arlen.

End of part 1 of the chapter!

“I know him! He ruined our plans last time, or else we could have made the lizardmen suffer a great deal!” The bewitching Dana was no different, screeching her fury as she pointed at Han Shuo.

“You shameless, despicable little invaders! I’m going to rip you to shreds right now to appease my anger!” The Ancient Lizard King finally took note of Celt and his band, causing the air to shake with his mental message. He threw his head back in a long roar to the heavens as he began to move towards them.

The earth shook with each foot he stomped down with. Dagassi moved several dozens of meters with each step as his colossal body moved with a speed that belied its size. He quickly caught up with the remnants of the invading army, flattening a group of heavy armor Redbud Knights into meat paste as he made his way over to where Celt was.

Dagassi's ten meter long tail writhed like it had a mind of its own. Several dozens of Redbud Knights and dark elves were batted into the air like twigs with each swing. The massive body of the Ancient Lizard King moved with an unparalleled presence, projecting an irresistible momentum.

He made the earth tremble with each step, trampling several knights into the mud with each footfall. His tail was like a deadly weapon, snapping in the air with each step, reaping the lives of the knights and dark elves one by one.

Celt and Arlen's underlings repeatedly fired magic spells at the Ancient Lizard King's body. However, his huge, rock-like body seemed to possess an outstanding anti-magic effect. That level of attacks simply couldn't hurt him at all.

Arrows, spears and lances couldn't pierce his durable body either. Only the two archers wielding strange bows next to Arlen could shoot out arrows possessing dark magic elements, penetrating his skin to leave a minor wound on the Ancient Lizard King's body.

It was a pity that that level of injury was like a mosquito bite to the Ancient Lizard King. Their effects were minimal, incapable of hindering him as he ravaged their forces. More and more Redbud Knights and dark elves were trampled into bits.

What was even more horrifying was the Ancient Lizard King's wondrous attacks. Waves and waves of strange, mental energy shot in all directions, even much more powerful now that the old Ancient Lizard King was unsealed. It only took two of these attacks to heavily injure a Redbud Knight, and three to kill one on the spot.

The dark elves were even worse off. Each successful attack meant the

death of a dark elf. The only exception was Arlen, who could rely on defensive magics to withstand the attacks.

“Retreat, we all need to retreat!” Celt painfully gave a loud shout. He didn’t take out his artifact “Starry Sky”. He knew that even if he did, he still wouldn’t be able to defeat the Ancient Lizard King with the power he currently possessed. That was why he decisively issued a retreat order.

Needless to say, Arlen was absolutely out of his mind with terror, and just charged haphazardly. In his panic to survive, he even left Dana behind. It was a pity that Dana’s strength didn’t amount to much. In a moment of carelessness, she tripped when she was fleeing and saw a reddish black mountain loom into view as she scrambled to her feet. That was the last thing she saw before she was flattened into meat paste.

Following Dagassi, Han Shuo happily had the Demonslayer Edge absorb the power of the dead invaders. The yin demon was also closely observing Celt, waiting for the moment he lost focus to deliver a fatal blow.

By this time, Cecilia had led her Dark Mantle team to the site of the battle. They had hardly reached the battle when the enormous figure of the Ancient Lizard revealed itself and shocked them silly. They stood at a distance, completely stunned by the turn of events.

“That, what is that thing, it’s so big!” The fire journeyman mage Chrissie even cheered with a look of joy and excitement.

“This must be the creature inside the magic crystal mine. Such strong undulations of power, it should be close to a rank five super rank magic creature. How could such a powerful creature appear in this layer?” Cecilia couldn’t help but exclaim in shock as she watched the mountainous Ancient Lizard King pursue Celt and Arlen.

“Bryan, that’s Bryan!” Emily also exclaimed. She had flown into the sky using her levitation skills, which allowed her to see further. She shouted loudly upon seeing Han Shuo next to the waist of Ancient Lizard King.

Han Shuo had originally been near the Ancient Lizard King’s waist. He flew up to the Ancient Lizard King’s shoulder in the blink of an eye. Pointing at the panicked and escaping Celt and Arlen, he said, “These two

fellows are the leaders. Kill them and you can avenge your children's deaths!"

"Aowuuuuu....."

Dagassi once again let out an earth-shattering roar. The sound wave itself was like a terrifying weapon, turning the shrubs and leaves into dust.

"Damn it, I definitely won't forgive that despicable human!" The noble dark elf Arlen had almost been injured by that sound wave, and couldn't help but curse when he heard Han Shuo egg the Ancient Lizard King onwards.

Celt was well aware of how powerful Han Shuo was. He believed that even without the Ancient Lizard King in the picture, Han Shuo would have no trouble annihilating Arlen. Celt kept his mouth shut, sneering inwardly at Arlen while frantically searching for a path to escape. He just wanted to get away from this terrifying Ancient Lizard King as soon as possible.

Dagassi had killed more than a thousand of Redbud Knights and dark elves by then. Only a few hundreds were left of the invaders, and they were bolting in all directions. Not a single one dared to look back, let alone stop to catch their breath.

So advised by Han Shuo, the Ancient Lizard King fixed his eyes on Celt and Arlen and no longer paid any heed to the small fry. His huge body seemed slow, but every step carried him dozens of meters. In addition, he was repeatedly using his presence to attack. The two fellows were being pursued miserably, as they hatefully cursed the instigator in their hearts. Their curses warmly greeted each and every one of Han Shuo's eighteen generations of ancestors.

"It's really that brat, why is he together with that monster?" Cecilia was floating next to Emily in the air using an unknown method, looking at Han Shuo sitting comfortably on the Ancient Lizard King's shoulder. Her heart was in turmoil and her feelings all disarray, as if jars of five-spice powder had been upended.

Cecilia actually hadn't found Han Shuo annoying in the beginning. On the contrary, she even somewhat appreciated his strength. However, Han

Shuo had repeatedly gone against her, from the orc's shop in the Valley of Sunshine to this mission. He had never once let her conduct her business smoothly.

This made Cecilia, having become one of the three heavyweights in the Dark Mantle at a young age, extremely furious. In her heart, she wanted to see Han Shuo fail. The more he failed, the happier she would feel.

However, reality never pleased her. Earlier she learned from Chrissie that he had caused the loss of Celt's ear along with the green dragon. Now seeing him in high spirits with the big lizard chasing Celt, how was he failing as she'd wished?

The mission to deal with Celt was originally theirs, but now that the lone Han Shuo had inserted himself, he'd interrupted their plan. He hadn't even seemed to exert himself at all, yet was able to force Celt into such a miserable state. This was an embarrassment for Cecilia, who'd spent so much time on Celt but was still helpless.

"Ah, it's really Bryan, he is so handsome!" Chrissie finally saw Han Shuo and couldn't help but yell.

"You little boy-crazy girl, hurry up and shut your mouth. Don't lead that big lizard here!" Fearing the lizard would come, Cecilia snapped at Chrissie.

What one didn't want was obviously what one would get. The Ancient Lizard King didn't hear them, but the wicked Celt obviously did. He suddenly changed directions, leading the experts of the Redbud Knights straight in their direction.

# Chapter 344: Deathly pursuit

“Not good, that blasted Celt! Everyone, be careful!” Cecilia’s pretty face paled when she saw Celt’s sudden change in direction. Celt led the group of knights as well as Arlen and his dark elves in an about face towards the stunned Cecilia.

“Master, that Bryan is also a member of Dark Mantle. He won’t dare to act impudently as long as we capture those women.” Kassel vigorously urged Celt along. The Ancient Lizard King’s appearance and subsequent brutality had struck a deep chord of fear within him.

“If they’re with Bryan, we can use them to force him to submit.” Celt responded tightly. He coldly rushed towards Cecilia as he drew “Starry Sky” from his space ring.

From his position atop the old Lizard King’s shoulder, Han Shuo quickly identified Emily from afar. Since the Redbud Knights and dark elves had made such a flashy mess of things, it was impossible to keep Dark Mantle in the dark. Their appearance at this juncture was well within Han Shuo’s expectations.

“You can’t let those ones leave alive, otherwise you can definitely expect this place to turn into a warzone in the near future!” Han Shuo whispered urgently in the old Lizard King’s ear. His eyes were fixed on the two leaders, a murderous glint flashing through his eyes.

“I don’t need you to remind me.” The Ancient Lizard King didn’t bother with audible speech, letting his voice echo within Han Shuo’s mind.

At this point, the Ancient Lizard King had left the corpses of more than a thousand knights and dark elves in his wake as he rampaged through the combined army. The lucky survivors bolted in every direction, doing their damndest to put as much distance as they could between them and the ferocious figure of the Lizard King.

Suddenly, russet colored light shone over the massive body of the Ancient Lizard King. Astonishingly, his enormous body began to shrink, the light folding inwards.

Still atop the Lizard King's shoulder, Han Shuo had front row seats to witness this transformation. A quick mental message from the old Lizard King assuaged his worries, the Lizard King was simply transforming into his human form. Han Shuo leaped off his perch, hovering in the air.

Dagassi's colossal body rapidly shrunk under the russet colored light. The twenty meter tall form of the prehistoric apex predator was replaced with a hundred and seventy centimeter tall old man within ten breaths. His face was flushed, and the only remnant of his previous form was a lizardman's tail extending from his spine. A red robe appeared out of nowhere, casually draping itself over him.

Dagassi's transformation had actually resulted in such an earth shattering change to his features. Nowhere could one see the behemoth that had slaughtered knights and elves like swatting flies in this small, normal looking old man. He looked up to see Han Shuo hovering in the sky above him. He stretched, shouting in the human tongue, "Get your friends somewhere safe, I'm going to exact my blood price from those invaders."

The old Lizard King had forgone mental transmission, instead using the common tongue. It seemed that the ancient magical formation that bound him had also sealed his ability to freely transform. Now that he could shift into a human form, he'd regained the ability to use the common human tongue.

As he spoke, he lifted himself haltingly off the ground. His actions seemed a bit out of practice, seemingly searching for that familiarity he once had in the air, the sense he'd lost from being sealed underground for so long.

Dagassi's reminder broke Han Shuo's fascination with the Lizard King's transformation. He looked up to see Celt and his group almost at Cecilia and her group's heels. Kassel had taken the opportunity to shapeshift into his favorite great earthen bear, causing the ground to crack beneath his charge as he charged Cecilia.

The noble dark elf Arlen gazed dumbstruck, eyes wide, at Kassel's



transformation. Turning his head, he caught sight of “Starry Sky” in Celt’s hands. Apprehension grew in his heart as he remembered how arrogant he’d been in front of them earlier.

He broke out in a cold sweat. Arlen had been rudely woken to the fact that his men’s strength paled in comparison to that of the Redbud Knights during the Ancient Lizard King’s rampage earlier. With “Starry Sky”, he could admit that he was no longer Celt’s match. Now that this druid subordinate had revealed a transformation skill that allowed him to turn into a great earthen bear, Arlen realized that if he’d really come to blows with Celt, he really would’ve been defeated miserably.

While Arlen’s heart trembled with fear, a different sort of emotion was rousing within Cecilia’s heart. She cursed vehemently inside as she hovered in the air, shouting, “Move! Don’t just stand there, Celt is coming!”

Even in his current state, Celt was renowned as the leader of the Redbud Knights, one of the top ten knight troops, across the Profound Continent. The loss of his green dragon didn’t cause noticeable drop in his strength when he wielded “Starry Sky”. Cecilia may be one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, but she didn’t specialize in combat. With little experience to draw on, seeing Celt and his band form a charge immediately caused her to panic.

“Annoying women, don’t expect to leave here alive today!” Celt shouted. “Starry Sky” started to emit a blinding light as his charge turned into a full assault. It was like the stars had descended on the entire underground world. Off to the side, the great earthen bear Kassel also mounted his own assault to pressure Cecilia and her band.

In the face of this twin onslaught, a crimson light suddenly streaked through the sky. Even as it sped through the sky, its point rapidly coalesced into a dense orb of bloodlust. The blood colored orb of light began to rapidly spin, as its slivers began to rattle in warning. The enormous ball of prickly, crimson light shook as it continued to rapidly rotate in midair. Han Shuo had finally unleashed the “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts”.

The wails of weeping ghosts and howling wolves accompanied the “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts” as it shot out from the Demonslayer Edge. It careened through the air towards Kassel’s great earthen bear form. He was on the verge of lashing out in a powerful blow against Emily when he sensed the dense aura of killing intent locking onto him from behind. Quick as thought, Kassel changed targets, skidding to a stop as he turned to face the scarlet orb that was screaming through the air towards him.

Emily was no slouch, she quickly harnessed her levitation skills to throw herself out of harm’s way. Her dark hair danced in the wind as she chanted under her breath, magic staff in hand. Two massive Hands of Death appeared in mid air, swiping at Kassel’s transformed feet.

Kassel has zeroed in on Han Shuo’s Demonslayer Edge as the biggest threat, and didn’t expect Emily to launch a counterattack mid-retreat. Both of his feet were firmly grabbed by her two Hands of Death.

There was no time left to try and pry himself loose. Kassel could only grit his teeth and use his front claws to catch the spinning scarlet orb. The crimson light rotated madly in the bear’s claws, fiery sparks shooting out from its palms as the bear stamped his feet in agony.

After depleting thirty percent of its energy reserves in that one attack against Kassel, the Demonslayer Edge once again turned into a streak of red light and returned to Han Shuo, leaving behind the wailing Kassel with his two mangled bear arms.

Emily suddenly decided to not pursue Celt and dark elf Arlen either as she sped further away.

Boom.....

A strong force smashed down from the sky, abruptly trampling the ten meters tall bear into the ground. Dozens of attacking force waves simultaneously invaded Kassel’s body. He bled profusely from his nose and mouth, his body shrinking back into human form.

The one who’d attacked Kassel from above was indeed the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, who descended from a red dot in the middle of the

sky to land next to Kassel. "You are one of the main perpetrators, how could I let you escape!?" Dagassi was still using the form of a ruddy old man, so he stomped right on Kassel's head.

Kassel's skull shattered like a rotten watermelon with a crunching sound.

End of Part 1 of the chapter.

On the other side, Cecilia and the Dark Mantle members were desperately trying to evade Celt and Arlen's pursuit. The latter two were obviously unaware of Han Shuo and Cecilia's dubious relationship. The only reason Han Shuo had rushed over was to rescue Emily. He didn't care for the rest, and he watched Cecilia's group fleeing without offering a helping hand.

Only when he saw the fire journeyman mage Chrissie almost caught by a Redbud Knight's killing move did Han Shuo make a move, blocking the attack for her. He shouted from afar, "Chrissie, come over to my side! I will keep you safe!"

"Bryan, hurry and help Mistress Cecilia. Hurry!" Chrissie seemed to care very much for Cecilia. She didn't run to Han Shuo, instead disregarding her own safety to ask him to save Cecilia.

Emily was not too far away from Han Shuo at this moment. Knowing the grudge between him and Cecilia, her elegant black brows furrowed. She didn't say anything to persuade him, flying directly to Cecilia instead.

Standing proudly in the air, Han Shuo saw Emily flying to Cecilia without another word. He couldn't help but let out a low curse before rushing after her. He couldn't care less whether Cecilia lived or died. Emily however, was his woman. He absolutely didn't want anything to happen to her.

In actuality, Emily was secretly paying attention to Han Shuo's actions. A sweet feeling surged in her heart when she saw him fly after her. She knew Han Shuo had only followed to ensure her safety. He still wouldn't interfere even if Cecilia was in grave danger.

Celt was busily pursuing Cecilia, but Arlen saw Emily fly over. He immediately gave an order to the two dark elven archers behind him. The archers raised their bows and aimed at Emily, magical fluctuations coming into existence around the arrowheads.

The black magic scepter in Arlen's hand waved once as he chanted a spell in the dark elven tongue. An enormous black python formed from dark elements slithered out from the magic scepter. It shook its head and tail and sprang towards Emily, its blood maw gaping open.

"You want to die?!" Han Shuo roared, the Demonslayer Edge flying out of his right hand. Bloody light exploded out right in the middle of the enormous python.

The Demonslayer Edge was like a bloody mire, a terrifying suction force devouring everything around it. Even the air was no exception as the vacuum force began to increase. The black python was helpless in the face of such a power and was sucked in whole.

The two archers next to Arlen couldn't resist either. They shrieked, but simply couldn't control their bodies and were involuntarily sucked into the mire. The archers, along with the surrounding gravel and plants whirled into the air, heading straight onto the mire created by the Demonslayer Edge.

Arlen's soul seemed to have fled his body in his fright. He decisively stabbed the black magic scepter into the ground, tightly holding onto it with one hand. He took out a dark magic scroll with another hand. He quickly drew something on the scroll, and a mass of black mist rose from it to wrap around his body.

Many gas beings that resembled Arlen formed from the black mist, sent flying with the slightest gust of wind. These gaseous beings twisted like leaves in the wind, but they didn't seem affected by the Demonslayer Edge's suction force. Soon, they were drifting further and further away, about to vanish into the distance.

However, Arlen had obviously forgotten about the existence of the old Lizard King Dagassi. He'd been observing the changes in the scene

without making a move. All of a sudden, he shot dozens of force waves underground.

A mournful cry came from the depths of the earth. When he heard it was indeed Arlen's scream, Dagassi cackled and murmured, "You despicable dark elves still dare to try and flee in my presence?"

"Dagassi, what are you just standing there for? Killing them was your responsibility, when did it shift to me?!" Han Shuo had long seen that the Ancient Lizard King had taken the position of a bystander, watching with an eye of interest. He couldn't help but yell loudly when he sensed Arlen being killed underground.

"Funny little human fellow, you alone seem capable of handling them. I'll just act as your assistant." Dagassi had suddenly developed an interest in Han Shuo, continuing, "I've lived for countless years, but this is the first time I'm coming across something like your combat style. This cultivation method of yours seems rather special, so I'm waiting to see how many more miraculous areas there are to you."

Dagassi was very powerful, and naturally his eyesight was rather sharp. He only needed a little bit of time to realize that Han Shuo's magic cultivation didn't resemble fighting aura nor follow the tenets of magical elements. He'd never seen anything like it in his life. As a result, Dagassi was immediately interested in Han Shuo, and decided to see what depths this human had. This was why he hadn't hurried to go on the offensive.

Hearing his words, Han Shuo snorted coldly, "If so, then just watch."

Han Shuo moved like lightning to Emily's side as his words fell on Dagassi's ears, grabbing her waist and stopping her from flying. He then shouted to Celt, "Celt, chasing those people is useless. I don't care if they die. If you don't run away, you'll be dead without a doubt. Are you crazy?"

Celt, who was diligently chasing Cecilia and her team, almost vomited blood in anger upon hearing Han Shuo's words. He looked back and saw no trace of Arlen, just Han Shuo standing there with a mocking look. Han Shuo appeared to have no intention of saving those people. He obviously wasn't joking.

“Damned Kassel, giving me false information!” Celt spat out a low curse. He took a moment to think, and quit chasing Cecilia. He gathered the remnants of his Redbud Knights and forged a path deep into the bushes.

“Emily, how did that Cecilia become one of the Dark Mantle’s three heavyweights? Her strength can’t compare with Candide or your brother Amyes!” Han Shuo asked Emily in surprise when he saw that Cecilia only knew how to duck and weave.

Han Shuo’s jeering had forced Celt to give up on chasing Cecilia. Emily struggled out of his embrace in embarrassment when she saw Cecilia was safe and sound. She timidly looked around, slowly floating down before finally replying to Han Shuo, who was still closely following her.

“Sister Cecilia doesn’t specialize in fighting. Moreover, her grandfather is one of the oldest veterans of Dark Mantle, and is also the only sacred magus of the Empire. You’ve even met him before.”

Han Shuo was stunned by her words. He exclaimed, “No wonder! I thought her power was too weak for her to hold this position at such a young age. She has so many strange magic artifacts, so it’s all thanks to her sacred magus grandfather. Oh right, I don’t remember meeting any sacred magus, where have I met him? You aren’t kidding me, are you?”

“Of course not, but I can’t tell you who he is since it’s a rule. Anyway, you’ll definitely meet him after you reach a certain rank in Dark Mantle.” Emily smiled delicately and said, seemingly amused at Han Shuo’s confused expression.

“Her grandfather, I have met him...?” Han Shuo’s thoughts raced. When he came up empty handed after a moment, he no longer spared effort thinking about it.

“You little brat, you’re definitely a scoundrel of the first degree, making an old man like me take action myself!” The old Lizard King’s voice rolled in waves from behind. Han Shuo then saw a red shadow shoot through the air in Celt’s direction.

“Right, Celt has an artifact and a space ring, we still need to take a look.” Han Shuo suddenly remembered the wealth that Celt carried. He hurriedly

pulled Emily along and flew towards the two.

The earth elite zombie was still deep underground, following Han Shuo's orders. It tunneled towards Arlen's corpse, ready to strip him bare of his valuables.

As for Kassel, whose head had been crushed by Dagassi, Han Shuo couldn't care less. The druids worshipped nature and didn't like to collect weath. The traitor Kassel hadn't had any opportunities to collect magic crystal ores, and Han Shuo hadn't seen a space ring on his hands either. Obviously, he wasn't a generous sort.

# Chapter 345: Rank five demigod existence

The power of Ancient Lizard King Dagassi was indeed horrifying. By the time Han Shuo and Emily arrived, he was kicking Celt around like a ball.

Celt's thick armor was far more durable and solid than ordinary armor. However, under Dagassi's blows, they dented like scrap metal. The sounds of bones cracking echoed from Celt's body.

The Redbud Knights were extremely loyal to Celt. They fearlessly went up against Dagassi, launching an offensive to buy enough time for Celt to escape.

Unfortunately, the power gap was too large. Dagassi didn't even need to use that much force to disembowel more than a dozen knights with explosions, killing them on the spot. The fighting aura from their swords and spears simply weren't enough to cause the Ancient Lizard King any harm.

Maybe if Celt had been one rank higher, combining the strength of a divine knight and his artifact "Starry Sky", he might have been able to pose a threat to Dagassi. However, it appeared he would never have this opportunity. His body had just crumpled to the ground when it was firmly stepped on by Dagassi.

A crunching sound resounded, and one last footprint was now imprinted on his chest. His internal organs splattered open with the impact, blood overflowing from the footprint. Celt's eyes rolled upwards as he lost all signs of life.

The cosmic light imbuing the "Starry Sky" dulled after Celt's death. The weapon lay quietly amongst the bushes. It didn't have any of the characteristics of a divine artifact.

Flying over with Emily, Han Shuo's eyes were shining as he stared at "Starry Sky", and he shot forward without a word. However before he could lay hands on it, the artifact lying in the bush suddenly flew into Dagassi's hand.



“What? You want this thing?” Dagassi looked at Han Shuo and asked, shaking the “Starry Sky” in his hand a bit.

Han Shuo nodded, feeling somewhat embarrassed. He gave a dry laugh, “I do want it.”

“I see the weapon in your hand is even more ferocious than this one, aren’t you a little greedy?” The transformed Dagassi wasn’t a monster without emotion anymore. On the contrary, he was very human as he spoke to Han Shuo with a teasing tone.

“I don’t need that sword, but I have a very good friend. If they can use that sword, their strength will improve by a lot.” Han Shuo relaxed, squinting at the joking Dagassi.

“Hmph, it’s for that chit Phoebe, isn’t it?” Han Shuo had been anxious to get to “Starry Sky” earlier, so he’d shot ahead and left Emily behind. She used her levitation skills and floated to his side, her delicate face obviously expressing some anger.

Hearing Emily’s words and seeing her jealous appearance, Han Shuo didn’t know what to say and just stood there, smiling dryly.

“This sword is indeed not bad, but I killed Celt, so it should belong to me!” The Ancient Lizard King Dagassi looked at Han Shuo with a smile on his face. He only continued when he saw the latter nod his head, “But this sword is of no use to me. If you really want it, I can give it to you. As long as you agree to some of my conditions, I will also give you that human’s space ring as well.”

Hearing that there was still room for negotiation in the Ancient Lizard King’s words. Han Shuo was startled as he asked, “Tell me about the conditions first.”

Dagassi was in no rush to speak. He swished his tail towards Celt, and the latter’s space ring flew into his hand. Dagassi glanced at the ring caught in his hand, and waves of strange energy surged into the ring.

With a snapping sound, the ring’s magical boundary was forcibly destroyed. Dagassi explored Celt’s ring a little, then squinted and laughed

cheerfully at Han Shuo, "Lots of good stuff inside, hmm. An estimated value of at least a million gold coins. This fellow was quite the money maker."

Han Shuo's heart itched with greed when he heard Dagassi's words. However, the latter still hadn't stated his conditions, so Han Shuo also wasn't in a hurry to ask. He stared at Dagassi as he waited, knowing the latter would definitely bring up his conditions in a moment.

"All of the magic crystal ores below the gourd mountain, plus this priceless divine artifact and the wealth inside this space ring, they can all belong to you if you promise me a few things."

After taking a deep breath, Dagassi stated his conditions to Han Shuo.

"Name it!" Han Shuo said simply.

"First, protect the lizardmen in my stead as long as you're alive. Moreover, if we have the chance to meet again, I hope you will agree to one more condition. I will not say what it is for the time being, but you have to agree to it." Dagassi looked at Han Shuo and said solemnly.

"With you here, who would dare to touch the lizardmen? As long as you are willing to spend some time in the underground world, this layer can easily be dominated by the lizardmen. Why would you need my help then?" Surprised, Han Shuo couldn't help but give voice to his doubts.

Shaking his head, the Ancient Lizard King heaved a long sigh and said, "I cannot stay in the underground world. Otherwise, it may directly lead to the genocide of my children. There are some things you can't understand now. Maybe the next time you meet, you'll understand."

"Wait for me to talk to my children, then I will leave to take revenge on the one who imprisoned me. Perhaps we will never have the chance to meet again, as I'm likely to face death. However if we do meet a next time, I think your strength would far surpass now. By then, if I haven't yet died, you may be able to help me."

The power of Ancient Lizard King was even greater than that of the Lord of the Flames. Han Shuo couldn't even imagine the kind of people or

creatures that could kill him. Dagassi seemed ready for death, and Han Shuo didn't know how his future self could help him. However for Han Shuo, the immediate benefits at hand significantly outweighed his future worries.

Therefore, he only hesitated a little then nodded readily in agreement, "I will help you take care of the lizardmen as long as I'm alive. However my ability is limited, and I can only try my best. On the other hand, next time we meet, I hope your condition won't be too difficult to achieve."

"Haha, good, very good!" The Ancient Lizard King laughed loudly. He didn't make Han Shuo swear a solemn vow to the gods. He readily threw "Starry Sky" and Celt's space ring to Han Shuo, saying, "I believe you. Let's go, I'll help you get the magic crystal ores and settle matters with my children."

Han Shuo held the space ring and checked it with his consciousness. He was immediately dazzled by the wealth inside. There were all kinds of translucent, sparkling crystals of different colors and piles of gold, silver and beautiful jade. Celt must have plundered them from the golden dragon or the underground world.

Aside from that, there were weapons and equipment that had the distinct aura of magic elements. They must have been forged by a great alchemist and were items of priceless value. There were also three ownerless crystal cards of a hundred thousand gold coins. Anyone could directly withdraw money from these cards.

Just as Dagassi had said, the total value of Celt's space ring was at least a million gold coins. If Phoebe sold this large number of crystals, gold, silver and jade, they'd possibly be worth more than a million gold coins.

"Alright, I'll go with you." Han Shuo said. However, he hesitated a little upon seeing the dead bodies littered over the ground, "The weapons and armor of the dead Redbud Knights and dark elves are very good. They may even have more gold coins in their pockets. If you don't mind, can I loot them all before we leave?"

A deep laugh bubbled out of Dagassi. He was about to agree when his

eyes brightened suddenly, he said, “Those armors aren’t suitable for my children because of their body structures, but the weapons can be used. How about the armor and the other items to you, but the weapons to my children. What do you say?”

“No problem.” Han Shuo readily agreed, then laughed and said, “Wait a moment, I’ll collect these things quickly.”

Han Shuo took out the bone staff when he finished speaking, chanting a spell. Rows of white skeletal warriors walked out from thin air, scattering out like snowflakes and collecting the equipment and valuables on Han Shuo’s orders.

While Han Shuo took out the bone staff, the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi suddenly shot forward like lightning, screeching to a halt in front of Han Shuo, his eyes fixed on the bone staff. His expression was in absolute contrast to the relaxed one he had on before.

Han Shuo was scared stiff by this drastic change. Seeing the old Ancient Lizard King staring strangely at his bone staff, he hurriedly withdrew it. Taking a step back while feeling somewhat guilty, he asked, “What’s the matter?”

After Han Shuo put away the bone staff, all of Dagassi’s surprise and attention refocused on him instead. Han Shuo felt a bit uneasy by that shocked look, not knowing what was running through Dagassi’s mind.

The old Ancient Lizard King finally broke the tense silence with a loud laugh, “Little fellow, it seems we do have some shared fortune! Do you know the origin of that bone staff?”

Han Shuo was dumbfounded. He looked at the Ancient Lizard King in shock, gingerly asking, “Could it be that you know?”

“Heh heh, looks like you don’t know anything about it. That bone staff belonged to my previous master. Do you want to know its secrets?” The Ancient Lizard King asked Han Shuo, looking somewhat excited.

“Your previous master!” Han Shuo was shocked, then exclaimed, “You’re from the Calamity Church?”

“Calamity Church? What kind of organization is that? I’ve never heard of it.” The Ancient Lizard King replied with a frown, then sighed, “Since the bone staff is now in your hands, my master is either dead, or not on this plane. I wonder where the master is now, aii!”

When he heard that Dagassi didn’t know anything about the Calamity Church, Han Shuo thought for a bit then asked, “Just what realm are you? How long have you lived?”

“I was already following master when I was just a mutated lizard. I’m currently a rank five super rank magic creature. As for how long I have lived, even I myself don’t remember clearly. I only know that I have been sealed here for about five thousand years.” Dagassi explained to Han Shuo with a smile. His attitude toward the latter was even more cordial than before.

An old monster indeed! Han Shuo secretly exclaimed. No wonder he didn’t know about the Calamity Church. The Calamity Church had less than a thousand years of history, it wouldn’t be strange for the Ancient Lizard King to not know of them. It appeared the origin of this bone staff was even more ancient than the Calamity Church knew, and had deeper connections than just the Calamity Church.

“Can you tell me about the abilities of the bone staff as well as its origin?” When it came to the secrets of the bone staff, Han Shuo could only hope to slowly uncover the fog that surrounded it. He very much wanted to learn what secrets it held.

“Heh heh, when you figure out all the mysteries of the bone staff, you will naturally come to understand the matter of five thousand years ago. Whether master died on this plane or has already left it, master has definitely left an explanation of everything inside the bone staff. As long as you completely grasp the staff, it will tell you everything you want to know. Me telling you is useless, and what I know can’t be as detailed as what master has left inside the staff. You should figure it out on your own.” Just like that necromancy archmage Wolf, the Ancient Lizard King didn’t directly tell Han Shuo the secrets of the bone staff. He only left some clues for Han Shuo to use in digging out the truth on his own.

“You’ve reached the strength of a fifth rank creature. Isn’t that the same as a demigod, who else in this world could be more powerful than you?” While inwardly criticizing the Ancient Lizard King for not straight out telling him everything, Han Shuo suddenly remembered the Ancient Lizard King’s words earlier.

“I may seem powerful in the Profound Continent, but I can tell you, this continent is not as simple as you see it to be. Here, there’s no lack of beings like me. If the powerful existences from five thousand years ago are still around in the Profound Continent, then even more terrifying beings than me definitely exist. You should take precautions.” Dagassi looked deeply at Han Shuo, reminding him carefully.

Han Shuo was once again shocked by these words. The most powerful presences in the various human countries only stood at the sacred rank. Han Shuo had never heard of any existences surpassing the demigods. If he hadn’t met Dagassi here, he would never have known that his continent had a rank five super rank magic creature on par with demigods.

As far as Han Shuo knew, Dagassi’s level of power allowed him the freedom to do whatever he wished on the Profound Continent. But, his words didn’t have a trace of arrogance. Far from it, in fact, it actually seemed to hold a hint of trepidation when talking about those existences more powerful than him on the Profound Continent.

If Dagassi was already a rank five super rank magic creature with power equivalent to a demigod, then those that were even more powerful than him, how shockingly terrifying would they be... were they, “Gods”?

This was something Han Shuo simply couldn’t imagine at his level. His mind was a mess thanks to Dagassi’s words. When the bunch of skeletal warriors finished collecting the spoils of battle, he cast the issue to the back of his mind and said, “Who cares about those powerful beings? I just need to do my job well. I’m only a small character. Heh heh, I won’t get in any conflict with them.”

It’s not up to you to decide anymore since you hold the bone staff.

Dagassi sighed in his heart, but he didn't speak it out. He looked at Han Shuo with emotion, as if looking at his master. He hadn't known of his master's fate for the thousands of years they'd been apart. A strange light sparkled in his eyes.

"Bryan, should I go with you?" Emily had listened for a while and was similarly perplexed. When she saw Cecilia and the others who had escaped Celt slowly approach, she hurriedly maintained a distance from Han Shuo to avoid raising any suspicion.

This time, Han Shuo also saw Cecilia and the others walk over. They were obviously afraid of the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi's existence. Their postures were as unassuming as they could be, fearing the latter's displeasure.

# Chapter 346: Collecting the spoils of war

Han Shuo was in no rush to leave. When Emily saw Cecilia and the Dark Mantle members slowly making their way over, she felt like she needed to be a bit cautious, maintaining an appropriate distance from Han Shuo to avoid rousing suspicion.

After all, Emily was the daughter-in-law of the Betteridge family. No matter what she felt towards Han Shuo in private, they couldn't let outsiders know of it. Be it Emily or Han Shuo, that particular bit of information would only bring them unnecessary troubles in the foreseeable future.

After he saw the bone staff in Han Shuo's hand, Ancient Lizard King Dagassi's attitude towards the latter had grown considerably better. His long years of life had also seemingly forged an incredible level of patience. His expression remained unchanged as he watched Cecilia and the others slowly inch their way over.

"I can just take care of these people if you think they're in the way, it won't take me too long." Dagassi casually remarked. A wicked grin crossed his face as he saw their timid approach.

Dagassi's attitude towards Cecilia and the others could only be described as extreme contempt. He wasn't afraid to let them overhear his conversation with Han Shuo. For a demi-god existence like himself, Cecilia's group were no different than ants, an eyesore that only needed a flick of a limb to eradicate.

Cecilia and her team had only approached the group because they saw Han Shuo and Emily getting along well with the Ancient Lizard King. Cecilia's face blanched when she heard Dagassi's offer. She couldn't help but take a few steps back and stare nervously at Han Shuo.

"No need, they are my colleagues." Han Shuo's answer allowed Cecilia to heave a sigh of relief. But only when she saw the Ancient Lizard King nod at Han Shuo did she slowly walk over to their side. She first nodded at Emily and then spoke to Dagassi, "Powerful being, I am of the Lancelot



Empire and in charge of dealing with the enemy this time, I...”

“I have no interest in your words.” Dagassi interrupted before Cecilia could make much headway, let alone finish, “Puny human girl, those who dared to invade lie dead. Whatever happens in this area is under my control, and the underground world is not a place for you humans to set foot in. I won’t kill you since you are his colleagues, but if you value this temporary amnesty, I hope you leave this world as quickly as possible.”

“I...” Cecilia was about to say more, but was quickly stopped by Emily, “Alright little sister Cecilia, as far as I can see, we’ve successfully completed our mission. Even if it wasn’t exactly due to our actions, the name of the Redbud Knights will no longer be spoken on this continent. We should definitely leave. We’ve accomplished a great deed here.”

Emily desperately winked to signal Cecilia while saying this. Cecilia was no fool, she caught Emily’s signal and nodded. She then turned to Han Shuo and said bitterly, “I know you spent a lot of effort on this, and I will report it in detail to the higher-ups. However, our private grudge isn’t over.”

Shrugging, Han Shuo smiled blandly, “Whatever you want!”

Han Shuo didn’t care, but the Lizard King immediately rolled his eyes upon hearing that they had a private grudge. A mass of energy as weighty as a mountain emanated from his body, rapidly spreading out. The Ancient Lizard King didn’t even need to transform into his massive appearance to bring pressure down on Cecilia and her group.

“I think I’ll still help you kill them. She and you seemed to have some grudges. If they never leave the underground world, your words will simply become truth. Then, all your problems will be solved, how about that?” The Lizard King loudly laughed and looked at Han Shuo as he offered his help once again. His powerful presence alone made Cecilia feel great discomfort.

Han Shuo felt no goodwill towards Cecilia, however it wasn’t to the point of wanting to take her life. Moreover the relationship between Emily and Cecilia was very good, so Han Shuo couldn’t kill her in front of Emily.

Therefore, he again shook his head, "They're my colleagues. Although there are some misunderstandings, we are not enemies. Just let them leave."

As Dagassi took back his aura, the sweating Cecilia and her team were able to resume their regular breathing. This time, Cecilia didn't wait for Emily's wink before she turned around without another word. As she left, she glanced back at Han Shuo and whispered a sentence, "Thank you!"

Cecilia understood in her heart that if Han Shuo hadn't stopped him, Dagassi, who had killed enough Redbud Knights and dark elves to form a river of blood, would definitely have exterminated them all with a single gesture. Although she still had some negative opinions about Han Shuo, he'd definitely saved her life this time. Even if in she didn't want to thank her in the depths of her heart, she still had to.

Unconsciously, Cecilia's resentment for Han Shuo had dissolved a bit. Her heart was full of doubt, she didn't understand how Han Shuo could forge a relationship with such a powerful creature, or how he could make the Ancient Lizard King listen to his words so easily.

Her mind flashed as she suddenly remembered something else. As she left with Emily, Cecilia pulled on Emily's arm when no one was next to them and asked in a low, suspicious voice, "Are you with that Bryan?"

Emily's heart pounded, her cheeks uncontrollably flared with red. She pretended to calmly tell off Cecilia, "What nonsense are you sprouting? I only worked with him on a couple of occasions and developed a friendship."

"Is that so?" Cecilia stared at Emily, puzzled, "It feels odder the more I think about it. Bryan's relationship with me is selfish and unfriendly. He shouldn't have helped us last time Kassel pursued us, I only discovered later that it was because of you, big sister."

"It's the same this time. He went to the underground world, going through Chrissie just to look for you. He protected only you in the fight before, even that big lizard didn't target you with his murderous intent. I know that Bryan is no saint. I kept wondering what kind of relationship

you two have to make him so concerned about you. I think he only did so because he loves you, isn't that right, big sister Emily?"

"Of course not. What are you guessing madly for? It's just that he wasn't as powerful before and I saved his life once. That's why he's helping me now. You can stop spouting random nonsense now." Emily strongly denied everything with all her might. She knew that she had to deny things no matter what, or the outcome wouldn't be good for either Han Shuo or her.

"Big sister Emily, look at yourself, why do you still not admit to things?" Cecilia stared at Emily in surprise. Her hand rose, holding a small mirror in front of the latter's face.

In the mirror, Emily's face was embarrassed and red with a secret delight, an unconscious response to when Cecilia said Han Shuo only did what he did because he loved her. Emily couldn't help the feelings in her heart from showing on her face. Looking at this bashful and flushing appearance, no one would believe her if she said she had nothing to do with Han Shuo.

Seeing that Cecilia's face showed absolute confidence in her theory of Emily and Han Shuo's intimate relationship, Emily softly sighed and said, "Little sister Cecilia, I do have some goodwill towards him. However, you know my situation. I'm the widow of the Betteridge family, and my age is greater than his. Even if I harbor affection for him, he won't bother with me. My identity dooms me to be forever avoided by men, aiii!"

Emily heaved and sighed pitifully. Hearing her explain, Cecilia was stunned and came to a sudden realization. To think her big sister Emily's love for Bryan was one-sided! Her thoughts spun to a close, and seeing Emily's desolate expression, she hastily spoke, "Big sister Emily, I'm sure this Bryan is far from ordinary. With his strength, sooner or later he will grasp immense power. You know that as long as he has enough power, nothing is impossible for him in the Lancelot Empire, rest assured. By then we will also have my grandpa, he can help you too!"

Emily was genuinely touched upon hearing Cecilia's words, and the last sentence in particular made her heart rejoice. Cecilia's grandfather held a

distinguished identity in the Lancelot Empire. If she and Han Shuo were determined to be together in the future, things would go a lot smoother with the old man's help.

"Really? If Bryan and I can be together, you'll ask your grandfather to help me?" Emily asked, feeling happy in her heart.

"Of course, grandpa dotes on me the most. If I'm willing to help you, he'll help too." Cecilia proudly replied.

"Then I'll have to thank you in advance!" Emily was overjoyed.

"Hehe, us sisters shouldn't be so polite. Right, tell me about how you saved that cocky brat previously. Now I'm very interested in his matters!" Cecilia snickered.

While the two women leading the Dark Mantle members away, Han Shuo also crammed all the weapons, armor and money bags that had been sorted out by the skeletal warriors into his space ring. His space ring could only hold a part of them, the rest was stuffed into Celt's space ring.

Han Shuo remembered the space ring of the fire grand magus Marceau in the end. He conveniently asked the old Lizard King Dagassi to break its magical enchantment brand and harvested roughly three hundred thousand gold coins from it. There were also some valuable magical equipment, the most precious of which being a strange tent.

The tent looked as if it could only accommodate two or three people, however, when Han Shuo actually went inside, he discovered that the space was much wider than he'd imagined. It was divided into three levels, with a hundred rooms of various sizes. Each room was clean and brightly decorated, luxurious carpets covering the floor.

There were several magic laboratories containing magical equipment on the top level, along with a library on fire magic. There were even two storage rooms with a number of fire attributed magical items. This should be the place where Marceau normally carried out magic experiments.

The unassuming tent had turned out to be a valuable space treasure, the area inside no smaller than Han Shuo's residence in the City of Brettel.

This magical tent was definitely created by the combined effort of a space sacred magister and a grand alchemist.

The accommodations of this tent was even much larger than that of the space ring. More importantly, when used for traveling in the wilderness, hundreds of adventurers could stay in it when this tent was set up. For mercenaries who often went out for missions, this kind of space treasure was of a value that was comparable to a divine artifact.

“This thing is no artifact, but its practical value is even greater than one. If you want, it can sell for at least three hundred thousand gold coins.” The Ancient Lizard King told Han Shuo after understanding the tent’s marvelous ability.

“Such a magical treasure comparable to a divine artifact, I won’t be selling it. It’s better to keep for my own use.” Han Shuo replied to the Ancient Lizard King.

After stripping all the dead knights and dark elves of their valuables, Han Shuo and the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi returned to the ruins of the gourd-shaped mountain. Thanks to the earth elite zombie, a tunnel leading out of the underground space had been dug, and all of the lizardmen filed out through it.

“Where is our great ‘true God’?” The leader with the longest tail anxiously asked as soon as Han Shuo and the old Lizard King Dagassi arrived.

Pointing at Dagassi in human form, his long tail swishing through the air, Han Shuo smiled and explained, “Isn’t that him?”

Hearing Han Shuo’s words, the lizardmen appeared somewhat horrified as they looked at the Ancient Lizard King. Only when they felt a familiar presence from him did they feel relief and submit. Under the orders of their leader, the lizardmen kowtowed towards Dagassi, their mouths rapidly speaking in lizardmen tongue.

The old Lizard King was no longer bound by the ancient magical formation in his human form. He also rumbled forth in gibberish, conversing with the lizardmen in gratification. Han Shuo didn’t

understand a thing, but refrained from speaking. He just stood there with a dry look.

The earth elite zombie stood there for a while after leading the lizardmen out and watched the bunch while crudely touching its head. It was even somewhat frightened of the Ancient Lizard King. Sensing the latter's powerful presence, it silently went to Han Shuo's side, pulling the corner of his clothes as it sent him a message, "Is there anything else ah? If not let me go back!"

Han Shuo was dumbfounded as he looked at the earth elite zombie who'd just sent a message to him. He had yet to open his mouth to speak when on the other side, the Ancient Lizard King's attention had been caught by the earth elite zombie. He was stupefied, and asked in disbelief, "Did, did this zombie warrior just communicate with you?!"

"Ehh... I think so." Han Shuo replied. He was also inwardly a little shocked. The earth elite zombie could originally communicate with him, but only in the form of listening and obeying orders. The messages had also been simple reports of the fights, unlike now when it'd expressed its own opinion.

It appeared that, unwittingly, the earth elite zombie was gradually developing an autonomy like the little skeleton. This also showed that it was getting stronger and stronger, otherwise it couldn't have developed its own ideas so quickly.

"If I didn't hear wrong, he wanted to take the initiative to return to the necromancy dimension. He is your summoned creature, but also has his own consciousness?" The Ancient Lizard King couldn't suppress his wonder. He could also sense the message sent by the earth elite zombie to Han Shuo.

"He is different from other ordinary undead creatures. You've also seen it, he can utilize the power of earth to move freely underground and create tunnels. Hehe, this has to do with my magical cultivation. I can use this art to alter the summoned undead. It not only gives them higher intellect, but also more power and even the ability to evolve." For some unknown

reason, Han Shuo had a favorable impression of the Lizard King. He could feel the latter's passion and trust in him and understood in his heart that he wouldn't harm Han Shuo. Therefore, Han Shuo answered without concealing anything.

“Unbelievable. Unbelievable indeed. Even my master couldn't bestow undead creatures with intelligence and the ability to evolve. It seemed your techniques are even more incredible than I'd imagined.” Dagassi exclaimed.

“Hehe, I also think this art is amazing. I believe that once I break through again, I may possess power on par with yours.” Han Shuo confidently said. He remembered that Chu Cang Lan earlier could traverse the moon at the “nine changes” realm. He also understood that the “carnal” realm would definitely increase his power tenfold, or even a hundredfold.

“Very good. I look forward to our next meeting. If I'm still alive then, we will definitely have the chance to meet. Maybe you really can help me at that time.” Dagassi said contentedly. He turned back to the lizardmen and resumed his quick gibberish.

After the lizardmen leader listened to Dagassi's words, he turned to Han Shuo and said respectfully, “From now on, us lizardmen of the underground world will follow your instructions.”

# Chapter 347: Becoming a Dark Sun envoy

Han Shuo stayed deep in the underground for several days. With the help of Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, he collected the magic crystal ores deep within the underground.

Han Shuo exited the gourd mountain ruins when his space ring couldn't hold any more. This trip to the underground world had bestowed him with rich harvest, not only was Celt dead, but, Han Shuo had even won the friendship of the lizardmen.

Han Shuo's space ring was also filled to the brim. He'd looted the Redbud Knights thoroughly, as well as the wealth that Celt had accumulated over many years, and some of Arlen's magic equipment as well. The total harvest, if converted to gold coins, would amount to more than two million.

"Alright, I will ttinave the underground world for now and collect the rest of the ores next time I come back. I'll also bring more weapons for you in my next visit, so you can resist the dark elves' invasion." Han Shuo said to the lizardmen leader.

"Next time you come, I should already have left this underground world. I hope for the chance for us to meet again. I also hope you can take care of them for me." Dagassi reminded as he looked at Han Shuo about to leave.

"Rest assured, I will help you take care of them." Han Shuo agreed with a vow.

In the past couple of days, Dagassi had been like a kind elder, imparting Han Shuo with many interesting things. Han Shuo had unconsciously developed favorable impression of Dagassi. Now as he was about to leave, he actually felt somewhat reluctant. From Dagassi words, Han Shuo knew that this time the old lizard didn't simply intend on leaving the underground world, he seemed to want to depart the plane containing the Profound Continent.

Dagassi only glossed over some of the deeper secrets and didn't tell Han SHuo much. Han Shuo couldn't understand the thoughts of the demigods,



so he didn't pursue things to the end by asking too many questions. He only faintly understood that the power of Dagassi's enemy was just as much terrifying.

Han Shuo's farewell to Dagassi was cool, calm and didn't drag on. He didn't remain in the underground world after leaving the area. He followed the old road back to the surface by using his astounding memory.

Han Shuo didn't encounter anything out of the ordinary along the way. He occasionally met a few attempts of others races wanting to rob him and used heavy handed methods to kill them instead. He easily made his way back to the Dark Forest.

Having stayed in the underground world for more than ten days, Han Shuo felt a comfortable sensation as if he was being reborn when he saw the sun shining above his head. The warm sunlight shone down, lifting his mood into an extremely happy state.

The Dark Forest was rich with lush green trees mixed with exotic plants. Fragrance overflowed in the warm spring light and permeated the heart with a peacefulness that refreshed the mind. Han Shuo luxuriated in this warm and comfortable feeling that was a far cry from the gloomy humid, underground world, heading for the direction of the Cemetery of Death.

When he was back in the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo didn't linger and went directly to Brettel City. Rich harvest in hand, he immediately set up a small meeting with little fatty Jack, Dorcas as well as Faulke and Chester.

"You were gone all of a sudden for more than ten days, where did you go?" Jack had the closest relationship with Han Shuo, so he started peppering the latter with questions immediately.

"Hehe, I made a trip to the Dark Forest. Have things been quiet in Brettel City recently?" Han Shuo smiled slightly and didn't hide his trip to the Dark Forest. Only the existence of the Cemetery of Death remained under wraps.

The Redbud Knights and dark elves had suffered heavy losses in the underground world. However, a small number of them had still escaped. News of Han Shuo's actions in the underground world must have spread

already.

Dick, the local Dark Mantle liaison, bowed respectfully towards Han Shuo and said, "My Lord, I would like to report some information alone."

"This is all our own people here. There is no need to hide anything, you can speak directly." Han Shuo knew Dick must have gathered some information from his higher-ups. Jack, Dorcas, Faulke and Chester were all his trusted people. Since Faulke had been sent here by Lawrence, the latter must have mentioned Han Shuo's identity as a Dark Mantle member to Faulke already. Han Shuo had nothing to hide in front of him.

Jack and Dorcas had spent much time with Dick lately, so they more or less knew of his identity. The existence of Dark Mantle in the Lancelot Empire wasn't much of a secret. Although people didn't talk about it openly, they all knew about it in their minds.

"Master Candide relayed that your deeds in the underground world are highly appreciated. The Dark Forest is on the edge of the border of our Empire. For the Redbud Knights to suffer heavy losses, even though the Brut Business Alliance will likely be extremely indignant, they presumably won't make any radical responses. Master Candide told you to be at ease." Dick started his report when he saw Han Shuo was nonchalant about his privacy.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo smiled, "You may carry on."

Dorcas, Jack and Faulke listened but couldn't understand anything. However, Faulke and Dorcas knew that Candide was one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle. From Dick's words, they knew Han Shuo's relationship with Candide wasn't superficial. They were inwardly amazed.

"Master Candide said this time you achieved a great deed this time. His Majesty has approved that you will be a one star Dark Sun envoy from now on. You only need to visit the Dark Mantle headquarters to upgrade your badge. Congratulations to you, my Lord!" Dick's face was full of worship as he grew excited himself.

"Dark Sun envoy, hehe, it seems that Cecilia didn't conceal any of my credit. This woman knows what to do." Han Shuo smiled contentedly and

murmured to himself.

Going from Star to Moon was one level, from Moon to Sun was another. Becoming a Dark Sun envoy meant that from now on, Han Shuo was officially a high ranked member of the Dark Mantle and was now able to enjoy even more special treatment. He could recruit his own subordinates and redistribute the organization's members in a location.

"My Lord, Dark Sun envoys have the rights to assign missions to Dark Star members, and can also can directly bestow credit on them and raise their level." Chester looked excitedly at Han Shuo and stated a reminder.

"Rest assured, now that I'm a Dark Sun envoy, you will naturally receive some benefits." Han Shuo laughed as he responded, then turned to Dick, "Anything else apart from this?"

"Master Candide said you don't have to worry about anything else, he will help deal with the detrimental remarks against you, you only need to take good care of Brettle City." Dick hesitated a little before answering this time.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo appeared to understand it completely. He was aware that Cecilia had reported everything correctly, even last time's matter when he stopped her from acting against the forest trolls.

"Alright, I understand." Han Shuo looked at Dorcas and Faulke, asked, "How is the situation in Brettel City recently? Have the mountain people come down from the mountain? Any action from the seven grand duchies?"

"A total of twenty thousand people have come down the mountain and are currently residing in Brettel City. The five chiefs of the mountain people are actively cooperating, so the process is going smoothly. The fighting in the seven grand duchies had slowly subsided, only Helen Tina of Helon Duchy has been struggling with the rebels within her land. However, it's drawing close to an end now." Dorcas replied.

Ever since Dorcas joined the army, he had gradually replaced Faulke's position due to his own efforts and Han Shuo's deliberate arrangements. Dorcas was a military man through and through and had never hidden

this desire to fight. Due of many years of formal military education, he was much more adept in leading operations than Faulke, who had originally a knight.

Faulke also understood in his heart that Dorcas was supper to him in this aspect. Coupled with the fact that the latter had won Han Shuo's trust, Faulke was powerless against this gradual shift in power. Fortunately, Han Shuo didn't mistreat him, letting Faulke form his team of trusted confidants and strongest soldiers in Brettel into a brigade of a thousand knights.

Han Shuo provided this knight brigade with the most luxurious equipment. Their armor, weapons and equipment were all the most expensive in Brettel City. Han Shuo had poured a great deal of resources into this brigade as it was equipped with the best goods currently in the market. Currently, his investment stood at three hundred thousand gold coins. Except for a lack of horses, just based on the equipment alone, this brigade was no inferior to the official Royal Knights of the Empire.

Of course when compared to the top ten knights associations in the Profound Continent, this brigade was far inferior in whether fighting power or equipment. However in Brettel City or even in the seven grand duchies, this fledgling brigade couldn't be underestimated.

As a pure knight, nothing moved his heart so much as commanding an official knight brigade, so Faulke didn't feel too much unpleasantness at the loss in military power. On the contrary, he poured his heart into training the brigade.

"So for the time being, the seven grand duchies seem to have not enough power to deal with us?" Han Shuo asked with a smile.

Nodding his head, Dorcas confirmed, "The seven grand duchies won't do anything for at least a month. But when they start to act again, it won't be just one duchy coming alone. News of the four great bandit regiments suffering heavy losses has spread all over the seven grand duchies. Even if each duchy puts all their strength behind an attack, their power still can't compare to the combined force of the four great bandit regiments. With

the bandits' defeat as a lesson, they definitely won't act rashly before they are completely confident."

Dorcas continued after a short pause, "In other words, the seven grand duchies won't act now, but once they do, I'm afraid Brettel City would face a hard battle!"

"Hmph! The seven grand duchies want Brettel City to be their hunting ground, I think it's time to change this perspective of theirs. Only when we kill each and every one that comes, will they commit this to their memories for the rest of their lives." Han Shuo said with a cold face. He was silent for a while after, then suddenly spoke to Dorcas and Faulke, "Make good use of this time period when Brettel is still safe to train your soldiers. Make the bandits that have invaded Brettel in recent years your target. I know that beside the four great bandit groups, there are also seven or eight smaller bandit groups. All of you can think of ways to make them spit out everything they looted from us."

Dorcas' eyes sparkled with a fierce light after he heard these words, he immediately replied, "My Lord, rest assured, I know what to do."

"Heh heh, from my trip to the underground world this time, I suddenly realized that in order for Brettel City to quickly become powerful, the fastest way is to plunder the resources from others. Train our soldiers on one hand, plunder others on the other. We get the best of both worlds in this world." Han Shuo made a fortune on dirty money in the underground world, he finally understood why there were so many bandits in the seven grand duchies. Even one of the top ten knight troops of the mainland, the Redbud Knights, didn't mind traveling thousands of miles all the way to the Dark Forest.

"My Lord, I have some interesting news." Dick put on a creepy smile as he spoke to Han Shuo with a smile.

When he saw Dick smile despicably, Han Shuo knew the words about to come out from his mouth were definitely nothing serious. He wasn't angry however, "What interesting news? I can't help but want to beat you after seeing that smile."

“Heh heh, the Narsen Duchy was originally friendly with the Helon Duchy, but they seem to have been extremely unhappy with each other lately. Grand duke Benedict of the Narsen Duchy didn’t even help Helen Tina with her internal strife. Do you know why, my Lord?” Dick looked at Han Shuo with an evil cackle.

Furrowing his brows, Han Shuo said, “Why?”

“It’s to your credit, my Lord. Now all the seven grand duchies know that you’ve had Helen Tina, Benedict, an ardent pursuer for many years, also knows. He has been pursuing Helen Tina for so long in vain, but my Lord was able to have her after having just arrived at Brettel City a few months ago.”

“For Benedict, a used woman has naturally lost her flavor. His attitude towards the Helon Duchy also changed greatly. He only stood on the sidelines to watch when Helen Tina faced her enemies.” Dick explained while laughing, then he sighed, “My Lord is very farsighted, easily splitting up the two most solid allies.”

“Indeed, my Lord has great vision. We are lack his charisma and definitely have to learn from my Lord!” Chester had the same look of admiration on this face as he nodded and sighed emotionally.

Han Shuo’s expression darkened. He looked at these innately dirty fellows and grunted, “So you spread this news, I didn’t think you would be so despicable.”

Chester and Dick laughed awkwardly without a word, while Jack was full of interest and said with envy, “Bryan, I heard that that woman is very beautiful, you are really blessed!”

It appeared these fellows wouldn’t believe his explanation, so Han Shuo didn’t try to explain himself anymore. He took out Celt’s space ring with all the armor from the Redbud Knights, along with an enormous amount of magic crystal ore, and said to Jack, “This ring is loaded with armor from the Redbud Knights and magic crystal ore. You go put them in the warehouse and keep the ring.”

“You are giving this space ring to me?” Jack looked with surprise at Han

Shuo handing over the space ring, his voice high.

“Mhm, this ring originally belonged to the Redbud Knights leader Celt. The space inside is enough for you to transport goods.” Han Shuo smiled at Jack, then took out fire grand magus Marceau’s space ring and handed it over as well, “There are a number of crystals, jade and a variety of jewelry inside, worth nearly a million gold coins. They are to be used as the capital for Brettel’s operations, you have full control over them.”

Jack sensed Celt’s space ring and discovered the massive amount of armor and magic crystal ore inside, he smiled excitedly at Faulke, “Faulke, you can have even better armor now. The magic crystal ore inside is also enough for our magic crystal cannons to use for a while.”

“Very good, His Lordship took one trip outside and truly really rich harvest!” Faulke let out a happy cry hearing Jack’s words.

There were the harvested ore, armor from the dead Redbud Knights, plus the crystal, jade and gold coins that Celt had plundered from the underground world in Celt and Marceu’s space rings. Han Shuo had stored some magical equipment, the “Starry Sky” and the magical space tent in his own space ring.

The things he gave Jack were all related to money as they didn’t provide any practical uses for Han Shuo. Brettel City was currently his greatest asset, what he cared about the most was to make Brettel more powerful. These gold coins would fully demonstrate their value in Jack’s hands.

“Good, I’m counting on you to make good use of these things.” Han Shuo said to Jack and the bunch. With these things, he knew that Brettel City would become even more powerful.

# Chapter 348: Demon-rearing

Five days passed, and Fabian arrived at Brettel City, followed by a group of merchants. They had brought far more goods this time than their previous trip. The enthusiasm of the merchants who had tasted an untapped market far exceeded Han Shuo's expectations.

Every merchant had brought along a caravan this time. Each had carriages pulled by earth dragons, laden with bags of various sizes. Inside the various pouches were goblin missiles and sacks full of crossbows and arrows.

The goods on the carriages at the rear were wrapped tightly in canvas. Although, from the look of the bulky packages, it didn't take a genius to figure out that each carriage held ammunition, and lots of it. Two large and slow-moving earth dragons pulled a carriage, each 5 meters wide and 10 meters long. Each of these gigantic carriages were large enough to accommodate 10 battle wagons or catapults.

The carriages being pulled by the dragons contained at least 20 battle wagons, while the 27 smaller carriages behind them were pulled by warhorses. Although these 27 carriages weren't as large as the ones pulled by the earth dragons, each was large enough to accommodate 3 battle wagons apiece.

Located even farther back were Cloudmound Beasts. Extraordinarily, these creatures were just as strong as the earth dragons, but also just as slow. They were twice as large as warhorses, each long leg as large as elephants. They carried sacks full of food and daily necessities. These should be able to replenish Brettel City's warehouses.

The number of merchants had doubled, compared to last time, each wearing a smile that only grew wider as they drew closer to the city. They all wore casual expressions, each talking about their soon-to-be profits.

They hadn't encountered a single corpse on the road from Seamist City to Brettel City, nor did they see hide nor hair of bandits. After Dorcas' extermination campaign, all the bandits had been eradicated. Those who



cooperated had been conscripted as hard working janitors, working to keep the roads free of detritus.

When they noticed these subtle details, the merchants began to gradually relax. When they reached the city, Jack, Brettel City's finance minister, paid the merchants in one lump sum after completing an inventory of the delivered goods.

The merchants who had come such a long distance were utterly delighted to receive their money. They didn't immediately leave Brettel City, but nagged Jack to allow them to open a store in Brettel City.

"Jack, the Boozt Merchant Guild also plans to open a branch here, help us prepare a suitable location," Fabian said to Jack.

"Understood. The branch of the Boozt Merchant Guild will be the first to be arranged," Jack promised, smiling. Despite the objections of the nearby merchants, he covertly brought Fabian aside, sneakily asking, "These merchants have finally come to their senses and want to set up shop in Brettel City?"

"Aye. Ever since the four great bandit groups had been defeated, Brettel City has become known as a merchant's wonderland after our painstaking marketing campaign. To be frank, the mines surrounding Brettel City are rich in resources. As long as we have enough smiths, Brettel City will certainly be able to use these resources to create weapons."

"Brettel City is also the closest juncture to the seven grand duchies. As far as the nobility of the seven grand duchies were concerned, the Lancelot Empire's ornate clothing and porcelain were luxury products that they were willing to spend large quantities of money on. On the other hand, the hardy horses, furs and jewels produced by the seven grand duchies are also very much in demand by the Lancelot Empire."

If it wasn't for the fact that Brettel City's safety could not be guaranteed, the ideal location of this city would've propelled this city to becoming the place to be for merchants. Now that word of the four bandit groups' defeat is spreading, along with the guarantee of safe passage, many merchants will start to willingly seek out Boozt Merchant Guild to sell their wares

here.”

“Just wait and see, this is only the first wave. As long as Brettel City can give the merchants a sense of safety, more and more merchants will come flocking. At that time, we’d be hardpressed to even try stopping activity.” Fabian explained to Jack.

“It seems that our choice was a wise one.” The little fatty smiled until his small eyes were nearly creases upon hearing Fabian’s words, “Guess what, Bryan made a trip to the underground world a while ago. Do you know how many valuable things he brought back? Haha, I now have two million gold coins at my disposal! If we include the crystals and other valuables, then the money at my disposal reaches three million! I would never have thought that I would be able to one day control so much money!”

Fabian was visibly shocked upon hearing Jack say these words, then sighed, “Follow Bryan well, you little brat. The very fact that he’s given you so much money to look after is proof of his trust. As long as you work hard, becoming a noble is only a matter of time.”

“Rest assured, uncle, I know what to do. The crystals, gold, silver, jewels and other valuables have to be sold through the merchant guilds. Brettel City is an iron stronghold as long as we have enough money,” Jack replied.

“There are a couple of merchants here who probably have an interest in your products. You should find them and negotiate directly.” Fabian laughed, and said “We’re off to see Bryan, Phoebe asked me to bring him a few things.”

“Go on in. He’s waiting for you.” Jack replied.

Fabian soon found Han Shuo’s room after leaving Jack. Han Shuo was waiting impatiently, as he already knew that Fabian was coming. Han Shuo welcomed Fabian in as soon as the latter’s footsteps sounded. Smiling, he said “Mister Fabian. Did Phoebe ask you to bring me anything?”

“Of course. This space ring contains what you need.” Fabian laughed, handing Han Shuo the space ring. Han Shuo focused his mental strength into the space ring and immediately joined Fabian in laughter.

“Take this sword to Phoebe for me. Be careful, and make sure that nothing happens along the way.” Taking out the divine weapon “Starry Sky”, Han Shuo handed it over to Fabian with a warning, “This is the divine weapon, “Starry Sky”, formerly of the leader of the Redbud Knights, Celt. You should know its value.”

Fabian’s expression immediately grew serious as he realized what he was holding. He stored “Starry Sky” into his own space ring, saying, “Rest assured, I will definitely bring this sword to Miss Phoebe.”

“Tell Phoebe to continue collecting the things on this list.” Han Shuo once again took out a list and handed it to Fabian.

“Understood, I know what to do.” Fabian tucked the letter away, continuing to reassure Han Shuo.

After Fabian took his leave, Han Shuo found Chester and gave him some instructions, then returned to the Cemetery of Death.

The Cemetery of Death was immersed in the aura of death all year round. A large, oval hole had appeared amongst the white bones. The hole was surrounded by 12 colourful banners, each around 10 meters tall and still managing to flutter despite the complete lack of wind. Each banner was emblazoned with an exotic symbol.

The oval pit was filled with large bone spikes, all sticking upwards. Some of these bones had been pulled from the green dragon’s corpse by Han Shuo, while the others came from the taboo land from last time. All of the bones were from deceased powerful magic creatures.

Han Shuo dumped buckets of black and shimmering violet liquid into the oval pit. Bucket after bucket were dumped in, Han Shuo seemingly having an endless supply from his space ring. All of it went inside the pit.

This liquid was either metallic-smelling blood or juices of a much more gruesome nature. It came in many colors, and the smell was far from flattering. After tens of buckets had been dumped into the pit, Han Shuo took out a dagger and shallowly slit his wrist. He held it over the hole as drops of fresh blood dripped from his arm.

As Han Shuo's fresh blood splashed into the hole, the liquid began to emit red smoke. Surprisingly, the drops of Han Shuo's blood didn't diffuse, instead swimming around like red agates. The tranquil liquid began to bubble, catalyzed by Han Shuo's blood, as crackling filled the air.

Han Shuo tilted his head up and whistled, a long low dragon's cry that promised of sinister things to come. The Demonslayer Edge shot out from the nape of Han Shuo's neck, bringing with it the ghosts of the fallen. The silently flailing and screaming ghosts resembled a nest of snakes as they were drawn into the twelve banners. After hundreds of ghosts were absorbed by the banners, a killing aura began to drift out from the banner, slowly rising to the skies.

The killing aura seemed to be attracted to the liquid in the hole, arcing down into the hole at a speed visible to the eye. With the help of this killing aura, Han Shuo's originally emulsified blood gradually dissolved into the liquid contained within the hole, soon vanishing without a trace.

Taking a deep breath, Han Shuo circulated his magical yuan towards the wound on his wrist, watching as the cut made by his dagger rapidly healed.

Taking out the skeletal staff, Han Shuo began to rapidly chant an incantation. Three horsed evil knights suddenly appeared in front of Han Shuo. He pointed his staff at the hole in the ground. The contract-bound evil knights didn't hesitate, jumping in one after the other into the hole.

When the first evil knight and his horse landed in the pit, the previously silent knight and horse suddenly threw their heads back in a soundless roar. Not a sound came out of the pit as the two wailed, the knight's bronze colored armor and horse sizzling as they came in contact with the liquid. Both of them gave off clouds of smoke, which rose high into the air.

The evil knight and his mount appeared as if they were suffering the worst pain imaginable. The evil knight, who normally would not dare violate the contract, suddenly attempted to break the power of the contract, trying to leave the hole that caused him so much suffering, his body twisting and thrashing in his agony.

The evil knight wasn't a lowly existence like the skeleton warriors. These strong fighters had their own version of intelligence in their dimension. Although their prodigious strength was restricted by the magical contract, the harrowing pain that exceeded that of death forced him to instinctively struggle against the contract.

Han Shuo cursed under his breath as he held the skeletal staff. "How can you be reborn if you don't suffer this kind of pain? You don't know what's good for you. You'll know what this pain has brought you after you've been tempered and your body reforged. Just the materials required for this "Twelve Demon Rearing Fragments Formation" costs at least a hundred thousand gold coins. Stop struggling!"

As Han Shuo cursed, he used his consciousness to suppress the evil knight's struggles and force the other two evil knights into the pit as well.

Just like the first evil knight, the other two evil knights who were forced into the pit also began resisting due to the overwhelming pain, attempting to break the contract Han Shuo held over them.

Han Shuo could easily deal with a single evil knight's rebellion. However, if three evil knights and their steeds resisted as a group, then even he would have trouble dealing with them. Han Shuo was forced to use all of his available mental strength to firmly suppress their combined assault on the magical contract.

"Nine cycles of demon reincarnation, scattered souls return to your positions, reduce!" Even as Han Shuo used his mental strength to yank the evil knights back under control, he still had to split some effort out to manipulate the spell.

After he spat out the words, the killing aura drifting out of the twelve banners began to thicken. The mysterious patterns that the banners were inscribed with began to form faces. Under the infusion of the ghosts' power, twelve sinister demon faces gradually appeared. Although each demon's face was unique, they had one frightening similarity. They struck fear into the hearts of men and women alike.

These twelve demon faces were identical to the demon heads that had

entered Han Shuo's body when he advanced to the separate demon realm. After the twelve grimacing demon faces had all appeared on the banners, twelve demon heads slowly emerged from Han Shuo's body, floating in front of their respective faces.

After the twelve demon heads had returned to the banners from Han Shuo's body, the killing aura exuded by the banners suddenly swirled into a vortex, gathering in the center of the central pit. The three knights and their mounts felt like their souls had suddenly been set afire. Their pain had doubled, and they began to struggle even more fiercely against the contract that bound them.

Han Shuo froze in place, barely managing to put the skeletal staff away. He sat in place in front of the pit, using every iota of his formidable mental strength to suppress the evil knights and their steeds. In the pit, the evil knights swung their bone lances wildly, as if wishing to decapitate Han Shuo that very instant.

# Chapter 349: The dignity of the little skeleton in the other dimension

Despite the complete absence of wind, twelve large banner fluttered vigorously in the wind. Baleful aura swirled around, flowing like mercury towards the pit in the middle. Inside the pit, the liquid boiled like fire oil, searing the three evil knights and their mounts and sending smoke billowing into the air.

Han Shuo closed his eyes as he sat, facing three evil knights. His mental strength flowed like an unstoppable river, holding the three evil knights true to their contract. As the mounts of the evil knights were weaker, they gradually lost the strength to continue struggling fruitlessly.

Three enormous bone spurs continued to madly thrust at Han Shuo. A millisecond of relaxation, and the evil knights would ruthlessly exploit the advantage to pierce right through Han Shuo's head. Han Shuo was fully focused on his task, iron-willed to the end. Inextricable patterns of mental strength weaved into a formless net in the sky, grinding away at the mountain of resistance that was the will of the three evil knights.

The Cemetery of Death wasn't touched by either the sun or moon, eternally shrouded in faint, dim light. Hence, one could never sense the passage of time. After an indeterminate amount of time, the three bone lances struggling to reach Han Shuo slowly lost their strength. Like the bodies of the evil knights, they listlessly fell back into the pit.

Han Shuo's whole body looked like it had been carved from stone, not a single sign of life from his cross-legged position. The twelve banners still absorbed ghosts and radiated killing aura that converged on the pit. After what felt like a few days, the bodies of the three evil knights completely dissolved into the liquid, with not a trace left behind.

At long last, Han Shuo moved, a gasp of air escaping his lips as his eyes opened. His voice was haggard with exhaustion, "That was so damn tiring!". It had only been three evil knights and their mounts, but the process of reforming their bodies had already caused Han Shuo this much

trouble. It seemed that Han Shuo's initial hypotheses were true. It was impossible to use demonic arts to reform every undead creature's body.

For one, this kind of refining used overly complex and highly precious ingredients. If the countless skeleton warriors and zombie warriors under Han Shuo's command were to all be refined, even his prodigious savings wouldn't be enough to support it. Just refining these three evil knights already cost at least a hundred thousand gold. Refining every skeleton warrior and zombie warrior would drive him to bankruptcy and beyond. Even then, he still wouldn't be done!

Also, refining undead creatures in this manner took too much of his time and energy, with very little benefits to such an enormous undertaking. After all, skeleton warriors and zombie warriors were essentially cannon fodder. Even he rendered them immune to light magic's corrosive effect, their usage was limited. As such, Han Shuo wasn't willing to waste mountains of gold on them.

Evil knights were currently the strongest undead creatures that Han Shuo could summon. Even within undead creatures, they were considered high level. They had great utility and flexibility once their fire-breathing steeds could take the field with them. Their monstrous innate strength could be combined with hardy armor to produce a combatant that was tougher than a human knight. Han Shuo had already had to use all of his mental strength to suppress the fierce resistance of three evil knights and their warhorses. While Han Shuo could summon bone demons and old fey zombies, he definitely couldn't refine three of them at one go. This was because the resistance from the Bone Devils and Old Corpse Demons would definitely be stronger.

Standing up from his cross-legged position, Han Shuo summoned the twelve demon heads from the banners with a thought. Howling, they reluctantly returned into Han Shuo's body. Since the bodies of the three evil knights were already merged into the pit, Han Shuo didn't need to suppress the matrix with his magical yuan any longer .

The twelve demon heads had formed when Han Shuo had reached the separate demon stage, using the large baleful aura within the Valley of



Sunshine as a catalyst. These twelve demon heads innately contained vicious killing intent, every demon head formed from the last vicious obsession of many hateful souls. It was the best ingredient to refine the “mystical demons” that were one level above the “yin demons”.

Of the three previously refined yin demons, there was currently only usable one left. Han Shuo was convinced that one yin demon was far from adequate to maintain his battlefield advantage. When he'd advanced to the separate demon realm back at the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo had deliberately saved the boundless murderous aura, coagulating it into the twelve demon heads. When the ingredients needed to refine mystical demons were gathered, the twelve demon heads would be used as the base ingredient for the mystical demons.

After making sure the area would operate without supervision, Han Shuo headed for the specialized area for refining ‘original demons’ and “yin demons”. He first summoned the earth elite zombie, commanding it to modify the layout of the yin demon cave, molding it into a cave suitable for cultivation “mystical demons”. When the modifications were complete, Han Shuo took out the ingredients he needed, and placed them in the centers of the formation eyes around the cave.

Once he had completed all the preparations, Han Shuo dismissed the earth elite zombie and placed twelve drops of his own essence blood into the mystical demon cave. The blood essence began to revolve in mid air within the mystical demon cave. The twelve demon heads emerged from Han Shuo's body at his command, each swallowing a drop of blood essence. As if at some unknown signal, the cave's enormous energy began to activate. Han Shuo then summoned a few hundred wraiths and tossed in a few spirits from the Demonslayer Edge to act as fodder for the mystical demon's evolution.

Han Shuo then dug deep into his magical yuan reserves, pouring the remnants into the mystical demon cave to maintain its normal operations. When the twelve demon heads began to howl and rip at the wraiths and spirits in the matrix, the exhausted Han Shuo returned to the center of the Cemetery of Death.

The two matrices had now resumed normal operations. Han Shuo had not only expended a large amount of mental strength, but also used significant amounts of magical yuan and blood essence. This was even more exhausting than when he'd fought against Kosse at Brettel City. At that time, he had the little skeleton, the earth elite zombie, and the fire elite zombie assisting him. But something like this refining process was something only he could handle. As a result, he was bone deep exhausted.

Sitting on the ground in the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo pondered for a moment and took out the skeletal staff, meticulously examining the tri-colored skeletal staff. He wanted to make use of this interlude to examine the secrets of the skeletal staff.

Calamity Church's necromancer archmage Wolf as well as Ancient Lizard King Dagassi had seemed to know traces of the skeletal staff's origin. This skeletal staff, which had transformed from the Eye of Darkness, was the key to opening the Cemetery of Death. It definitely held many hidden secrets.

Han Shuo hadn't possessed the skeletal staff for a long time. His understanding of the skeletal staff only went as far as seeing that it enhanced his necromancy magic. If not for the necromancer archmage Wolf using the skeletal staff's power to rejuvenate his life, Han Shuo would perhaps never have guessed that the skeletal staff could have such an effect.

"Skeleton staff, oh skeletal staff. How many secrets are you hiding!" Han Shuo mumbled to himself as he stroked the three colored skulls.

The exhausted Han Shuo fell unconscious. He semi-consciously felt like he'd been shrouded by the thi-colored light from the skeletal staff, spinning him around. Colorful lights streamed quickly past his body. It felt like he was falling from a great height into an endless abyss.

Just when Han Shuo felt nauseous from the dizzy feeling, he suddenly sensed a familiar smell intrude on his consciousness. This smell seemed to come from an area of the abyss he'd fallen into. Han Shuo's groggy consciousness latched firmly onto the familiar smell, gradually sinking

back into unconsciousness.

There was an infinite black void in the distance. The surroundings seemed to have been forever shrouded in torpid grey, and grey and black cloud constantly rolled over the horizon. The whole area was filled with the smell of death, desolation and wilderness.

Swamps and tree husks that were void of branches and leaves dotted the landscape closer to him. A variety of undead creatures stumbled across the wilderness, aimlessly wandering in the desolate space.

There was no cycle of day and night in this desolate place, nor any sense of time. There was only loneliness and despair, deathly stillness and desolation.

For a moment, Han Shuo thought he was still within the Cemetery of Death. It was too similar to the Cemetery of Death's everlasting dusk. But when a pack of gargoyles soared over his head, followed by a horde of skeletons and zombies on the ground, Han Shuo was suddenly struck by the very real fact it wasn't indeed the Cemetery of Death.

He clearly remembered that he hadn't summoned these low level undead creatures in the Cemetery of Death. Han Shuo suddenly felt like he was in a dream. Only when he followed this line of thought to its end did he realise he didn't have a body, existing as just pure awareness. However, as soon as Han Shuo thought about his body, his exhausted mental strength slowly filled the area of his consciousness. A identical copy of his body rapidly coalesced into being.

His left hand touched his right, both hands obviously making contact. However, Han Shuo didn't feel any contact between his skin; everything felt so strange. But he felt a sense of intimacy towards the surroundings. As for what felt intimate, he couldn't quite place his finger on it.

The dense horde of undead creatures suddenly charged down from a bare mountain. These undead creatures were arranged neatly in order. Right at the front were skeleton warriors and zombie warriors, behind them were skeleton archers and rows of gargoyles. Even further back were two evil knights.

These undead creatures actually numbered three or four thousand. However, the majority of them were skeleton warriors, zombie warriors and ghouls, only a small portion were hate warriors and evil knights. Charging down from the towering mountain, they flocked towards a steep canyon.

Han Shuo's body and consciousness slowly floated into the canyon. Only when he reached the canyon did Han Shuo realise that the interior of the canyon was similarly flooded with undead creatures. Right down the center of the canyon was a pitched melee of undead creatures. Claws and teeth were used to their fullest potential as they wrestled and tore at each other, incapable of feeling pain and knowing retreat. It was a magnificent yet chilling scene.

When weak undead creatures such as skeleton warriors and zombie were completely destroyed, those low level souls would immediately disperse. But from hate warriors onwards, their souls wouldn't immediately disperse upon elimination. The undead creatures around them would fight to claim a part of that soul power, devouring it to strengthen themselves.

From the middle of the struggle rose a five meter tall, enormous mummy lord. Wrapped in strips of corroded white cloth which exuded a deathly aura, he slowly rose from deep within the ground of the canyon. This mummy lord seemed to be the leader of the undead creatures within the canyon. When he rose up from deep within the ground, his whole body unleashed an incomparable storm of death.

When the undead creatures charging down from the mountain came into contact with the death storm, they immediately turned into ashes. The strips of cloth around his body danced like weapons, cutting apart any hostile creature unfortunate enough to be caught in its path. Only an evil knight that descended was able to block the attack with his bone spear, driving his fire-breathing warhorse to retreat to the side.

In the hierarchy of undead creatures, mummy lords ranked higher than evil knights. As such, in skirmishes between undead creatures, a difference in level usually meant a foregone conclusion. Unless there were ten evil

knights attacking the mummy lord, this battle had no suspense in its outcome.

End of part one of the chapter.

When the mummy lord emerged from the ground, the surrounding undead creatures that had charged down from the bald mountain were ground to dust by the death storm. More than seven hundred undead creatures turned into ashes in moments.

“The being who’s holing up on high ground, accept this challenge from the mummy lord Pharaoh! That mountain is not a height that can be held by someone as weak as you, so hand over the territory to me!” Mummy lord Pharaoh roared at the towering mountain as a large amount of mental strength swept through the whole area.

“My Lord Majesty, how can you tolerate the transgressions of that lowly mummy?” The evil knight that’d retreated on his fire-breathing warhorse hissed sternly.

The sounds of rocks shifting suddenly sounded from around the canyon. The incomparably familiar wood and fire elite zombie separately rode out on fire-breathing warhorses, dashing in from both sides of the valley.

An enormous shadow dived down from the tops of the mountain, the incredible undead porcupine full of bone spurs. The little skeleton was wielding a bone dagger that had transformed into a spear three meters long. The seven bone spurs stood upright from his spine. His grand aura covered the scene as he landed.

“Humble mummy lord, my territory is not a place where you can just casually trespass. Now, not only do I desire your soul’s dissipation, but from today forth, the north side of the mummy lord’s territory is also under my control.” The little skeleton’s thoughts exploded out like a raging flood, completely disproportionate to its tiny figure high in the sky.

“My Lord Majesty, you must unite and rule the darkness.” The evil knight that’d previously spoken dismounted, going down on one knee in front of the gallant figure of the little skeleton flying high above the battlefield. His face was filled with solemn worship.

This was the first time the mummy lord Pharaoh had set eyes on the rumoured superb mutated skeleton. The aura exploding from the little skeleton's figure instantly terrified Pharaoh. There was also the flaming fire elite zombie, seemingly tossing two fireballs from hand to hand while sitting on the back of the warhorse. The scorchingly high temperature caused the cold loving mummy lord Pharaoh to feel extremely uncomfortable.

Pharaoh suddenly felt like he'd fallen for a trap this time. He'd survived in this world for an extremely long time now, he wasn't like the typical trudging undead creatures around. He'd long since gained true intelligence.

That bad feeling he had solidified his decision to leave, and he attempted to return underground. However, the previously soft earth had suddenly become as hard as diamonds. Just as the mummy lord Pharaoh started to panic, the simple-minded earth elite zombie slowly emerged from the earth. Grinning at Pharaoh, it naively said, "You can't escape, right?"

The previously awe-inspiring mummy lord Pharaoh suddenly realised all his escape paths had been cut off. He howled furiously, "Despicable being, you are too sinister!"

The little skeleton didn't respond. The undead creature beneath him suddenly dove at Pharaoh. The little skeleton lifted the three meter long bone spear, the baleful aura in the surroundings surging into the bone spear. The bone spear absorbed a large amount of deathly aura, becoming as heavy as a mountain. As it pierced towards Pharaoh, the mummy lord threw back his head in a roar of defiance.

The strips of cloth on Pharaoh's body danced as it crushed everyone within its range. But when the little skeleton's bone spear descended, it tore straight through the strips wrapped around his body, piercing through to his chest in one strike, pinning him to the ground.

"Submit, or die!" The little skeleton coldly shouted as his huge aura fiercely bombarded every inch of the mummy lord pinned by the bone spear.

Unable to struggle loose, Pharaoh yielded to the little skeleton's viciousness after a mournful howl. He docilely bent his head to the little skeleton and said, "I, mummy lord Pharaoh, submit to My Lord."

The little skeleton wasn't in a hurry to remove the bone spear from the mummy lord's body. He drew a contract mark in the dusky air with his free left hand, making the mummy lord hand over some of his soul to brand the contract. Only then did he remove the bone spear without concern for the mummy lord's pain, turning around and saying, "Return to the mountain!"

The mummy lord didn't have any chance to resist now that the one-sided master and servant contract was formed. He struggled to his feet, lumbering off with slow steps behind the earth and wood elite zombies, his goal clearly the towering mountain.

Han Shuo had seen everything clearly and was filled with surprise. He finally knew where he was at this time. This was the other dimension in which the undead creatures lived.

Han Shuo never would have imagined that the little skeleton and earth zombie would actually have an enormous troop in the other dimension. It even looked like they were getting on rather well. No wonder the earth elite zombie had asked to return last time if there wasn't anything for him. Looking at this battle, it seemed that the little skeleton had brought along the earth, wood and fire elite zombies, and was conducting a mighty invasion in the other dimension.

A high level undead creature like the mummy lord could only be summoned by a necromancer archmage, similar to the bone demons. Yet the little skeleton had handled the mummy lord with a single strike. This fully proved that the little skeleton's level was higher than the mummy lord. This was something that Han Shuo never would have thought of.

When the mummy lord was subdued by the little skeleton, Han Shuo suddenly panicked. He suddenly remembered that he didn't know how to return to the Profound Continent. There weren't any people or things that Han Shuo was familiar with in this eternally desolate and still space.

If he could only remain in this foreign netherworld in his consciousness, it would be complete torture to Han Shuo. At present, even his body was formed by his consciousness, so not only could Han Shuo not control anything, he couldn't cast any magic either. This was an extremely unfavourable situation for Han Shuo.

Looking at the little skeleton fly towards the towering bald mountain, Han Shuo repeatedly screamed mentally in an attempt to contact the little skeleton. In the midst of that, a sharp pain suddenly spread across Han Shuo's whole body. This kind of agony was unbearable even to Han Shuo's tough nerves. As a result, his consciousness gradually dissipated.

The little skeleton, who was travelling towards the towering mountain with the elite zombies, suddenly paused, looking towards the area where Han Shuo's consciousness vanished. He suddenly turned the flying undead creature and flew towards the area where Han Shuo's consciousness had just been. The purple demon eye sparkled, filled with uncertainty.

The earth, wood and fire elite zombies all spurred their fire-breathing warhorses to pass through the ranks of the undead army to stand next to the little skeleton. The earth elite zombie asked innocently, "What's wrong?"

"Father was here." The little skeleton, who only had two holes for a nose, moved with a crunching noise and responded to the three special undead creatures.

"How can Father be here, this is our world!" The earth zombie looked naively at the little skeleton, trying to understand.

"I don't know, but I just felt the connection between Father and myself. He was just here!" The little skeleton swung the three meter bone lance in his hand, the tip of the bone lance stopping at the area where Han Shuo's consciousness previously stayed, saying, "Right here, if you sniff carefully, you can still smell Father's scent."

With this sentence from the little skeleton, the three undead creatures all drew close to the area. Among them, the wood and fire elite zombie shook their heads, having yet to fully develop their own consciousness.



They currently could only rely on the little skeleton to think. Only the earth zombie deeply breathed in a few breaths of air, as if really smelling Han Shuo's scent. It replied while shaking its head, "Yes. Father has truly been here!"

"Let's return to the mountain, Father has already left. We still need to take over Pharaoh's territories later." said the little skeleton, and then spurred the undead creature into the sky, howling as he made his way to the towering mountain.

Han Shuo shot to his feet as if his head had been struck by lightning. When he landed on the ground, he was covered in a cold sweat, his heart still palpitating with fear.

The skeletal staff that was in his hand fell to the ground at this moment. It rattled as it bounced on the smooth hard ground of the Cemetery of Death. There weren't any changes to the skeletal staff that was now quietly lying on the ground. However, Han Shuo knew that the skeletal staff had just brought him to another place.

Travelling to the desolate and still dimension had given Han Shuo a scare. What Han Shuo was afraid of wasn't the existence of and war in the other dimension. Instead, he was scared that he couldn't return to the Profound Continent. He had existed only as a consciousness in that paradise for necromancy, but his body had remained on the Profound Continent.

The effect on a necromancer like Han Shuo was obvious, he was unable to use much of his power there. If he was stuck eternally in that area, facing desolate and deathly undead creatures for the rest of his life would be akin to torture to Han Shuo.

Being used to the riotous colors of this world, Han Shuo couldn't easily adapt to the monochromatic other dimension. Besides, this world still had Han Shuo's close friends, who were made of flesh and blood like Han Shuo, unlike the creatures in the other dimension.

"That was close, this skeletal staff is really odd, luckily it finally sent me back. If not, my life would have been destroyed." Han Shuo spoke to

himself for a while. Only then did he look at the skeletal staff again. His mind was thinking furiously as to how he had passed through the various layered planes, with his consciousness landing in that space.

Unfortunately, even after pondering for a long while, Han Shuo still didn't know how he'd done so. Shaking his head, Han Shuo didn't carry on thinking about this question. He instead recalled the little skeleton's amazing performance in that space. Han Shuo wanted to immediately use the skeletal staff to summon the little skeleton over, but had a lingering fear of the skeletal staff's previous changes. He temporarily gave up on the thought of immediately summoning the little skeleton.

"Who knew the little skeleton was actually so well established. He looks even more awesome than me in the Profound Continent! When did this fellow become so formidable, eh?" Han Shuo couldn't resist sighing. When he remembered the scene where the little skeleton had landed, and the looks of fear from a few of the low level creatures, he finally understood what was going on.

# Chapter 350: The excited dark dragon

Han Shuo, who'd just returned from the necromancer's dimension, spent the next couple of days recovering. After he was fully rested, he went to the dark forest and caught a few magic beasts, continuing to practice the "Trembling Soul" magic.

After a few days of practice, Han Shuo was finally able to manipulate his mental strength at will. When a "Trembling Soul" spell was fired, a wild beast would simply fall down, blood flowing from its nose and mouth.

When Han Shuo could control "Trembling Soul" as he would, he began studying spells that higher ranked necromancers should be proficient in.

The most important matters were the summoning spells for bone demons, old fey zombies and mummy lords. As necromancers progressed, not only would the level of their summoned creatures grow higher, but they would also be able to summon other kinds of creatures. Necromancy archmages like Han Shuo should be able to call forth bone demons, old fey zombies, and mummy lords.

In reality, apart from a few differences in the incantations, there weren't many differences between summoning the three. Even though their soul brands were different, the strength required to summon any one of them were roughly the same. As long as Han Shuo mastered summoning bone demons, he would then be able to summon the other two undead creatures just by slightly modifying the incantation.

Although, just like the "Trembling Soul" spell, the farther a necromancer progressed, the harder the advanced spells would become to master. Han Shuo's understanding of necromancy magic from the deceased archmage Clayton was now useless.

Starting from this realm, Han Shuo would have to carefully study necromancy magic by himself. Luckily, the Cemetery of Death had many books that Han Shuo could peruse. The number of references concerning the essence of necromancy were too many to count.

As the three evil knights and twelve mystical demons were still being

refined, Han Shuo used this time to study more advanced necromancy magic.

The days flew by. One day, Han Shuo suddenly sensed a familiar presence outside the Cemetery of Death whilst chanting his incantations.

Suddenly awakening from his deep contemplation, Han Shuo held the skeleton staff as he walked out of the Cemetery of Death, running into dark dragon Gilbert wandering outside, "What are you doing here?"

"Esteemed master, I felt your presence, and it just so happened that I was in the Valley of Sunshine. Hence I came over to find you." Dark dragon Gilbert cheered up when he saw Han Shuo appear.

Gilbert hadn't seem to have undergone any great changes. However, Han Shuo could feel from Gilbert's body that his aura seemed to have strengthened a little. After Gilbert walked into the Cemetery of Death, he immediately began chattering, reporting on what had happened in the Valley of Sunshine.

Han Shuo gradually came to understand the situation in Valley of Sunshine from Gilbert's stories. Ever since Han Shuo had previously schemed against the various powers that had converged on the hidden valley with the mithril mine, the four great powers had formed a temporary truce. Instead, they focused all their attention on crusading against the culprit behind the scenes.

Laureton had previously said that whichever faction was the first to find the culprit behind the scenes would hold power in the Valley of Sunshine. So, all the powers, large or small, were trying to find the culprit behind the scenes. However, even after so many months, there was still no results.

Trunks understood that the real culprit, Han Shuo, had long since left the valley. Towards this issue, he pretended to express concern, but also silently expanded the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. Unwittingly, the silent and unknown Soul Destroyers had gradually become the fifth great power in Valley of Sunshine thanks to its abundant funds and Trunks' prestige.

Having consumed one of Han Shuo's Rebirth Pills, Trunks' strength had

advanced from swordmaster to great swordmaster. Out of all the different factions in the Valley of Sunshine, only Laureton, who could go thrice berserk, could beat him. Florida and Adam Melo were both inferior to Trunks.

This period of time was the Soul Destroyers' chance to rise. As they shot through the ranks of their peers, they absorbed even more outstanding experts. Trunks previous ruthlessness now had an added edge of insidiousness to it. He wasn't in a hurry to immediately deal with Florida, intending to slowly torment him a bit at a time.

Gilbert took on some missions with Trunks, completing every operation perfectly. In this process, Gilbert frequently visited many brothels, using the skills that Han Shuo taught him to secretly absorb some yin energy. Thus, his strength also rapidly improved.

After he finished listening to Gilbert narrate the situation in the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo was actually slightly worried. Currently, Trunks' Soul Destroyers were the fifth greatest power in the Valley of Sunshine. This also meant that Soul Destroyers had the right to participate in the fight for the leadership over the Valley of Sunshine. Previously, when the Soul Destroyers didn't have this level of strength, only Florida would spare no effort in suppressing him. Now that the Soul Destroyers truly had such strength, the other three sides naturally would place more attention on Trunks.

Even the Berserker Warriors' Laureton would unfortunately not be as friendly to Trunks as he previously was. After all, Trunks possessed the strength to threaten his Cairo mercenary band. There were no friends who were forever in this world. Once there was a clear conflict of interest, it was very possible that some dirty things would happen.

Han Shuo contemplated for a while, understanding in his heart that Trunks and the rest would perhaps find it more difficult to develop in the future. However, Han Shuo believed in Trunks' ability and didn't care too much about this. After thinking for a while, he smiled slightly and said to dark dragon Gilbert, "I have something for you."

“What is it?” After Gilbert explained the details of the situation in the Valley of Sunshine to Han Shuo, he was surprised by Han Shuo’s response.

Han Shuo took the green dragon’s magical core from his space ring, lustrous green energy whirling within. The massive amount of energy contained within immediately caused Gilbert to go mad with joy, loudly screaming with delight, “A supreme magical core?”

“That’s right. This is a green dragon’s magical core, I believe this magical core should be useful to you?” Han Shuo grinned at Gilbert and asked.

Unable to stop nodding his head like a chicken pecking rice, Gilbert was tremendously excited, his right hand already holding up the green dragon’s magical core in his palm, laughing boisterously, “Useful. Too useful! I can feel the enormous energy contained within. With this green dragon magical core that’s of a higher rank than me, I can definitely evolve to the second level!”

“That’s good, swallow it immediately and just evolve in the Cemetery of Death.” This green dragon’s magical core had obviously been specially prepared by Han Shuo for Gilbert. Seeing Gilbert looking surprised and excited to the point of madness, he smiled.

Apart from his lewdness, Gilbert could also be considered a loyal follower. Previously in the taboo land deep within the Dark Forest, he’d displayed loyalty that’d touched Han Shuo. If not, Han Shuo, who was berserk at that time, perhaps would have been lost forever.

“Thank you, Master. Master, you are too great! Your loyal servant praises you from the bottom of his heart...” Gilbert sang unceasing praises as he clutched the green dragon’s magical core. Gilbert had interacted with humans for a long period of time during this time. His boot-licking skills had greatly improved, and he almost didn’t repeat a single sentence.

“Alright, alright. Just swallow the green dragon’s magical core for me. Less of that nonsense.” Han Shuo interrupted Gilbert’s fawning, not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

Gilbert stopped his nonsense this time, animatedly nodding his head and speaking to Han Shuo, “Master, I need to transform to my original

form, which might be inconvenient in the Cemetery of Death. I'll just proceed outside."

"Go, but you need to be careful. Don't mess up the formation I set up." Han Shuo frantically reminded him as Gilbert rushed excitedly for the entrance of the Cemetery of Death, the green dragon's magical core in hand.

"Be at ease, Master. I know what I should be doing!" Gilbert replied, greatly avoiding the two large formations Han Shuo had set up. He only swallowed the green dragon's magical core after reaching another area.

It looked like Gilbert would be able to become a level two super magical beast in the near future, Han Shuo mused. He decided to continue studying necromancy and practice incantations in the Cemetery of Death.

A few days passed when Han Shuo suddenly thought of the dwarves in the valley. Thinking of the dwarves' skills in forging weapons and remembering his promise to Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, he departed the Cemetery of Death, travelling to the valley where the dwarves resided.

Winter had passed, and the dwarves' valley was filled with the fresh smell of flora. The dwarves guarding the valley all recognized Han Shuo. Han Shuo smoothly entered the dwarf village, seeing a few dwarves brewing fruit wine. When the dwarves that were brewing wine saw Han Shuo appear, all of them cheered endlessly, regardless of adults or children.

Encouraged by a woman, a dwarf child less than a meter tall walked towards Han Shuo with a glass filled with fruity smelling wine. "Uncle Han, this is for you, it's very delicious." This dwarf child stood on his tiptoes, handing over the glass filled with wine to Han Shuo.

Kneeling down, Han Shuo rubbed the little dwarf child's head and received the glass with a smile. "Thank you!"

The dwarf child's smiling face blushed, as he shyly ran to his mother's side and said, "Uncle Han thanked me."

The honest dwarves, no matter young or old, all roared with laughter.

The village was filled with a cheerful atmosphere. It looked like the dwarves had been living pretty well during this period of time.

When Bennett who had heard the news and saw that Han Shuo had arrived, he shouted from afar, “Yo, Han. It’s been a long time since you’ve came!” He’d been forging weapons just now and was naked from the waist up. His face was covered in soot and he was holding a large mallet in his left hand.

“Hehe. I’ve been a bit busy recently. Have you all been well recently?” Han Shuo asked smilingly.

“Of course, spring has arrived. We haven’t even finished the food you provided us for the winter. There’s still a lot of bacon. We’ve mined some ore and I was just instructing the youngsters in the dwarf weapon forging skills. Life is much better than it was previously.” Bennett chuckled as he replied, looking visibly refreshed.

“Where’s the village chief? I’ve come to discuss a large deal with you all.”

“Han, the gates to the dwarf village are forever open for you. To forge weapons for you is an honor for the dwarves and doesn’t count as business.” Chief Calvin leaned on a cane as he stroked his braided beard with a beaming smile, walking out from a distant stone house.

Calvin looked visibly older, and his body was getting weaker. When one reached a specific age, struggles with walking were inevitable. Calvin’s beard was fully silver now and he had to rely on a cane. It looked like he similarly couldn’t resist the effects of aging.

However, Calvin was in high spirits, and his chuckling look made him seem full of benevolence. When two young dwarves saw Calvin appearing, they took the initiative to go up and support the chief. Bennett asked, “Elder, why have you come out?”

“Han is here, of course I have to come visit. Bennett, I’m not as old as you think, don’t you see I walked over on my own? Heh!” Calvin laughed and bowed towards Han Shuo. “The dwarves in this village will forever thank you for your favor. There’s no business between friends. We will



forge all the weapons you need, this is our attitude towards friends.”

When he'd come over this time, Han Shuo had primarily wanted the dwarves to help forge some weapons for the lizardmen in the underground world. Han Shuo promised Ancient Lizard King Dagassi to help look after the lizardmen. Although the lizardmen had obtained some weapons from the corpses of the Redbud Knights, those weapons were far from enough for their use.

In addition, lizardmen were built differently than normal humans. Han Shuo wanted to ask the dwarves to forge them some weapons tailored for their use. Of course, Brettel City's city guards also needed the dwarven-forged weapons. This was because the weapons forged by the dwarves were much more outstanding than normal weapons.

Calvin listened carefully to Han Shuo's descriptions. When Han Shuo finished, Calvin smiled as he said, “Don't worry. The children are coincidentally very free recently. We still have enough food currently and don't need to hunt. I will make arrangements for them to forge the weapons you need.”

“Many thanks, Elder!” Han Shuo sincerely expressed his gratitude.

“Haha, there's no need for such polite words between friends. It's rare for you to have come, do try out our freshly brewed fruit wine.” Calvin proudly said, pulling Han Shuo towards the women brewing wine.

# Chapter 351: Father?

In the blink of an eye, over a month had flown by.

One day, twelve consecutive rumbling sounds rang out in the sinister Cemetery of Death. Twelve enormous banners unfurled in the explosions.

Han Shuo sat cross-legged right in the center, his eyes fixed on the twelve flags in the middle of the pit. The liquid inside the pit had turned into a pitch black pool, bubbles of various sizes rising to the surface. Black mist churned and coiled out of it, drifting around the Cemetery of Death without dispersing.

As the bubbles popped and crackled, that pitch black pool of liquid was gradually absorbed by the three evil knights and their fire warhorses. The evil knights had originally been submerged deep in the liquid in the pit. Now they were sucking in the black liquid like they were dying of thirst. Finally, the three evil knights and their mounts had fully absorbed the liquid, revealing their figures. They were now inky black from head to toe, with the eyes of both the riders and the mounts glinting faintly red with the light of eternal flames.

Apart from the vicious deathly aura drifting around them, there was now another baleful presence swirling around them. Feeling the enormous changes occurring within their bodies, the three silently threw back their heads and howled to the heavens, the bone spears in their hands dancing madly.

Because they could no longer bear the deep agony in their souls, the three evil knights once again tried to attack the power of the contract as their bodies came clear of the liquid in the pit. They wanted to escape from Han Shuo and from the slavery.

“Hmph! High rank undead creatures are indeed a little annoying. At least you understand the concept of resistance!” Han Shuo coldly snorted, abruptly standing up from his cross-legged sitting posture. He then sent his mental strength crashing down on the three evil knights, forcing obedience on them while revolving the secret arts of demonic magic.

The three evil knights' mournful, miserable howls were abruptly cut short. As both riders and horses looked at Han Shuo in horror, the flames in their eyes became weak and feeble, like a candle in the midst of a tempest. Their bodies and souls seemed ready to dissipate at the slightest provocation.

The liquid inside the cave that enhanced their bodies had contained Han Shuo's blood essence. Since the three evil knights and their fire warhorses had completely absorbed it, Han Shuo's blood essence now flowed within their bodies. This meant that he was completely capable of turning them into dust without leaving behind the slightest trace.

Therefore, when Han Shuo punished and tortured the three evil knights and their steeds using his own blood essence, the fear that struck them was the most primal of them. The three evil knights had been ready to exert their everything to break away from Han Shuo's contract, but now all of them were crawling on the ground, their entire beings trembling.

Han Shuo could sense the feeling of fear and awe from the depths of the three evil knights' souls. He snorted coldly, stepping in front of the three evil knights who no longer dared to resist, and placed three "Dark Seals" on each of them. With this magic, he could directly summon them from the other dimension.

If Han Shuo hadn't imprinted the "Dark Seals" onto them, he wouldn't be able to call upon them in his next summons once he sent them back to the other dimension. Without an identifying brand on their bodies, the next summons would've chosen a random set of evil knights. In the vast, boundlessness of the other dimension, there was a countless amount of these low level existences. It would take a miracle to summon the same set once again.

However, as long as a "Dark Seal" was stamped onto their bodies, Han Shuo could find them anywhere in the other dimension through the brands. From there, he could bring the refined evil knights directly to this plane.

After branding the evil knights and their fire warhorses one by one, Han

Shuo intended to send them back to the other dimension. However, he suddenly recalled how he'd seen undead creatures including the little skeleton, earth, fire and wood elite zombies thrive in that haven of necromancy during his trip last time.

Han Shuo understood that the little skeleton and the crew were vigorously carrying out an invasion in that dimension. As their strength was improving constantly, Han Shuo was well aware of the strong undead creatures in the other dimension, and how the mummy lord wasn't the strongest creature in the other dimension either.

When he reached the rank of grand magus necromancer, Han Shuo could call upon undead creatures such as the mummy lords, bone demons and old fey zombies. However, there were races beyond the undead creatures, above the mummy lords. Those super high rank undead creatures included creatures like bone dragons, skeleton kings and zombie kings. Only necromancers at the rank of sacred magus were able to summon them.

According to legend, necromancers beyond the rank of sacred magus could even summon undead creatures that wielded the strength of demigods from the strange world. How mighty were these undead creatures? What kind of form did they appear in? Even Han Shuo wasn't sure...

In the endlessly vast other dimension, Han Shuo didn't know whether or not undead creatures with the power of demigods existed. The little skeleton's strength was constantly being enhanced, but Han Shuo was still somewhat worried about him. This was why he wanted the little skeleton to take the three evil knights back to the other dimension, thereby increasing his strength again.

When his thoughts reached this point, Han Shuo took out the skeletal staff and started chanting an incantation. Since he'd last accidentally entered the other dimension, there had been a period of time when Han Shuo had had some apprehension towards this magic staff. However, after a few days studying it, he didn't find any differences when he started using it in chanting incantations again. Han Shuo didn't know how the previous

matter actually occurred, and so decided not to care too much about it.

A black light flashed from the void. The little skeleton landed, still atop the spiky undead creature. When they arrived, the three evil knights instantly sensed the familiar air of death from this dimension. When they saw clearly that it was just a little skeleton commanding them, the three evil knights emitted the might of a high rank undead creature, as if wanting to terrify the little skeleton.

The little skeleton swept a glance over the three evil knights, his purple eye socket flashing with light. He lightly tapped the three meter long bone spur on the spiky undead creature. The latter suddenly turned to the three evil knights and let out a silent roar. A billowing surge of murderous intent abruptly rolled out.

The three evil knights, who had planned on showing off their strength in front of the little skeleton, suddenly felt the powerful might of that odd undead creature. They suddenly jolted in shock, their instinctive fear of higher level undead creatures causing them to retreat a few steps.

“Father!” After scaring off the three evil knights, the little skeleton leapt off from his undead creature. He ran straight to Han Shuo, joyously transmitting this message.

Han Shuo was shocked. He looked at the little skeleton who’d lived with him ever since the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. The little skeleton had secretly helped him throw out garbage in the middle of the night. Now that Han Shuo heard the little skeleton call him like this, he was at a sudden loss of words.

“Father, you have been to my hometown, right?” The little skeleton stuck the three meter long bone spear into the ground as he walked up in front of Han Shuo. He looked up, blinking his purple eye socket at Han Shuo to transmit this message.

The word “father” that the little skeleton called him stunned Han Shuo. He suddenly found himself increasingly unable to see through the little skeleton. From simple communication to a conversation, this change had happened in only two years. Looking at the little skeleton in front of him

with a sparkling purple eye socket, Han Shuo was shaken to the extreme.

He finally snapped out his shock after a while, nodding, "That's right. I visited the other dimension last time." Pausing for a bit, Han Shuo asked with some hesitation, "Do you finally have your own complete consciousness? Why do you call me father? What's going on?"

"You created me. Your blood runs within my body, and you've also always considered me your child. You are my father." The little skeleton blinked his purple eye and continued to send messages, "Father, not only do I have a complete consciousness, I also have some miraculous powers. These were all given by you."

Han Shuo had originally seen the tiny little skeleton as a little child. The latter's display of childish behavior had always reinforced this illusion, especially after leaving the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Perhaps that was why Han Shuo subconsciously considered the little skeleton his child. As for the little skeleton, he could feel the deep feeling of love through the spirit connection with Han Shuo and gradually took Han Shuo as his father.

Han Shuo's mind was a bit chaotic after the little skeleton's sudden thunderous call of "father". His heart was full of questions, but Han Shuo didn't know where to start. He fell silent for a while before saying, "I've enhanced the three evil knights so their power has increased quite a bit. Take them with you, they should be of help."

"Thank you, father! I will discipline them well." The little skeleton exclaimed in delight. He didn't have the arrogance in front of Han Shuo that let him look down on the world like he had in the other dimension. Instead, he acted more like a naughty child.

The little skeleton pulled the three meter long bone spur from the ground before walking towards the three evil knights. The closer he drew to them, the more violently the air of death around him surged. All of the deadly air from the Cemetery of Death seemed to churn like a whirlpool, the little skeleton firmly in the eye of the hurricane as he strode forward.

The three evil knights suddenly trembled. The flames in their eyes

flashed as they stared at the little skeleton with seven spurs behind his back. They seemed to have figured out the little skeleton's extraordinary origin.

High level undead creatures possessed a might that any undead creature of lower ranks was simply incapable of resisting. The little skeleton walked proudly up to the three evil knights, tapping his huge bone spur on each one, fire warhorses included, seemingly issuing an order.

The bone spur rang out clearly as it tapped on the riders and mounts. The flames in their eyes flickered intensely as their postures turned submissive. It seemed they had all yielded to the little skeleton's might.

Han Shuo watched the little skeleton tame the three evil knights smoothly, feeling quite incredulous. Even Han Shuo himself had to use his blood essence to subdue the three evil knights when he dealt with them. He didn't expect the little skeleton to have no need of anything. He'd used his identity as a higher rank creature to the point where they didn't dare to lift their heads.

Whether it was because of different refining methods, or because the little skeleton, earth, wood and fire elite zombies had all started off at a low level, they had all readily accepted Han Shuo without any resistance during the demonic magic's refining process.

When he'd refined the little skeleton, Han Shuo had felt their souls interconnect. He dared to say so because the latter had inherited a portion of his memory in addition to some of his power. Otherwise, it'd be absolutely impossible for the little skeleton to skillfully display the Law of Activating Magic using the seven bone spurs on his back.

As for the fire, wood and earth elite zombies, they had been refined via the secret zombie refining process. In addition to Han Shuo painstakingly collecting the materials, they'd also absorbed the five extreme elements from the extreme places of their respective elements. Who knew how much power had been stored up in those locations? The enormity and rarity of that power was immeasurable.

Perhaps it was due to those reasons that the four undead creatures – the

little skeleton, earth, wood and fire elite zombies could directly communicate with Han Shuo through their minds. They had extraordinary abilities to begin with, as well as the surprising ability to evolve. On the contrary, for those three evil knights or even higher rank undead creatures, Han Shuo could only give them orders, not communicate mentally with them.

End of part one of the chapter.

They likewise lacked the fortuitous chances of the little skeleton, and a part of Han Shuo's memories. Neither had they absorbed an enormous amount of elements from the heavens and earth like the other three zombie fellows. Moreover, because their starting rank was already much higher than the zombies and skeletons, they'd even tried to resist Han Shuo's effort to improve their physical bodies. Perhaps due to these reasons that despite being strong, they were still a far cry from the four of little skeleton inner circle – the undead creatures who Han Shuo had tempered first.

"Father, they will listen obediently from now on." The little skeleton pointed at the three trembling evil knights, saying to the silently pondering Han Shuo.

"Heh heh, you can take them back. My mind is a bit of a mess right now." Han Shuo smiled with the little skeleton. Then, when he was about to cast the spell, Han Shuo suddenly looked at the undead creature that was the little skeleton's steed and asked, "Right, what is this strange fellow? Why have I never seen it before?"

"Oh, he was originally a bone demon. Father found me lots of good bones last time. I dismantled this bone demon and used some of those fine bones to create its wings, so it turned out looking like this. Father, did I make it ugly?" After answering, the little skeleton asked Han Shuo, somewhat embarrassed.

"No, it looks very nice." Han Shuo replied, before sending the little skeleton and the three evil knights back to the strange world. With his connection with the little skeleton, Han Shuo sent the three evil knights to



the little skeleton's territory. From now on, those three were destined to become its underlings, to be its vanguard in battle.

"When did you have the ability to refine undead creatures?" After the little skeleton and three evil knights disappeared, Han Shuo muttered with a heart filled with shock.

Although the little skeleton's enhancement on that bone demon was a simple dismantling and reassembly of the bones, Han Shuo could see from this action that the little skeleton was simply incredible. He was sure that the little skeleton had received that enhancement method from his memory. Otherwise, the little skeleton certainly wouldn't have had this ability.

That the little skeleton had unconsciously grown into this existence was a big, pleasant surprise for Han Shuo. For someone who had personally created this miracle, the little skeleton's rapid development had astounded Han Shuo in the beginning. Now it had transformed to excitement and ecstasy. The more he thought about it, the more satisfied he was of his masterpiece.

Deep down in his heart, Han Shuo had truly regarded the little skeleton as his child, so he was supremely excited when the latter had called him "father". He had some difficulties adapting at first, but after the little skeleton had left for the other dimension, Han Shuo felt a kind of longing. Han Shuo suddenly realized that he'd seen the little skeleton as his child from very long ago. His doting and worries for the latter were indeed the behavior of a father for his child!

"Ahh, child. I finally have a child!" A while after the little skeleton left, inside the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo threw back his head and let out an insane laugh to the heavens. His laughter was full of joy and excitement.

The three evil knights had emerged, but the twelve mystical demons still needed some more time to take shape. The evil knights only needed to absorb some energy, so this process naturally didn't take much time, However, the twelve yin demons were an evolution to another form. This

process was much more complicated than a simple energy absorption. Accordingly, the time taken was longer.

After dark dragon Gilbert swallowed the magic core of the green dragon, he nested in the Cemetery of Death and fell into hibernation. His huge body curled up into a ball, his scales and skin sometimes overflowing with stinky liquid and some lights began to flash deep within his body.

Gilbert's evolution might take quite a while, and Han Shuo didn't continue studying archmage necromancer rank magic anymore. Seeing that everything was proceeding in a good direction in the Cemetery of Death, he once again returned to Brettel City.

Having left Brettel City for some time, Han Shuo was surprised to see life had suddenly become more bustling than when he had left it. The streets were pathetically deserted in the past, and it was practically impossible to see anyone walking back and forth.

However, when Han Shuo released the yin demon to make a quick scouting trip upon his return, he suddenly saw many changes had occurred unknowingly in Brettel City. As city lord, these changes greatly pleased him.

Because the mountain people on the surrounding mountains had migrated into Brettel City, the city's population had increased. In addition, the merchants outside had flooded the city in pursuit of profit. Not only did they bring various daily necessities, some of the bold merchants had even opened up shops in Brettel City.

After the demand for food was met, those merchants started to sell luxurious clothes along with daily necessities. The population of Brettel City wasn't high, but the young men who'd joined the city guard had earned a good monthly salary.

Every month, the honest young men in the city all received gold coins which were used to improve the originally poor life of their families. As long as each family had a young man at the right age, the entire family could live in style in Brettel City. Enthusiasm for enlisting in the military was unprecedented. Some young men in Seamist City even took the risk to

come here to enlist as their life's last chance.

Unknowingly, the number of city guards had increased from the original three thousand to five thousand. With the war crazy Dorcas stationed there, Jack didn't need to spend gold coins to forge equipment for the soldiers. Dorcas was pushing his men to compete with Faulke's elite knights, seeing who did the best in punishing the bandits around Brettel City.

Dorcas and Faulke were extremely effective as a pair. Not only did they wipe out two bandit organizations, the gold coins that came as the spoils of battle were enough to equip the soldiers. Brettel City had gone from its passive turtling, suffering humiliation here and there, to actively striking out, visiting retribution on the bandits. The city had gradually risen up within the span of a few months, attracting the attention of the seven grand duchies. The seven grand duchies who were originally tangled in the chaos of small wars suddenly called a truce.

The seven grand duchies all had the same feeling – the wolf is coming!

After the yin demon finished touring around Brettel City, Han Shuo listened to a report of the city's current situation from Dick and Chester. Dorcas and Faulke were still personally leading a thousand city guards in a sweep through the some of the large bandit groups in the surrounding area.

Dorcas had outstanding military strategy and stood as the military's head, while Faulke and his knights held all the power and equipment of a standard knight brigade. Their furious pace of raids against the nearby bandit camps almost seemed like a competition to see who could wipe out more bandits. The soldiers were forged in the crucible of constant warfare, becoming increasingly adept at battle.

"Bryan, the number of merchants coming to the city isn't small. According to the current situation, Brettel will definitely become a big city and attract more immigrants." Jack laughed, his cheeks wobbling at the effort, and carried on, "I can already see the mountain people coming down soon. Now that the benefits and treatments in Brettel City are this

good, it's much more profitable than their mining job."

"We don't have to wait for long. The five mountain chiefs have already made this decision. Except for Adleman who lacks ambition in his old age, the four other chiefs all want to lead their subordinates down to become the official army of Brettel City." Dick looked at Han Shuo and smiled wryly, "Those four fellows have been urging me so many times already. They wanted me to tell Your Lordship about this, but Your Lordship hasn't been in the city. So this matter was delayed."

Han Shuo's mind raced when he heard Chester's words. He asked with a seemingly very interested expression, "What is this about? Aren't they doing very well with mining ore?"

"This depends on who we compare it with. To the native civilians, their mining income is pretty good. But to compare with the city guards' benefits, their money from mining isn't enough to support the daily expenses of their subordinates."

"Up until now, the mountain people had not been faring too poorly, but since Your Lordship's come, that's taken a quick turn. The income of a soldier is now far better than the income from mining. Moreover, Dorcas and Faulke have collected a great deal of weapons, armor and even gold from wiping out the bandits. This supplemental income from raids far exceeds that from mining."

"The seven grand duchies are locked in chaotic fighting, which make it a place of easy profit. Be it selling weapons, warhorses or directly robbing the bandits, they are all the fastest means to accumulate wealth. My Lord, Brettel City developing this quickly is also due this reason – plundering the wealth of others."

"Hehe, to the mountain people, following Your Lordship is obviously much more promising than mining. Not to mention that Dorcas and Faulke also brought some bandits back to be slaves. With these slaves, the mines don't need too much manpower. The mountain folk are all good fighters with their strong bodies. It's a matter of course that they have the idea to join the army." Dick explained to Han Shuo.

As Dick finished speaking, Han Shuo smiled and said, "It seems everything is for 'profit'. However, how is the loyalty of these mountain people?"

"My Lord, with you here in Brettel City, do you think they'd dare to be disloyal?" Chester suddenly asked back with a smile.

Chester's boot licking was perfect timing. Han Shuo smiled and mused for a moment, saying, "The number of mountain people capable of fighting from the five mountains is about ten thousand. That number alone will double the amount of Brettel city guards. If they decide to join, all the war chariots and stone-throwing catapults at the city gates' can be put in operation."

"Brettel City currently is overflowing with capital, so the prospects of future development goes without saying. This matter of expanding the army is imperative! Ten thousand mountain people will make truly fine soldiers. They've been clashing with the bandits for many years, so there's no doubt about their fighting ability. I think this is very interesting, but I just don't know if the mountain people are actually sincere."

"My Lord, regarding their illustration of sincerity, I think they are sincere." Dick immediately guaranteed.

"Oh, how do you know that?" Han Shuo smiled superciliously, looking at him and asking again, "You can make the decisions in their stead?"

Dick was about to say that he was a mountain man but upon hearing Han Shuo add the question at the end, he couldn't help but smile wryly, "My Lord, although I cannot make decisions for them, I know how they think. As long as Your Lordship acts with moderation, with their current level of trust and gratitude towards Your Lordship, they will definitely be willing to listen to your orders."

"Is that so?" Han Shuo fell silent for a bit before speaking to Dick with a smile, "Well then, help me pass my words to the mountain people, I'm also glad to let them join the army, but their squads must be split up, and their original leaders no longer their commanders."

"In addition, all of the mountain army leaders will start from the rank of

captain, and can only return to their original rank through meritorious battle service. For now, all of the mountain people must be under our lead. I will allow them to join the army if they can agree to these conditions, sharing the same treatment as our soldiers.”

Han Shuo was thinking for himself as well. Taking all five mountains into account, there were about ten thousand mountain fighters. If they were still left under the control of their original leaders, it could bring about unbearable damage if they nursed the idea of rebellion after entering Brettel City while outnumbering the city guards.

One absolutely needed to defend against the hearts of people. Even if he wasn't thinking of himself, Han Shuo's position was one that demanded that he act responsible for the city's people. Though he believed that the mountain chiefs wouldn't dare to rebel, there was no guarantee for anything in everything. Everyone could have this kind of wild ambition. Han Shuo didn't want to risk the lives of the civilians.

Moreover, the mountain chiefs were still young. Whether or not they were suitable to command so many soldiers needed to be judged through their true abilities. In the low likelihood that these young chiefs were useless good-for-nothings, not only would Han Shuo lose his gold, it might create a latent danger in Brettel City.

Since becoming the city lord of Brettel City, Han Shuo's attitude and bearing had also developed alongside him assuming his position. He was becoming increasingly careful and mature. There was no longer any of that single minded ruthlessness he had in the past.

“Good, I will definitely pass on Your Lordship's words.” Dick didn't dare guarantee anything else after hearing Han Shuo's words, because his conditions were indeed somewhat harsh.

# Chapter 352: Stone Men

After three days, the five chiefs of the mountain people once again met in Brettel City. Apart from the aged Adleman, the other four comparatively young leaders actually all agreed to Han Shuo's demands.

Eventually, even Adleman who lacked the others' lofty ambitions, agreed with the four young mountain leaders to bring down the majority of the mountain people in the mines to join the army. Adleman would be responsible for extracting ore from the five nearby mines and a portion of the ore would be allocated to the four young leaders.

Brettel City was now brimming with life. Eight thousand people came from the five mines to join the city's burgeoning populace. Dorcas, called back by the news, decided to reorganize his troops. He broke up their traditional formations to form four large units, placing Han Shuo's people as their commanders.

Even though the mountain people had previously acquired a smattering of weapons and armor, Brettel City didn't have the equipment to fully arm eight thousand new recruits.

An armaments workshop funded by the Boozt Merchant Guild was quickly set up by Jack and Dorcas. It began operating at the site of the former workshops on Mount Silk. In addition, Brettel City also allocated funds to purchase smelting facilities, while the Boozt Merchant Guild was put in charge of hiring skilled metalworkers.

Since Han Shuo still had the assistance of the dwarves from the Dark Forest, he instructed the weaponsmiths at Mount Silk to focus on forging armour. The dwarves' ability to forge weapons was far superior to anything a human could make, but in return, their armor weren't as refined compared to those forged by humans.

Dorcas sent every one of the four mountain people units into harsh training, a regimen of his own devising. A former student of the Lancelot Imperial Academy, Dorcas was definitely a talented field commander. Under his training, the eight thousand mountain people saw a noticeable

improvement in their strength.

After Faulke returned, he began instructing the mountain people in the proper usage of combat wagons, ballista wagons, and catapults. This type of powerful defensive weaponry required strong people to operate them, and the mountain people were perfectly suited to this task. Under the auspices of Faulke, the mountain people learned how to properly operate Brettel City's gates and the combat wagons.

As the days passed, Dorcas found Han Shuo one day, and proposed a suggestion. "My Lord, the moat outside of Brettel City's gates is full of shallow sewage. Now that we have the eight thousand mountain people at our disposal, we can spend some time making the moat even deeper. This way, even if the seven grand duchies decide to invade, the moat will cause them to lose a lot of men."

Brettel City's moat had originally only been half completed, but since Brettel City had been sacked again and again by the seven grand duchies, the construction of the moat had been left as an unfinished project. In the end, Brettel City became a lost cause, and the moat was eventually forgotten.

Dorcas was indeed a skilled strategist, immediately seeing the value in the moat outside Brettel City's gates. Since the moat had already been given an initial shape, it wouldn't take too much time and material to finish building it. When Brettel City's moat was complete, it would act as a severe blow to the invaders.

This suggestion was immediately taken to heart by Han Shuo. The mountain people, relaxing after learning how to operate the defensive siege weaponry, were immediately put to work again on expanding the city's moats and making them deeper.

Han Shuo's arrival had also drastically increased the number of Dark Mantle agents operating in Brettel City. With Dick managing them, they then proceeded to infiltrate the seven grand duchies, resulting in a steady stream of information. If information concerning Brettel City was brought up, that would also be dutifully recorded and passed on to Dick, then Han



Shuo.

As an emissary of Second Dark Star, Han Shuo far outranked Dick. In fact, Han Shuo even possessed the authority to award medals and citations to members who had contributions to their name. Amongst those select few stood Chester. Under Han Shuo's deliberate recommendation, he became the second most powerful person in Brettel City's Dark Mantle branch, second only to Dick. In addition, Chester had also risen in rank within Dark Mantle.

One day, Adleman suddenly sought out Han Shuo, who was studying necromancy magic. Delia of Mount Silk, who'd entered the military by now, also entered by his side.

"My lord, numerous stone men have appeared at the mines halfway up the mountain. These stone men have been attacking miners at the deepest places in the mines, causing scores of deaths. These stone men don't fear magic, and their bodies are too tough. We don't know how to deal with them, so we were wondering if you would be able to help us." Upon finding Han Shuo, Adleman immediately told him what had happened.

Han Shuo was shocked. Frowning, he asked "Stone men? How can there be stone men in the mines? Was there anything like this in the past?"

Wearing soft armour, the heroic and imposing Delia had a tall nose and long legs. Standing ramrod straight, she presented an imposing figure. She shook her head at Han Shuo's question, replying, "No, this has never happened before. Even since my father took over Mount Silk, there were never been any traces of stone men in there."

Delia was originally the leader of Mount Silk. Even now, Delia still had many subordinates on the mountain. The people of Delia's father's generation had lived there before. Now that stone men had appeared, the former leader of the mountain people was now the focus of attention.

"Those stone men found halfway up Mount Silk... did you suddenly find them after re-opening an area?" Han Shuo continued to ask, brows furrowed.

Nowadays, not only did Mount Silk have mountain people mining there,

but it also had a collaborative armaments workshop jointly owned by the Boozt Merchant Guild and Brettel City. It produced ten or so sets of high-quality armor every day. When more metalworkers arrived, the weapons workshop would then be able to operate more to Han Shuo's satisfaction.

The mines on Mount Silk had abundant supplies of iron and copper ore. Taking advantage of this, the ore could be directly smelted into iron and copper. They would then be mixed with various other metals and forged into suits of armour by experienced metalworkers. In the eyes of Han Shuo, not only was Mount Silk an important source of ore, but also the crux of his armament campaign. As such, Han Shuo was greatly concerned about what Adleman had said.

"It is, My Lord. When we were excavating further below, we found that the iron deposits seemed to become even richer. When we were planning to send people down, a bunch of stone men appeared from an unknown place. These stone men seemed to have a very pitiful intelligence, making it impossible to communicate with them. They immediately began attacking us, and killed quite a few of our miners." Adleman replied.

"So it's like this!" Han Shuo thought for a moment and nodded. He said "I'll go with you to Mount Silk to see what's going on with the stone men in the mines."

"Thank you, My Lord!" Adleman gratefully replied.

"My Lord, Mount Silk was my region to govern; even now, I still have many friends there. I want to go with you to take a look. I hope that My Lord will allow me to." Delia stared at Han Shuo with glittering eyes, beseeching him. Since entering the military, the mountain folk had to follow orders and couldn't do as they wished. It looked like Dorcas' training lately had already taken effect. Delia seemed much more rule abiding now than the first time Han Shuo had met her.

Han Shuo simply nodded "Alright then."

One could see quite a bit of green at the base of Mount Silk. However, the amount of green decreased as one went up the mountain. There were craggy rocks as far as the eye could see, without a trace of flora or fauna.

Spring had arrived. The warm weather also felt very comfortable. Han Shuo, Adleman, and Delia, along with a group of mountain people, walked towards Mount Silk. Due to his advanced age, Adleman walked more slowly than the rest, so Han Shuo had no choice but to walk slowly up the mountain with him.

Delia radiated her beauty along the way, dressed in light armour. Her arms and legs were bare, and she wore sparkling silver armor covering the “important places” on her chest. She glistened beneath the sun. It complimented her wheat-colored skin, mesmerizing and attracting the gazes of Adleman’s young escorts.

In Brettel City, Delia was known as the number one beauty amongst the mountain people. But by the same token, her strength was also something extraordinary. Due to her previous position, nobody dared to be impudent. Delia was now a mere captain, but since her strength was enough to suppress both Jack and Kent, ordinary mountain people had no way of catching her attention.

On the way to Mount Silk, Han Shuo thought about the stone men in the mines with a heart full of suspicion. Not knowing where the mountain people had come from, he didn’t pay attention to Delia’s infatuated fans.

Halfway up Mount Silk, Delia asked Han Shuo “My Lord, how do you plan on dealing with those stone men?”

Han Shuo was in deep thought. He turned his head and gave a dazzling smile, saying “We’ll see after we arrive there. We won’t know how to deal with the stone men before we see them.”

“If it’s like this...if the stone men attack us in the same way that our enemies attack us, then what do we do?” Delia continued to inquire, looking at Han Shuo with shining eyes.

“Then we’ll turn them into stone forever.” Han Shuo casually replied.

Hearing Han Shuo’s words, Delia nodded, saying “They dared to kill people from my tribe. I won’t let them off the hook. Damnable stone men, I’ll make you pay!”

It seemed as if Delia really cared about the ten or so miners who were killed. From this, Han Shuo deduced that Delia was a person who really cared for her subordinates. Even though she was no longer responsible for Mount Silk, upon hearing that there was a crisis, she had immediately requested to go investigate with Han Shuo. This proved that Delia was indeed kind to her subordinates.

After Han Shuo had made his stance towards the stone men clear, Delia appeared more relaxed around Han Shuo, later excitedly inquiring about Han Shuo's experiences, especially his challenge of various experts in the Lancelot Empire and the corpses that lay behind him because of them. She also inquired about his conflict with the Brut Merchant Alliance, Cain, and the like-minded. Delia expressed a strong interest in these things.

There were many merchants in Brettel City who had come from Ossen City. These merchants were very familiar with some of Han Shuo's exploits. Due to their reverence of Han Shuo, they exaggerated stories of Han Shuo's heroic deeds, and relayed those to the citizens of Brettel City.

This unconsciously resulted in the citizens of Brettel City all coming to know Han Shuo's past experiences. Combined with his previous battles with the four bandit groups, Han Shuo's prestige in the city was beyond imagination. In the eyes of the citizens of Brettel City, a city lord who could provide safety and prosperity was far more trustworthy than that king in Ossen City who had abandoned them.

Responding to Delia's excited questioning, Han Shuo didn't say much, only elaborating a few sentences. However, the more Han Shuo appeared remote, the more interested Delia became. Delia spent the whole journey asking about Han Shuo's duels with other strong figures.

After a headache inducing talk, the group finally reached the entrance of the mines. There was already a group of miners, with dust-coated faces and muddy clothes, waiting for them. These young miners were pleasantly surprised upon seeing Delia, joyfully shouting "Boss!"

From the miners' genuine delight in seeing Delia, Han Shuo could tell that Delia was a good leader in their eyes. He looked a bit askance at her.

When Delia saw Han Shuo look at her with surprise, she stuck out her well-rounded bosom with a bit of pride, seeming to say that, “See that? I’m actually quite good!”

Han Shuo laughed involuntarily at Delia’s behavior and didn’t excessively voice his opinion. When Delia asked about the miners using the tone of a leader, Han Shuo released the yin demon while listening to the content of their conversation, slowly flying toward the area said to have problems.

“Let’s go inside and see what’s going on.” Delia instructed to a group of miners as Han Shuo used the yin demon to look inside.

“Hold on. Mister Adleman, you shouldn’t go inside.” Han Shuo suddenly said. “It’s cold and wet inside. With your advanced age, you should wait outside for a bit.”

Adleman didn’t persist, knowing that with his body’s condition, he would only be a nuisance if he went inside. He smiled and agreed, saying “Thank you for My Lord’s understanding.” Smiling and nodding his head, Han Shuo looked at Delia and her group, and led the group into the dark caverns of the mine.

## Chapter 353: Place of extreme metal

The caverns of the mines were dark and humid. Yet Han Shuo, someone who should've been unfamiliar with the mine, was rushing forward as if very familiar with the area.

At first, Delia had even expected him to take the rearmost position. Who would've thought that Han Shuo would just advance without even taking one step backward from beginning to end? What was even more surprising that Han Shuo led the way like he was the guide. There was no mistakes made as he went straight into the depths of the mine.

After a while, Delia couldn't hold in her curiosity, as the miners began to doubt their guide. She quickly walked up to Han Shuo, bright eyes staring at him as she inquired, "My Lord, you've been to Mount Silk before, haven't you?"

Shaking his head, Han Shuo replied, "No, I haven't. This is the my first time at Mount Silk. Why?"

"Really? Then how come you are so familiar with the terrain inside the mine? You haven't stopped to consider any path but one and yet you haven't taken a single incorrect turn. If you haven't been to Mount Silk before, how are you so familiar with the twists and turns here?" Delia was becoming more and more doubtful and chased after the leisurely striding Han Shuo with a bunch of questions.

In Han Shuo's eyes, this group of people, including Delia, wasn't very strong at all. Since the stone men deep inside the cave had no fear of magic and possessed rock solid bodies, Han Shuo had released the yin demon to scout ahead so that they wouldn't be suddenly slaughtered. This, coupled with some of the miners' description, let him proceed with naturally no hesitation at all. But who knew that it would rouse Delia's doubts?

Han Shuo laughed softly and said, "Didn't I already hear you guys describe the situation before we entered? My intuition towards cave terrain is highly sensitive. From your description, I can instantly and

accurately determine the terrain of this area. Do you believe me or not?"

Hearing Han Shuo's explanation, Delia was stunned before asking with a half doubtful expression, "Really?"

"Of course!" Han Shuo laughed out loud, "I've never been to Mount Silk before, let alone have the chance to explore this mine. How would I be this familiar with the way if I don't have a keen sense for cave terrain?"

Delia thought carefully about it. With Han Shuo's identity as the Brettel city lord and also a count, he really wouldn't have the free time to come explore the mine. Faced with this logic, she was mostly convinced upon hearing Han Shuo's explanation. Subconsciously, her gaze towards him held a bit more admiration as she told herself that the city lord was really as incredible as the legends said. He was a true man indeed!

Seeing that Delia didn't ask any other questions, Han Shuo continued to hurry onward. He had turned from guest to the guide thanks to the yin demon. The miners and Delia had become his attendants.

The only remaining yin demon slowly went deep into the belly of Mount Silk. It soon reached a narrow and dry area based on the miners and Delia's description. This area connected the entrances of three deep tunnels to the passage they were coming in through. Rocks pressed down on the tunnel's ceiling. If they wanted to continue ahead, they would need to be crawling on their bellies.

According to the miners, this was the place they'd encountered some stone men last time they'd been here mining. There were even some traces left behind from last time's mining. However, the yin demon was invisible. They wouldn't be able to discover its existence even if the stone men were hiding in the surroundings.

Han Shuo instantly sped up when he found the right place. Delia and the miners behind was greatly surprised as they watched his body shuffle quickly through the caves with extreme sensitivity. At this point, Delia truly believed that Han Shuo had a natural intuition for caves like he'd just said. He could still determine the accurate direction from the complex crossroads.

“Be careful, My Lord! Up ahead is the area where the stone men appeared last time!” The miners were panting heavily as they tried to keep up with Han Shuo, who was almost flying as he hurtled forward. He slowly decreased his speed so as to allow them to catch up when he heard their raised voices. At this moment, Delia finally caught up. She walked up, taking a few deep breaths to calm her heaving breasts. Her voice was filled with worry as she said, “My Lord, please be careful. These stone men aren’t easy to deal with. We should just advance calmly and cautiously.”

It turned out Delia wasn’t as casual and careless as she appeared to be. She was very careful and meticulous when it came to critical moments. Han Shuo couldn’t help but glance at her in surprise. Right now, Delia was trying her best to regain her breath and calm her racing heart. Her twin peaks rose and fell in rhythm, attracting his attention. Han Shuo’s heart skipped a beat, and he couldn’t help but sneak a few more glances at her chest.

People said any woman could tell from the men’s eyes which part of her body was the focal point of attention. No matter what kind of concealing method a man did use, the woman being observed could still sense if that man had snuck a peek at her breasts or not.

These words indeed had some truth to them. Although they were currently in the middle of a dark cave, Delia might just have discovered Han Shuo’s eyes on her chest. She was somewhat shy under his lingering gaze on her towering peaks. Instinctively, Delia slightly bent down, as if wanting to cover some parts of her full chest through the bending of her waist.

“Alright, I think we’ve reached the place. You guys stay close so I can take care of you in case there’s any danger.” Han Shuo slowed to a stop and turned to tell the people behind him.

The miners quickly caught up, but still lagged behind Han Shuo and Delia. Fortunately, the light in the tunnel was dim, and they didn’t have Han Shuo’s eyesight. Being a distance behind, they didn’t see the flush on Delia’s face.



The three tunnels converged midway. As the group walked a few hundred meters more, the ceiling above their heads gradually became lower. The path also narrowed, allowing only two people walk side by side. Everyone had to bend down at this point to prevent their heads from hitting the rocks.

After passing through the narrow path, the group reached the area where the yin demon had stopped at. This place was actually very wide, however, the rocks above their head extended quite a ways down. There were three flattened tunnels around, ones where one had to crawl on their belly if they wanted to pass.

This place was precisely where the stone men had suddenly appeared and attacked last time, resulting in many casualties for the miners.

Han Shuo was 190 centimeters tall. He couldn't walk upright even if he bent down, so he had to squat down to inspect the situation. The miners who'd been here before all revealed nervous expressions as they looked around carefully. They raised the crude mining tools in their hand, as if getting ready to deal with any stone men that emerged.

Even Delia looked a little nervous. She pulled out the dagger tied to her left leg, looking around with vigilance. Han Shuo and Delia were now leaning close to each other. In this area where they could face attacks at any moment, her bashfulness had long since been thrown far out of mind.

It was due to Han Shuo's notoriety outside that Delia and the miners now felt a reassuring feeling of being able to rely on someone. If it'd just been them, they would've been on the verge of panic, not just nervous.

Han Shuo squatted down to take a look around once before asking the miners, "How tall are these stone men and what do they look like?"

"They're only 150 centimeters tall, but are wide horizontally so they can move very flexibly without being restrained by the low ceiling." One of the miners replied.

Hearing his words, Han Shuo looked at the three tunnels and took an estimation. The tunnels were only around a meter tall, so a human had to crawl on their belly to enter. According to the miners, the stone men were

150 centimeters tall and very wide horizontally. They couldn't have come out from those three tunnels.

Except for the three tunnels in this area, there was only the passage that they had just come through. If the stone men didn't come from the three tunnels, could it be that they came from the passage as well?

Han Shuo's heart was full of doubts. He didn't continue observing the surrounding anymore, and sat still to think instead. He suddenly whistled in a low tone. The whistle started out faint and low, gradually became louder and high pitched, then ending in an echo like a dragon roar.

"Alright, if the stone men are close by, they will definitely hear it and come over. We only have to wait and see." Han Shuo turned to tell the nervous looking miners.

End of part one of the chapter.

To Han Shuo's left, Delia was bending down to survey the surroundings, revealing her breathtaking curves of her waist. She only wore a soft leather miniskirt on her lower body, accentuating the curve of her hips and her tantalizing bare legs. When Han Shuo caught sight of her when he turned to give orders to the miners, he couldn't help but spend a little time savoring her round buttocks.

Most of the nervous miners didn't notice, except for the three who accidentally saw this beautiful scene as well. The three young men all swallowed hard, and suddenly developed a slight hunch to their posture, trying to conceal a newly rising bulge..

Looking around, Delia abruptly turned around quickly, her bright eyes looking straight at Han Shuo, whose stare was fixed on her hips. Caught red handed, Han Shuo awkwardly coughed dryly and conscientiously turned his head away.

Delia was flushing red. She glared ferociously at the awkward Han Shuo and snorted lightly. She then angrily turned to the three miners and shouted, "What are you rascals looking at? Could it be you guys already want to seek death after I leave Mount Silk for a few days?"

Finishing speaking, Delia lowered her voice to mutter, “Men really are no good!” It was unknown whether or not this sentence was deliberately said only for Han Shuo’s ears, but he’d heard it indeed. He secretly thought, ‘Aren’t women meant to be looked at by men? How did you know we were peeping at you? You bent over to expose that wonderfully beautiful curved butt. Wasn’t that intentional?’

As Han Shuo mused, several almost intangible wisps floated in from the three narrow tunnels. Han Shuo looked around but didn’t find anything that would’ve provoked them. However, as a necromancer and a demonic cultivator, he could immediately sense that these breaths was similar to the existence of the wraiths.

He quietly cast a soul exploration magic, observing the eight murky mists, which were hidden from human eyes, slowly moving to a few dark corners. They slowly spread out, each coiling on top of a large block of rock. They then imbued each rock with a strange power.

The originally solid rocks slowly became malleable after being suffused with these pulses of power. Afterwards, it was like someone was molding these rocks, as they split into eight stone men that the miners had faced before. Han Shuo, who was adept at both demonic magic and necromancy magic, saw this stone shaping process clearly.

After the eight stone men slowly emerged from the corners, Han Shuo finally understood how they’d suddenly appeared in this place last time. So it’s actually like this, hmm! Evidently, only the souls came out of those three narrow passages, which then used the rocks here to reform their bodies.

“Eight of them, with fully formed bodies. Are they getting ready to attack?” Han Shuo took out the skeletal staff to summon dozens of skeletal warriors as well as zombie warriors. Some of them surrounded Delia and the miners as Han Shuo looked at the eight stone men slowly coming out of the dark corners.

The rock ceiling of this area was too low, higher rank undead creatures like the hate warriors and evil knights would be hard pressed to display

their full power. Only the short and small skeletal and zombie warriors could easily move about in this place.

Delia was scared out of her wits at suddenly being surrounded by a crowd of skeletal and zombie warriors. These undead creatures naturally didn't look very pleasing to the eye, and the morass of deathly aura that enveloped them sent a shiver of fear through her.

However, upon hearing Han Shuo's words and seeing that they only surrounded her without any intention to attack, Delia knew that these were the guards that Han Shuo had summoned for her. She then immediately felt reassured in her heart.

"My Lord, have the stone men appeared?" Delia calmed down and finally reacted to Han Shuo's words, raising her dagger.

The light here was too dim. The eight stone men were also forming in the shadows, so Delia's group simply couldn't see their movement. Nodding his head, Han Shuo smiled and said, "That's right, eight stone men."

The eight scattered stone men suddenly began to attack Han Shuo as they spoke, charging in from the eight dark corners. Their bodies were formed from the iron ore of this mine, and thus ordinary magic attacks wouldn't be very effective. Even standard weapons weren't much of a threat to these stone men. No wonder so many miners had died here last time.

However, Han Shuo's current body was much more solid than iron and rocks. He didn't even need to take out the Demonslayer Edge to deal with these stone men; he just crouched and smashed directly into them.

"Interesting, just what kind of creature are you guys?" Han Shuo still had the leisure to ask questions even when wrestling with eight stone men.

Surrounded by the undead creatures, Delia watched Han Shuo face the attacks from the stone men without fear. Even though some fists and kicks connected, he didn't respond at all. It was as if Han Shuo's body was even more solid than the stone men made of iron ore.

Han Shuo slammed his bare fists on the eight stone men's bodies. This time, it was them who was forced to retreat. Sounds of metal rang out as Han Shuo's fists connected with their iron bodies, rendering Delia's group speechless as they watched with eyes and mouths wide open.

In the Profound Continent, the only ones who counted as experts at close combat were swordsmen and knights. But they too had to use fighting aura to enhance the defensive abilities of their physical bodies. No one had ever heard of a physical body strong enough to not require the supplementation of fighting aura.

And indeed, Han Shuo wasn't using the defensive power of magical yuan. He was simply using the durability of his body to forcefully block the stone men's attacks. When his magical cultivation reached the separate demon realm, Han Shuo's body was far sturdier than iron. Ordinary swords wouldn't even leave a mark on him anymore

After fighting for a while and discovering that these eight stone men didn't show any signs of communicating amongst themselves, Han Shuo became impatient. He began to gather a bit of magical yuan on his hands as he attacked. The stone men were already reeling from the physical blows, they couldn't withstand these newly reinforced blows. Han Shuo grabbed their necks in his hand, ignoring the blows they were raining on his chests and beheading them with one crush.

The speed of Han Shuo's movements suddenly increased. His fists, now packed with magical yuan, smashed the stone men's bodies into fragments. In the blink of an eye, the eight stone men were completely pulverized into stone chips. Not a single whole block of stone remained.

"His Lordship is truly so strong!" A miner couldn't stop mumbling, a look of worship on his face.

Delia's pretty eyes glinted with a strange light as she stared at Han Shuo. She'd just watched him smash the stone men to shards using nothing but his bare hands. In the eyes of a woman who worshipped wild and strong men, this was far too irresistible. Delia couldn't stop her heart from pounding.

“Want to run? Heh heh, won’t be that easy!” After Han Shuo destroyed the bodies of the eight stone men, the eight murky wisps from the three tunnels seemed to know that Han Shuo wasn’t someone they could deal with. They began to slowly gather, planning to return the way they’d come.

Be it his identity as a demonic cultivator or a necromancer, Han Shuo had methods aplenty to deal with this kind of weird soul. His left hand stretching out, a surge of murderous intent flooded out from his palm like a miniature vortex. This murderous intent was harmless to physical bodies, but those eight wisps were unable to resist its suction.

Not only were the eight souls unable to take a single step away from Han Shuo, they were slowly absorbed by the force of the small vortex on his palm. When the eight of them fell into his palm, they were tightly held down by the murderous intent, unable to break free.

“Speak! What kind of thing are you?” This time, Han Shuo didn’t speak audibly, but used his consciousness to transmit the message.

The murkiness of the eight souls whirling in the high speed of the vortex on his palm slowly dispersed, and they became eight sparkling green light dots. Just like eight beautiful shining stars, the tiny tornado in Han Shuo’s hand had become a facsimile of the deep and profound Milky Way.

What should have been a dark and scary scene had turned into an intoxicatingly beautiful picture in Delia’s eyes. It was as if Han Shuo’s hand was an endless starry sky, sparkling with the twinkling of the night stars. If, at this moment, someone asked her which man could pluck the stars from the night sky for her, she’d instantly answer without hesitation: it was definitely the man right in front of her. There was a sky full of stars in his grasp.

After using his consciousness to transmit the message, Han Shuo felt a weak response. The consciousness of these eight souls was too small compared to his powerful consciousness. Therefore, the message they transmitted was also very faint, “Mercy please. We are the miners who died to the mine collapse before. Our souls didn’t disperse, but drifted to a strange place and absorbed a strange energy, becoming what you see

here.”

Han Shuo stilled his mind to listen carefully. When he gradually understood the message, he was stunned, “What was that strange place?”

“We don’t know either. Strange energy filled that area. We don’t know why our souls slowly became powerful when we absorbed some of that energy. We can even have the power to manipulate stone and form bodies of stone for ourselves. We couldn’t let the miners harvest that area and destroy that place of miraculous energy, so we attacked the miners. We beg you, please let us go. We won’t dare to do that from now on.” The eight souls on Han Shuo’s palm had joined together, clearing up the message they transmitted.

Han Shuo first frowned in doubt when he started listening, before inspiration struck. He suddenly yelled out in delight, “Haha, I know now. So that’s how it is!”

This joyous loud scream wasn’t a silent communication, but a loud cheer that broke through the air. This made Delia’s group jump in shock. They stared inexplicably at him, not knowing why he’d suddenly become so high spirited.

“My Lord, what is it?” When she looked at Han Shuo this time, Delia didn’t know why she suddenly felt that he was the most tempting of men. Her voice had unknowingly turned soft and tender.

“Nothing much.” Han Shuo took out the skeletal staff to send all of the undead creatures around Delia’s group back to the strange dimension. He then thought for a bit before responding, “You guys should stop mining from this area from now, or you’ll meet with danger. You can just come pick up harvested ore once a month. Mm, rest assured the stone men won’t attack you anymore. Alright, you guys leave first, leave this matter for me to handle.”

Delia’s crew was full of doubt at Han Shuo’s words. They only saw him easily annihilate the stone men, but didn’t know why he would say what he had.

“My Lord, can you tell us what’s going on here?” Delia thought for a

moment before asking Han Shuo.

“Oh, the stone men have submitted to me. From now on, they will have to mine a portion of ore every month, at rates surely more productive than you. You only need to come here once a month to collect it. I have agreed to let them have the area around these three tunnels as their living place in return for helping you with the mining.” Han Shuo smiled and explained to Delia.

“But, didn’t the stone men die already?” Delia asked, puzzled.

“They didn’t. Their souls are still in my hand. You guys can be at ease and leave. From now on, you only have to come here once a month to collect the ore. This is the best of both worlds.” Han Shuo explained to Delia.

Delia had originally come looking for the stone men to settle their debt. Now that Han Shuo had destroyed their bodies, captured their souls, and offered such favorable conditions, she readily agreed to Han Shuo’s words without asking too much about it.

“Alright. I’ll leave with them first. I’ll wait for you at the entrance.” Delia didn’t ask why Han Shuo wanted to remain here. She spoke a few words to the miners before leading them back the way they’d come.

After Delia’s group left, Han Shuo followed the guidance of the stone men’s souls to crawl into a narrow tunnel on his belly. Proceeding forward for seven, eight hundred meters, he suddenly emerged into a vast area.

Every part of this area was covered by stones of various colors. The rock wall over his head was a light silver color, sparkling with a silvery sheen. A variety red, purple and white ores were present, some of which Han Shuo knew and some he’d never heard of before. They were scattered everywhere in this wondrous area.

A dense sense of metal element filled the area. There was an enormous rock pillar in the center exuding a concentrated force of metal.

The place of extreme metal – the last of the five places of extreme elements, had finally revealed itself in front of Han Shuo!



# Chapter 354: Metal attribute treasure – The Golden Cudgel?

The central stone pillar in the place of extreme metal was shining with a faint golden luster. It was also where the metal element was the most dense.

The place of extreme metal was the most difficult one to form out of the five extreme places, because no matter where, humans had a tireless and endless enthusiasm for harvesting ore. Be it flat land or high mountain, as long as that area was rich with ore, people would flock to it like flies to cow dung and exploit all of its minerals.

It'd take hundreds of thousands of years for a place of extreme metal to gradually form. If this formation process was disturbed because of the exploitation of the ore, it'd be difficult for it to restore itself back its natural state. All of the five places of extreme elements were formed thanks to their unique terrain as well as the forces of nature. Even Chu Cang Lan, who'd cultivated his demonic magic to the nine changes realm, had been incapable of using human ability to create the five places of extreme elements or repair them when they were damaged.

All five places of extreme elements had been formed from millions of years of accumulation. IT was simply impossible to use human effort to change this. Just like the place of extreme fire, this place of extreme metal had also existed for eons. The enormous, glittering stone pillar in the center must be the metal attribute treasure nurtured by the place of extreme metal.

There was a legend in Han Shuo's previous world about the Immortal Monkey King. He had originally been a stone monkey who obtained his weapon, the magic needle of the Calm Sea – the Golden Cudgel, from the Dragon Palace beneath the seas. According to the legend, the cudgel was the metal attribute treasure born from an extreme metal place millions of years old.

Because the Monkey King himself was born with the metal attribute, he

was able to skillfully utilize the power of the metal attribute treasure. That was how he'd become an everlasting, legendary, immortal existence back on Han Shuo's Earth.

It seemed the shimmering golden stone pillar standing quietly in the center of the cavern was the treasure of this place of extreme metal. As for whether or not its power was as miraculous as the Golden Cudgel, Han Shuo wasn't too aware.

However, Han Shuo understood that only the elite zombie refined from the place of extreme metal would have the ability to master this metal attribute treasure. It was like how it had to be the fire elite zombie who took charge of the fire attribute treasure – the fire lotus. Therefore, Han Shuo didn't easily touch that metal attribute treasure, afraid that he would destroy the natural operations of the place of extreme metal.

Arriving next to the stone pillar, Han Shuo reached out to gently tap it. A crisp metallic ring echoed out, it was indeed the sound of metal. Dense ripples of metal element slowly rolled from the stone pillar onto his fingertips, turning Han Shuo's body a little stiff.

"Sure enough, a metal attribute treasure alright. It seems the metal elite zombie is quite lucky!" Han Shuo softly exclaimed. He took a tour around the place of extreme metal to view a variety of precious, rare ores that shimmered slightly. Han Shuo's heart was filled with delight. However, he didn't move a single ore in the place of extreme metal. Han Shuo didn't want to act rashly before he gathered all of the materials to refine the metal elite zombie. He wanted to avoid changing the natural formation of this place and prevent causing irreversible damage.

"Metal elite zombie ah metal elite zombie, you are the only one left. Now even your weapon is already made." Han Shuo murmured. He opened his right hand, scattering the eight light dots in the place of extreme metal. He ordered, "Protect this place well. Kill anyone, even the miners, who tries to come here."

"Understood. We won't let anyone vandalize this place." The eight souls transmitted their resolution in response.

Han Shuo didn't remain in the place of extreme metal. As his heart burned with the anxiety to immediately gather all of the necessary materials to refine the metal elite zombie, he instantly left the way he'd come in. At the area with the three tunnels, Han Shuo used the Demonslayer Edge to slice off a few huge stone boulders to block the tunnels, leaving only a hole as thick as an arm for the souls enter and exit.

Stepping out of the belly of Mount Silk, Han Shuo saw Delia and the miners still waiting at the entrance. The administrator of the five mines, elder Adleman, was also there.

"Did you handle everything?" Delia's eyes instantly brightened as soon as she saw Han Shuo, asking enthusiastically.

Han Shuo nodded with a radiant smile and said, "That's right. From now on, not only will those stone men stop attacking the miners, they will even hand over some ore to you."

Pausing for a bit, Han Shuo looked solemnly at Delia and Adleman before saying, "However, you have to remember, no one is allowed through the three tunnels that the stone men reside in. It won't be my responsibility if anyone dies after trespassing."

Adleman hastily guaranteed the outcome when he heard Han Shuo's warning, "Rest assured, My Lord, I will definitely discipline the miners well and won't let them enter that area."

"My Lord, rest assured, I think they won't dare to come in anyway. After all, only my Lord can deal with those stone men. How can some miners possibly be their opponents?" Delia's brightly shining eyes were still glued to Han Shuo's body as she replied with a chuckle.

Han Shuo also thought that to be the case when he heard Delia's words. He recalled that the rock solid stone men didn't seem to fear magic. In that narrow space, even senior swordsmen would be courting death if they were to face the stone men. Although the bodies of the mountain people were strong and sturdy, their strength was still a far cry from that of the stone men. They naturally wouldn't be so foolish to go seek their own death.

“Alright. You guys only need to go to that place once a month to collect the ore. The stone men have already agreed to my demands. They are much better at harvesting ores than you guys anyway. They will always help you mine the ore as long as you don’t interfere with their lives.” Han Shuo replied.

“Many thanks to my Lord, many thanks to my Lord!” Adleman was truly grateful to Han Shuo, bowing ceremoniously as he spoke..

“Elder, no need to stand on ceremony. This is only something I should do as the city lord of Brettel City.” Han Shuo helped him up and spoke with all sincerity.

With the stone men crisis resolved, Han Shuo didn’t remain on Mount Silk. Adleman and his subordinates resided on Mount Silk, so they didn’t return to Brettel City. There were now only Han Shuo and Delia on the way back.

Han Shuo was feeling a mounting sense of urgency, and he desperately wanted to ditch Delia and return straight to Brettel City. However, as he thought about it carefully, he came to the conclusion that doing so would be a bit rude to her. Therefore, Han Shuo slowly walked through the rugged mountain road down to the main road with her.

Han Shuo now felt a tad guilty about his actions. He’d been caught peeping at her in the mine and still hadn’t take the initiative to start a conversation. However, Delia’s gaze at him had been somewhat strange ever since they’d left the mine. Her sexily dressed, hot body didn’t seem to be ill at ease either. Instead, she even tried to deliberately puff out her chest.

Even though Han Shuo was no gentleman, they were currently observing propriety as they made their way down the mountain. He’d already been caught stealing glances, and his mind was occupied by the the matter of finding the materials to refine the metal elite zombie, so his perverted nature wasn’t as strong as usual. He didn’t sneak a single glance at Delia’s chest along the way.

However, such behavior from Han Shuo was mistakenly branded as

hypocrisy by Delia. With her identity as the most beautiful mountain woman in addition to her outstanding strength, her eye for men was very finicky. She hadn't chosen anyone among the young mountain men for so many years, and only toyed around with those who admired her.

Delia's 170 centimeters body was very tall. To the general mountain people, that height was enough capital for her to strut around with. However, in the face of Han Shuo's 190 centimeters height, Delia no longer felt proud. Moreover, back in the mine, she had been even more overwhelmed upon witnessing Han Shuo's thunderous assault that shattered the stone men to pieces. With her heart that only sought to admire the strong, Han Shuo was her perfect target in every aspect.

Suddenly, Delia leapt to block the road in front of Han Shuo, her shining eyes staring hotly at him, her soft, silky breasts heaving.

Han Shuo was caught off guard and almost bumped into Delia's soft chest. He immediately came to a stop, subconsciously taking a step back. He looked at her, somewhat confused as he asked, "What is it?"

"My Lord, you are a true man. I like you!" Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Delia's burning eyes was fixed on him as she boldly confessed her true feelings. The mountain women were very straightforward in their character, and Delia was one of the more outstanding specimens. She was wild, daring in love and daring in hate. The normal women of Lancelot Empire weren't so bold and frank.

Such a confession from Delia astonished Han Shuo. He squinted, and swept his eyes up and down Delia's body, as if wanting to see her clearly.

As Han Shuo eyes roamed her body, Delia instinctively felt somewhat shy, especially when his eyes fell upon her tall and full twin peaks. Some of the sensitive parts near her waist also weren't spared. Under the caress of his bold gaze, her body started to burn, making her a little embarrassed. However, Delia wasn't as timid as those ordinary women. She had confirmed Han Shuo her target, so she didn't retreat despite her shyness. Instead, she even pushed out her breasts, seeming very confident in her own body.

“You’re not bad.” Han Shuo suddenly smiled faintly a long while later and spoke softly.

Delia was delighted. A passionate smile blooming on her lips, she spoke boldly to Han Shuo, “My Lord, then, you want me, don’t you?”

End of part one of the chapter.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo answered, “I’m sorry. I already have a woman, and I love my woman.”

Delia’s face dimmed when she heard those words. She silently hung her head for a moment before lifting her face again and said stubbornly, “I, Delia, have never had any man before. Only you have been powerful enough to make me lose my resolve. Whether or not you have a woman, I want to become your woman.”

Han Shuo was flabbergasted. He looked at Delia’s stubborn face, the face of a woman who didn’t seem to know the meaning of defeat. His first thought was that either this woman had been feted by the gazes of adoration of the mountain men for too long, or maybe her standards were too high. It seemed like she was setting her mind on her own objective, regardless of his willingness.

Han Shuo himself wasn’t a gentleman who could control his desires with a beautiful woman sitting on his lap. Otherwise, there wouldn’t be Emily and Phoebe, and of course, Fanny whom he was obsessed with. Of course, Han Shuo was a horny male that had to mount every woman he saw. A demonic practitioner like Han Shuo wouldn’t have any scruples about the secular constraints. As long as he was genuinely interested in a woman, he’d throw all morality to the wind.

Delia’s body was extremely tempting, and her face was also very beautiful. Han Shuo didn’t deny that he lusted for her beauty. However, that was all it was, lust. If there was no responsibility attached to having sex with her, he would’ve have taken her without hesitation.

However, everything had its limits. If Delia persistently wanted to be with him, but he only stayed at Brettel City long enough to toy with her, only to abandon her afterwards, then the thirty thousand mountain men

here would be unwilling to let go of this matter. Han Shuo also didn't want to poke at this kind of hot potato.

"Hehe, I really do have, and not just one." Han Shuo first explained a little before continuing, "Honestly speaking, I only have a bit of interest towards you. However, it's just the interest a man would have towards the body of a beautiful woman, not the kind that you feel. You should understand what I mean, yes?"

"What? You have more than one woman?" Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Delia didn't care too much about the implications of his words. Her surprise had only led her to clarify the first sentence.

Han Shuo nodded, inwardly pondering if Delia would sprout some nonsense. However, as he thought about it, this matter would be exposed sooner or later, so he didn't deny it. Han Shuo answered with a nod, "Mhm, there is indeed more than one. So what of it?"

"Then that means you won't mind having me as another one! I'm willing to be one of your women. It's still better than being the sole woman in the heart of a mediocre man." Her eyes gleaming with excitement, Delia continued, "I knew it. A man like you can't just have one woman. Adding me in should be no problem, right?"

Han Shuo's eyes and mouth were wide open in shock at Delia's words. These mountain women were unexpectedly bold and straightforward. Even someone as free as Han Shuo, who'd always done whatever he wanted, found this attitude hard to digest.

Delia still wanted to discuss this matter in detail, while Han Shuo was set on heading out to find the materials to refine the metal elite zombie. Not knowing how to respond to Delia, he responded directly, "Let's discuss this later. For now, I still have no interest in you. I'll consider your proposal when I'm interested in you. Alright, I have some matters to take care of, so I'm going first."

Han Shuo shot towards the sky as soon as the last words left his mouth. His magical yuan circulated to radiate an aura that placed him high over the entire world, and he turned into a black streak of light that

disappeared into the clouds without a trace.

Delia watched with infatuation as Han Shuo's flying posture gradually disappeared into the horizon. She revealed a resolute smile, firmly nodding her head and whispering to herself, "I'll definitely make you fall for me. My Lord, keke, only a man like you can make me submit from the bottom of my heart!"

Of course, Han Shuo didn't hear these words. He flew all the way to Brettel City and looked for little fatty Jack, giving him the list of materials needed to refine the metal elite zombie, saying, "Acquire these materials for me. Use the Boozt Merchant Guild or whatever merchant guild, just get me these materials as soon as possible."

"No problem!" Possessing a mountain of gold coins, Jack replied with a hundred percent of his lung power. He was projecting an extraordinary spirit that screamed 'Consider it done!'. When he finished those words, he added, "Oh, right, Dick was looking for you."

Hearing that Dick was looking for him, Han Shuo parted ways with Jack. He went straight to the Dark Mantle stronghold in Brettel City, since Dick was normally there. He really did find Dick there after arriving at the Brettel City's Dark Mantle stronghold. The latter was processing and organizing some intelligence on the seven grand duchies sent back from his subordinates.

Seeing Han Shuo abruptly come in, Dick quickly stood up to salute with surprise. He then sat down and asked with a smile, "My Lord, what have you come here for?"

"I heard from Jack that you were looking for me. Did something happen?" Han Shuo asked Dick as soon as he sat down.

There were only six members, including Dick, in this secret stronghold. However, Han Shuo was absolutely sure that there were more than six Dark Mantle members stationed at Brettel City. It was just that they were usually scattered across the city or the seven grand duchies. They were all undercover or carrying out a secret mission.

They wouldn't come here unless circumstances warranted it. Only when



they acquired an accurate piece of intelligence or successfully completed a mission would they come in to report to Dick. Originally, Dick had been stretched thin for manpower. However, when Han Shuo had arrived here, Candide had reassigned some members to Brettel City to be under Han Shuo's direct command.

All of the Lancelot Empire's secret activities were singlehandedly managed by Candide. Even Brettel City, located at the extreme east of the Empire, was under his control. As Candide's most outstanding underling, Han Shuo also had the right to manage the personnel network of the Dark Mantle in Brettel City in addition to being the Brettel city lord. Dick was naturally under Han Shuo's jurisdiction.

"My Lord, I looked for you because I've acquired some information. It was just that you weren't in the mansion at that time. I didn't expect you to personally come find me. The honor truly frightens this little one." Dick himself also sat down with a smile before explaining to Han Shuo.

"Alright alright, less nonsense. What actually happened?" In private, Han Shuo and Dick never continued their master-servant act for long.

Dick chuckled and let out a cough. Face turning solemn, he said, "We may just have a big problem this time. All of the seven grand duchies have come to a truce. According to the information our people sent back, the grand dukes of all seven duchies will soon have a secret meeting at a mountain valley. We have no way to knowing the agenda for the meeting, but I'm almost certain they're convening to figure out how to deal with us."

The seven grand duchies had tirelessly waged war within themselves when Brettel City was no threat. However, now that the Brettel City had revealed its ferocious, domineering momentum, it naturally became the single biggest threat to the seven grand duchies.

The seven grand duchies were all split from the Vanerdun Dynasty. A hundred years ago, the royal family had fought amongst each other for the throne and split the Vanerdun Dynasty into seven duchies. Afterwards, they had gradually become today's seven grand duchies. When there was

no external threat, they delighted in invading each other for benefits. However, their history made them family, and a common enemy would quickly find themselves facing a tight knit alliance of the seven duchies. .

The Lancelot Empire hadn't clearly understood this peculiar situation last time and was tempted into invading the seven grand duchies. Ultimately, the seven grand duchies had allied to beat the Lancelot Empire into retreat. Also from that event, Brettel City had fallen into a slump, reduced into a worthless existence.

"It seems the seven grand duchies now consider Brettel City a new threat. Hehe, we should be proud. Brettel City's population doesn't even touch a hundred thousand, far less than any of the seven grand duchies. I didn't think they'd think so highly of us." Han Shuo smiled coldly at Dick.

"My Lord, the seven grand duchies absolutely can't be taken lightly. They can't be compared to ordinary bandit groups. They are a true army. Not only do they possess complete sets of siege equipment, their years of constant warfare has resulted in their common soldiers being of high quality. They are even one notch stronger than the standard army of the Lancelot Empire." Dick smiled wryly as he explained to Han Shuo, "In addition, each duchy has at least thirty to forty thousand soldiers on standby, not to mention the many private armies of the local aristocrats. If every man is roused to fight, and the seven grand duchies combine forces, their total force would probably be double that of our population. We absolutely cannot underestimate them!"

"Rest assured. I already have a plan. I just won't let them ally together." Han Shuo laughed sinisterly as his thoughts began to spin.

# Chapter 355: Ambush

The seven grand duchies had gathered at a secret meeting place in Sakamimir Valley. Although the seven grand dukes had created an alliance to fight against Brettel City, they did not trust each other enough to try holding this meeting in one of their duchies.

Thus, in the end the seven grand dukes decided to gather their armies at a neutral location, Sakamimir Valley. The majority of the soldiers were temporarily camping in the plains outside the valley, while the seven grand dukes and their most elite experts convened at the center of the valley.

Warm, comfortable sunlight bathed the flowers and plants that grew on the valley's slopes. At the center of the Sakamimir Valley, a simple tent had been erected on some flat ground next to a stream. Inside stood seven grand dukes, secretly negotiating something as their subordinates stood by their sides.

If a mishap actually occurred here, the seven grand duchies would suffer a fatal blow. Thus, not only were there numerous knights guarding the tent, but the tent was layered with magical barriers protecting the seven grand dukes within.

The points of contention within the tent was who the leader of the allied army would be, what checks and balances should be put in place, and how they would split the spoils of war. The years of warfare between them before this had created several grudges on the battlefield. This sudden new threat forced them to leave their differences unresolved, so there were bound to be some conflicts arising.

Helen Tina of the Helon Duchy had been feeling extremely agitated lately, and it showed; she was not as beautiful as before. She was clearly very haggard. The news of her being violated had spread like wildfire among the seven grand dukes. Thus, Helen Tina had become a target of ridicule overnight. Furthermore, anyone who saw her would have a strange look in their eyes. Those gazes made Helen Tina itch.

Furthermore, Benedict Sackville of Narsen Duchy, who had originally been a reliable ally, had become distant ever since the news had gone on to become public knowledge. Even now, after meeting Benedict Sackville here in person, he was clearly not as attentive as before, only giving her a polite greeting.

Helen Tina understood the root of the problem. However, because Han Shuo had truly captured her and imprisoned her within Brettel City for a couple of days, even if she had a hundred mouths, she wouldn't be able to explain her innocence. During this time, the arrogant Helen Tina had also suffered a lot from those strange looks from others. Even some of Helen Empire's citizens believed that the tainted Helen Tina was not suited to become a grand duke.

If it wasn't for her merciless and bloody methods in suppressing the rebellion, killing nine rebelling nobles in succession, perhaps she would have lost her status within Helen Duchy. Now, in the middle of the meeting between the seven duchies, Helen Tina was once again treated with neglect.

At this time, Benedict Sackville was embroiled in an argument with Bavenden Duchy's Alec Ambridge. The crux of the problem lay in the distribution of the spoils of war. Specifically, Alec Ambridge fancied the six magic crystal cannons within Brettel City that was worth six hundred thousand gold coins. Thus, he relentlessly fought for the right to take all six of them.

Benedict Sackville had originally purchased these six magic crystal cannons for Helen Tina from the distant Brut Merchant Alliance through his secret channel. Thus, Benedict Sackville believed that these six magic crystal cannons were naturally his and put his foot down, not compromising in the slightest.

Suddenly, Helen Tina, the one who'd handed over six hundred thousand gold coins for the cannons in the first place, was completely forgotten. In the past, Benedict Sackville would have relentlessly pursued Helen at any expense. But now, he'd reversed his position and was actively trying to recoup his losses.

After taking a cold glance at the argument heating up between the six other grand dukes, Helen Tina's heart became increasingly agitated. Unconsciously, her thoughts began to wander back to that which she had become intimately familiar with over the past year or so, Han Shuo's utter ruthlessness. Comparing the six guys in front of her to the memory of that ruthless tormentor, she faintly felt like these six guys droning on in front of her were far from true men.

Instead, the image of Brettel City Lord's ruthless and demon-like eyes kept popping up in her mind again and again. She had this gut feeling that the six grand dukes in front of her had no way of defeating the ruthless lord of Brettel City.

Brettel City's population didn't even reach a hundred thousand people. Without even mentioning the other six grand dukes, even the Helen Duchy alone had a military strength capable of defeating their target. Now that the alliance of six grand dukedoms intended to advance towards Brettel City, she was truly having a ridiculous thought. Even Helen Tina herself felt as though she was being absurd believing that the allied troops would be defeated.

"Duchess Helen, what do you want from Brettel City?" Grand Duke Randy Allard of Bonton Duchy politely walked over to the almost statue-like Helen Tina.

Waking up from her contemplation, Helen Tina silently thought for a moment before her red lips moved, saying softly, "I only want the life of Brettel City's lord. Although, victory may not come as easy as we think here. I have nothing to support this claim but instinct, but I feel it to be true."

"Haha. Grand Duchess Helen, you must be really tired. We will surely win with the army of seven grand dukedoms allied together. Even the Lancelot Empire that soars with fame and prestige was easily defeated by us that day. But now you're saying just one shabby little Brettel City will be able to obstruct our advance? That's just way too ridiculous! Hah, after you were captured by that city lord, it seems your courage was also broken. Am I wrong, Grand Duchess Helen?" Alec Ambridge overheard the

conversation and abruptly broke in. His sneer had no intention of concealing his contempt, outright breaking out in laughter at Helen Tina.

Originally, at such moments Benedict Sackville, who had just been arguing hot headedly with Alec Ambridge, would've spoken out for Helen Tina. However, he was unexpectedly silent, even slowly nodding his head. It was apparently the first time he'd agreed with someone who was just his enemy a moment ago.

Helen Tina only felt a cold feeling in her heart, looking at the man who had repeated over and over again that he would take care of her until he died. She had the sudden urge to laugh.

"I am a little tired. You guys can keep discussing." Helen Tina stood up wearily and spoke to the six other grand dukes before walking out alone.

None of the six grand dukes urged Helen Tina to stay. Instead, Alec Ambridge waited until after she left before snorting, "It looks like she's been conquered by the new city lord's skills in bed. She can't even grasp the current situation. Hehe. I really don't understand how someone could've been so foolish in the past to relentlessly chase her."

"Who are you talking about, huh?!" Benedict Sackville roared as his temper boiled over. Madly chasing after Helen Tina was now his greatest disgrace. He wouldn't let anyone who offended him in this respect off the hook.

"Hehe, nothing, nothing!" Alec Ambridge had unexpectedly found that prodding at Benedict Sackville was something rather pleasant. Seeing him burst into anger was especially gratifying especially since he had not been able to win during the fight for the magic crystal cannons.

In the plains outside the valley, within one of the Helon Duchy's stationed tents, Helen Tina's calm face disappeared. Her heart slowly sank to a new low.

"Helen? What's wrong, why are you unhappy again?" Within the tent, a high ranked super beast named Firewind transformed from a phoenix into a beautiful female dressed in red before pouring a cup of tea and handing it to Helen Tina with both hands.

“Sister Firewind. Could it be that being a virgin is that important? Why is that after I came back from Brettel City, it seems like everyone dislikes me?” Helen Tina sighed to Firewind.

“Helen, why would you say such a thing? That Bryan did not actually do anything to you, he only blackmailed you to get a million gold coins. That’s all.” Firewind looked at Helen Tina with astonishment and asked, confused.

After putting down the tea cup Firewind gave her, Helen Tina sighed again and spoke with annoyance, “But, everyone believes that the affair actually happened, and I basically have no way of explaining it whatsoever.

“Just ignore them. They’re just a bunch of nobodies. As long as you know you did not do anything in your heart, everything will be fine. What’s the point of bickering so much?” Firewind continued persuading Helen Tina and said, “If it wasn’t for that guy being so powerful, I’d have already killed him for you

“Don’t say such an outrageous thing. He is not someone we can win against. If not, I wouldn’t have allied with the other seven dukedoms.” Helen Tina was suddenly alarmed and hastily persuaded Firewind against acting rashly. Soon after, she shook her head and bitterly laughed before saying, “Sometimes I can’t help but think if I’d actually raped by that guy, maybe he would have taken care of me. But, I know that’s it’s just a fool’s dream.”

“How could you say such a thing?! He is your biggest sworn enemy. Not only has he blackmailed you into giving him one million gold coins, he even made such vile information public. We must find a way to kill him and claim your innocence.” Firewind hatefully said.

Sighing once more, Helen Tina helplessly responded, “I still cannot prove my innocence even if we kill him. This Brettel City’s City Lord is not only sinister, but his strength is also exceptional. I don’t know why, but I keep feeling as though he is always nearby. It seems I really am becoming muddle headed.”

Looking at the fretting face of Helen Tina, Firewind also sighed in her heart. She was truly clueless as to how to comfort her.

Ever since Helen Tina left Brettel City and returned home, she had to deal with everyone's skeptical looks, mocking, and ridicule. In the past when Helen Tina was within Helon Duchy, she was considered as a true living goddess. But now, she has become the nation's target of ridicule and had truly fallen from grace. For the moment, Helen Tina truly had no way of adapting to the sudden change. Even her customary smiles had practically disappeared due to an overwhelming amount of depressing torment.

It's all because of that Bryan, I must help Helen kill him! Firewind secretly thought in her heart.

Han Shuo was atop of a dirt mound, five kilometers away from Helen Tina's tent. Through a yin demon, he was able to hear Helen Tina's conversation with extraordinary clarity.

"This bitch still owes me six hundred thousand gold coins. Now that I count the days, it's about time that I get the rest of the money." Han Shuo muttered to himself. Moving his head and looking in the direction of Helen Tina, Han Shuo started stealthily advancing towards Sakamimir Valley.

A yin demon left Helen Tina's tent and gradually approached Han Shuo. Together, they advanced towards Sakamimir Valley. When they were almost at the central tent, Han Shuo concealed himself with the earth elite zombie and hid in the depths of the earth. Only a yin demon could secretly snoop around the central tents area.

The six grand dukes were still inside the tent. They had spared no effort in setting up the tent's security. All kinds of magical enchantments were crammed into the area. Even after probing the area with the yin demon for half a day, Han Shuo came to the conclusion that he had no means of approaching the area silently.

'It seems like I can only wait until they leave. These guys have truly reached new heights in defensive and security measures. The



enchancements not only cover the sky, but they've even warded the ground beneath it. They even have the main army of seven grand dukedoms stationed around the tent. Even a legion of undead wouldn't be able to exterminate them. They are truly a group of guys afraid of death.' Han Shuo secretly thought in his heart. He hid motionlessly in the depths of the earth while the yin demon continued to snoop around the area.

After about one and a half hours, the six grand dukes came out of the tent, wearing dissatisfied expressions. It seemed like the negotiations had yet to reach a conclusion and that the operations for defeating Brettel City will have to wait for another day or two. Only after properly arranging everything could they advance forward.

All six grand dukes had their experts beside them on full guard. This was a prime opportunity for an assassination. Thus, each and every one of them brought experts from their dukedoms. Furthermore, each of the Dukes also had the aura of a formidable powerhouse protecting them.

In fact, there were definitely be those who would take part in shady businesses and secretly backstab another if the chance arises. This kind of occurrence had occurred in the previous meetings between the seven grand duchies. This was why they'd all become so cautious and solemn.

Han Shuo hid in the deepest parts of the earth without any intentions of secretly killing anyone. Instead, he waited until after they'd all left the valley before finally slowly following one of them under the cover of night. The targeted area was the staging area of Alec Ambridge's army from the Bavenden Duchy.

The dead of the night. It was truly the most perfect time to do something surreptitious.

Even though Grand Duke Alec Ambridge had come here to attend a conference, he had obviously not forgotten to pack for leisure. Inside a gorgeous tent set up in the middle of his massive army, Alec Ambridge pressed a female knight known for her amazing figure down on top of a table. His hands moved to take off her armor from behind, leaving only her bare buttocks sticking high up in the air.

The female knight was splayed on top of the table, her fine black hair trailing down her back and accentuating her cheeks. Such a perfectly moisturized, plump and round butt. It was truly compatible for Grand Duke Alec Ambridge's conquest!

There were actually two other men in the tent as well. They each wore a sinister expression and were both great swordmasters. The two men actually looked at Alec Ambridge's lewd celebrations with indifference and familiarity as they grasped their longswords and coldly surveyed the area.

Alec Ambridge happily let out a groan in high spirits. After discharging his seed and feeling a pleasure that came from his lower abdomen spreading throughout his entire body, he suddenly felt as though the ground under his feet was swaying a little too hard.

However, due to the momentarily pleasurable dizziness, Alec Ambridge did not care too much about the change occurring under his feet. But when a burst of piercing pain came shooting up his leg, Alec Ambridge suddenly shouted in alarm, grabbed the female knight that he was still mounting, and tossed her under the soles of his feet.

"Puuu....."

Below the floor, sharp weapons easily penetrated the famous knight, causing her to twitch in reaction. Her mithril armor, noted for its durability, was easily broken through as the weapon didn't slow, stabbing deeper with the same level of force.

The terrified Alec Ambridge started feeling the pit of his stomach turning cold. In spite of his left leg's painful wound, he turned and limped towards the tent's exit while shouting loudly, "Assassin. There's an assassin!"

The two great swordmasters within the tent had already rushed over before he had even used the female knight as a meat shield. The two experts let out two dazzling silver rays of light which ruthlessly fell onto the female knight who was barely alive.

After the silver swords pierced into the female knight, the two men drew

back. They rudely threw the corpse that was now riddled with gaping wounds to the side, and cautiously looked down into the hole. The hole was about the size of a human arm. It seems like the attack probably came from this arm-sized hole.

“Damn it, wasn’t the ground covered with a protective rock barrier? How come there are still people that can attack me?!” Alec Ambridge frowned at his mutilated left foot and said, “Fortunately, I managed to react in time, otherwise I definitely would’ve died today. That shitty earth mage actually dared to laze around. I want him dead!”

One of the great swordmasters responded with a darkened face. “Your Grace, the protective rock barrier below us is still there, only the enemy is exceedingly powerful. His weapon’s piercing strength exceeds the rock barrier’s protective capabilities. This guy is definitely not any regular expert. Thankfully, Your Grace is alright. However, we still don’t know who would actually want Your Grace’s life”

“Who else could it be, but that damned Benedict Sackville! All I did was mock him with a few words, but he actually dispatched people to attack me at night. This guy really deserves death!!” Alec Ambridge shouted before advancing outside the tent and shouting once more, “Priest. Damn it priest, hurry the f\*ck here! One of my legs is about to be crippled! I spend so much gold on your pay, but when I am in need, you guys can’t even speed it up a little?!”

During Alec Ambridge’s ranting, Han Shuo, who just failed the assassination, left in sorrow. Even the tunnel formed by the earth elite zombie had swiftly been filled up again.

Han Shuo had originally wanted to directly kill Alec Ambridge, but who would’ve guessed that he would actually be so heartless? He’d unexpectedly grabbed the female knight he’d just screwed and sacrificed her to block a deadly attack at the critical moment. Luckily, Han Shuo had connected to the yin demon when he was leaving and heard Alec Ambridge’s statement suspecting Benedict Sackville. In fact, in the end, Han Shuo’s objective had been achieved, and he didn’t consider any more reckless actions. This night could be considered a success.

# Chapter 356: A pack of mad dogs

The seven grand dukes all took special care to ensure their own safety. They paid attention to every detail so as to protect themselves, particularly in this Sakamimir Valley.

After leaving Alec Ambridge's tent, Han Shuo took a trip to visit Duke Nehem Beige of Bisli Duchy. He had originally intended to make a move on this Nehem guy. However, Han Shuo had yet to draw near when he sensed a holy presence from within the latter's tent.

Han Shuo was very familiar with this holy presence and immediately understood that a member of the Church of Light was in that tent. It was no ordinary member either, the intensity of the presence was a good testament to that person's strength. It was most likely to be Kosse of the Church of Light.

As a result, Han Shuo didn't touch Nehem Beige. He hid himself deep in the underground, only using the yin demon to spy on that area from afar. Only when dawn broke did he see Kosse and his group quietly leaving that tent through the yin demon.

Nehem Beige himself was a sky rider. Out of the seven grand duchies, Bisli Duchy hosted many Light Temples of the Church of Light. This duchy guided its civilians' beliefs so that they would offer their faith and devotion to the God of Light.

At that moment, Han Shuo was witnessing the close relationship between Nehem Beige and Kosse, which made him recall the friendly attitude between Bisli Duchy and the Church of Light. Han Shuo had this faint feeling that this Nehem Beige himself was a believer of the Church of Light. Otherwise, he wouldn't have spared so much effort to support the Church of Light.

After Kosse left, there were still light magic pulses inside Nehem Beige's tent, in addition to two hidden powerful presences. Dawn had broken, but Nehem Beige and his subordinates were still deep in discussion even after Kosse had left. Han Shuo pondered for a bit and decided to give up on

dealing with Nehem Beige.

Today in the Sakamimir Valley, the seven grand duchies discussed the matters regarding Brettel City. After the assault the previous night, Alec Ambridge dragged himself on his bandaged stiff left leg, and loudly cursed Benedict Sackville out as soon as he arrived, accusing the latter of despicably ambushing him the previous night.

Benedict Sackville had already felt like he'd been greatly wronged the previous day. Now that Alec Ambridge was bringing an unfounded accusation against him and ridiculing him to boot, Benedict could no longer suppress the fires of anger in his belly. Neither of the two men were willing to let go of the issue and they almost fought it out right inside the tent. Had it not been for the other grand dukes coming forward to stop them, the two might have escalated things to a brawl. Even though they were forcibly separated afterwards, their fury didn't disperse. A ferocious light flashing in their eyes, no one knew what kind of insidious scheme they were plotting against each other.

Grand Duke Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy came to the fore at this meeting, vociferously dissatisfied with the current distribution of benefits. He insisted on taking the five mines as his own after Brettel City was captured. Burt Zili was persistent, but the other grand dukes also desired the mines, so they were naturally unwilling to agree. Today's discussion once again ultimately ended in each of them going their own way.

"At this rate, the seven grand duchies would be already at war even before the attack on Brettel City can be launched. These people can never join hands unless they are well and truly backed into a corner. Only because the Lancelot Empire came knocking on the doors last time did they learn to quickly work together."

"It seems they have yet to take the threat of Brettel City seriously. These people only know to quarrel all day; what grand deed can they actually accomplish?" Going back to her own tent, Helen Tina complained to Firewind with a frown.

"Just let them fuss. The day will come when Brettel City really attacks,

and they will learn the meaning of fear.” Having joined the discussion in the tent with Helen Tina, Firewind had seen the expressions of the seven grand dukes clearly. Even though Firewind didn’t have to right to speak, she still inwardly despised the other six grand dukes who only cared about grabbing fame and benefits.

“Your Grace, Grand Duke Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy requests an audience.” as Helen Tina and Firewind whispered their complaints to each other, the guard’s voice rang out.

“What is this fellow coming to our place for? The smell on his body really makes me uncomfortable.” Firewind frowned and spoke to Helen Tina when she heard the guard’s words.

“Invite him in.” Helen Tina told the guard outside before turning to Firewind, “This person has always been the sworn enemy of Bisli Duchy. This time, Nehem Beige of the Bisli Duchy was the one who proposed to join forces and attack Brettel City. As I see it, this Burt Zili seems to be deliberately destroying the stability of the alliance. I don’t know what this man has come to see me for.”

As Helen Tina and Firewind continued their conversation, Grand Duke Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy came in with a slight smile on his face. Burt Zili was an old summoner. However, rumors had it that he had signed a contract with the Evil God. His summoning could often call upon monsters from hell.

Burt Zilli’s body seemed to emanate a frighteningly sinister aura. Even when he was smiling kindly, other people would still feel his smiling face to be vicious. The fire phoenix was a holy super rank creature, so she was extremely annoyed at the smell coming off Burt Zili’s body. Therefore, the fire phoenix instinctively kept a distance between them upon seeing him come in.

“Grand Duke Burt, what business do you have with me?” Helen Tina’s territory was quite a distance from Burt Zili’s Boulet Duchy, so there was no real conflict between them. However, Helen Tina disliked this sinister grand duke. Moreover, her mood hadn’t been every good lately, so she

naturally didn't give him face.

"Heh heh, I come here to discuss the matter regarding Brettel City with Grand Duke Helen Tina. Since you've stayed at Brettel City for a period of time, what do you feel about Brettel City and its city lord?" Burt Zili exposed an amiable smile and asked Helen Tina in a friendly manner.

Her face growing colder by the second, Helen Tina said, "Grand Duke Burt, did you come here to especially make fun of me?"

"No, no!" Burt Zili hastily waved his hands, gesturing that Helen Tina shouldn't misunderstand him. He then explained, "As the saying goes, know your enemy and know yourself, and a hundred victories out of a hundred battles. Amongst us seven grand duchies, Grand Duke Helen Tina must be the most familiar with Brettel City. I want to hear your point of view on Brettel City and that city lord."

Letting out a snort, Helen Tina said with a stern face, "I'm not very familiar with Brettel City, but I know that city lord Bryan is no ordinary person. You haven't truly seen what you're dealing with. He alone repelled the group of Red Archbishop Kosse and several Templars of the Church of Light. This person is ruthless without measure. Once he sets his eyes on something, he won't hesitate to go for it, using any means, fair or foul. Whether you believe it or not, this person is far from easy to deal with. If the alliance keeps wasting time like this, we'll simply be giving Brettel City time to prepare.

"Heh heh, it seems his person is very much to my taste, interesting, interesting!" Burt Zili said with a wicked laugh, before fixing his eyes on Helen Tina, asking, "Grand Duke Helen Tina, what have you prepared to deal with Brettel City this time? Are you interested in forming a secret alliance?"

"I'm not interested at the moment, sorry." Helen Tina politely refused, her reply neither warm nor cold.

Nodding his head, Burt Zili cackled creepily without any further offer and said, "You can try thinking about it. I'm very interested in cooperating with you. Alright, I have disturbed you enough today. My apologies."

“Mm, I won’t see you off!” Helen Tina said.

Waiting until Burt Zili had left, Helen Tina said with a sense of wariness pricking her, “Really inexplicable. Did this person take a trip here just to ask about that city lord Bryan? It feels like he was a bit off.”

“Ignore him. I realized that when he was inside the tent, my whole body felt uncomfortable. I really wanted to burn him to death.” Firewind said to Helen Tina with a frown.

After leaving Helen Tina’s place, Burt Zili went straight back into his own tent, inside of which was a person whom Han Shuo was very familiar with. This person was lazing in the middle of a big bed covered in sea mink fur. Seeing Burt come in, he asked, “How did it go?”

“That little girl really didn’t seem to know anything. But it’s no problem, this doesn’t affect our plan. Wolf, you really think that person can bring us benefits?” Burt Zili glanced at Wolf on his own bed and asked.

Grand magus necromancer Wolf of the Calamity Church had turned into a handsome, elegant youth after being rejuvenated by Han Shuo’s skeletal staff. His skin was now fairer than that of any women. With the sharp claws resulting from his merge with the old fey zombie having vanished without a trace, his hands had become slender and pretty.

Wolf slowly sat up on the big sea mink furred bed, saying with a condescending smile, “Old friend, the power of that Bryan is beyond what you can imagine. He also has the skeletal staff. The higher-ups have passed down the order, we can’t let anything happen to him no matter what. What we have to do is try our best to support him.”

“The Pope only thinks highly of him as the owner of the skeletal staff. We should just grab his skeletal magic staff, it’ll be more convenient and less troublesome that way.” Burt Zili frowned in thought before telling Wolf.

Grand magus necromancer Wolf, who’d lived for who knows how many years, shook his head and explained with a smile, “It’s not that easy. Kosse personally led three hundred Templars but still failed to catch him, and both his attempts resulted in him retreating with heavy injuries. Do you



think we can catch him so easily?”

“Not to mention that he is now an archmage necromancer. Oh, no, his mental strength must have exceeded the level of an archmage. The skeletal staff is related to the secret of the holy land. What we want is to do recruit him into our church by any means. On the other hand, I can guarantee that having a relationship with him will be extremely beneficial for us.”

“Alright then. Your decisions have always been correct all these years. I will act in accordance with the plan. I only hope that he won’t disappoint us!” Burt Zili replied.

Han Shuo had followed the yin demon there while Burt Zili and grand magus necromancer Wolf were conversing in the tent. His consciousness could clearly discover the evil presence from Wolf’s body inside the tent.

Burt Zili’s Boulet Duchy had been fighting all out with Nehem Beige’s Bisli Duchy that worshipped the Church of Light, for many years. This had never once been resolved. Han Shuo initially hadn’t known what was going on. Now that he felt Wolf’s presence inside the tent, he instantly understood.

It seemed that grand duke Nehem Beige of Bisli Duchy was a member of the Church of Light, while grand duke Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy was of the Calamity Church. These were the two most religious groups in the Continent. Evidently, it seemed that their many years of both open strife and veiled struggle weren’t just limited to some small-scaled battles. They had actually been secretly manipulating the grand battle among the duchies!

Wolf’s appearance had previously been rejuvenated thanks to the power of the skeletal staff. From the conversation just now, Han Shuo understood that Wolf seemed to be greatly concerned about him and want to protect him as much as possible. From this, Han Shuo understood that the reason must be due to the skeletal staff.

Having no way to close in and eavesdrop on their conversation, Han Shuo didn’t know what conspiracy that the two senior members of the

Calamity Church were cooking up inside the tent. However, upon finding out that Burt Zili belonged to the Calamity Church, Han Shuo threw away the possibility that the former wanted to hurt him. However, he had no intention of revealing himself to talk to them either. Han Shuo once again left quietly.

After leaving the area, Han Shuo chose Grand Duke Argi Gilles of Etman Duchy to be his next target. Like the other areas, Argi Gilles' tent was also under strict protection. Han Shuo took a moment to discover that both the sky and ground were cut off by magic barriers. He understood that there wasn't much chance to kill this guy in one blow.

"F\*ck, the seven grand dukes all really do fear death. It seems they don't have the tiniest bit of trust in each other, bringing this many experts to a meeting." Han Shuo cursed in a low voice.

However, since he'd already come anyway, he couldn't leave empty-handed. Han Shuo mused for a bit and released the yin demon to inspect the area. Suddenly, he discovered that except for Argi Gilles' own tent which was strictly protected, the tents of some senior generals were left unguarded.

Ruthlessness surging in his heart, Han Shuo decided to leave Argi Gilles alone and shifted his eyes to his subordinates. There were usually only a few guards walking around the inside and outside of these people's tents. Naturally, their protection couldn't be as strict as Argi Gilles'. The earth elite zombie utilized his ability to travel underground to sneak into the tents of these people. Han Shuo was easily able to conceal his presence at the separate demon realm, soundlessly murdering all six high rank subordinates of Argi Gilles.

After leaving Argi Gilles' tent, Han Shuo continued on to Grand Duke Randy Allard's tent. Using the same method as with Argi, he once again assassinated his four senior generals before leaving in silence. Making a bit of a detour, he again went to Alec Ambridge's tent and took care of three senior generals in the same way.

Benedict Sackville of Narsen Duchy was also ambushed that night. The

tent was engulfed in a massive explosion. Benedict Sackville himself escaped just in time to keep his life, but his hair and brows were burnt cleanly off.

Overnight, apart from Helen Tina of Helon Duchy, Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy and Nehem Beige of Bisli Duchy, the troops of the other four all encountered some kind of big incident. Sakamimir Valley, the originally gathering place to discuss an act of alliance against Brettel City, had suddenly changed completely in nature.

The four attacked duchies suspected some of the others duchies that previously had grudges with them. In the tent, tempers ran high as the men raged at each other. Amongst them, Benedict Sackville was the one with the clearest mind, but had long come to the conclusion that Alec Ambridge was the one who'd attacked him last night. Alec Ambridge also believed that the massacre of his generals had something to do with Benedict.

This time, the two threw all face to the wind and broke out into a fight right at Sakamimir Valley. The rest of the grand dukes all had darkened faces, resentfully staring at each other in utter silence while constantly thinking of a way to retaliate. The other two attacked duchies also nursed bellies full of resentment, blaming everything on the two duchies who were previously their enemies.

The Helon, Boulet and Bisly duchies, who'd passed the night in safety, became the first objects of suspicion. The shaky alliance had already secretly changed in nature. During the day, the seven grand duchies investigated the roots of the problem to affix responsibility. At night, each parties sent their killers to kill each other. It wasn't very peaceful at all.

Han Shuo didn't make a move for three days in a row. The seven grand duchies faced each other each day with new hatred piling up on the old ones as black hooded men lurked everywhere, blurry figures flashing through the sky and on the ground. In the areas where the seven grand duchies had set up camp, one would hear a few tragic screams echo from time to time, as another person was assassinated.

Han Shuo had initially prepared to make a few more choice assassinations, but he found out that he basically no longer had any chance to do so. There were too many black hooded men at night that one yin demon wasn't enough to keep his cover from being blown. He simply didn't know who came from which duchy, and the situation was gradually thrown into chaos anyway.

“The seven grand dukes are indeed a pack of mad dogs!” Han Shuo couldn't help but exclaim when he found that he had nothing to do.

# Chapter 357: Collecting on debts

Chaos, the situation had fallen into utter chaos!

The seven grand dukes had originally gathered here in Sakamimir Valley to deal with Brettel City. But for some reason, all these old grudges and new hatred had erupted, with all of the parties attacking each other and turning the entire thing into utter shambles.

At first, they'd only snuck around to assassinate members of the enemy duchy at night. But as the dead kept piling up, fury deprived the seven grand dukes of logic as they started to use their armies. It'd changed from a meeting to discuss an alliance to an outright battlefield.

"What actually happened here?" Red Archbishop Kosse was nursing a bad headache as he questioned Nehem Beige inside the duke's tent.

Nhem Beige's headache wasn't much better. A wry smile was on his face as he spoke to Kosse, "The seven grand duchies have accumulated too many years of deep bone hatred, and a small fuse is enough to ignite the bonfire. Even I am at a loss to stem this."

"Aii, it seems we really can't rely on these people. Oh right, say, could it be that Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy has secretly executed some dirty tricks? He's from the Calamity Church. I think he definitely won't agree to something happening to that city lord Bryan." Kosse asked Nehem Beige.

"I don't know, it's possible. But it's a complete madhouse now, and it's utterly out of my control. It seems that we have to change our plan." Nehem Beige heaved a long sigh and responded.

"Forget it, I will think of another way." Kosse replied helplessly.

On the flat plain of Sakamimir Valley, the seven grand duchies, who'd always been enemies, had suddenly gone from secret assassination to open fighting. Han Shuo had only thrown a small stone behind the scenes, he also hadn't expected the deep bone hatred among the seven grand duchies to be so deep.

Seeing the area around Sakamimir Valley turn into a battlefield, he no

longer paid any heed to the situation here. Instead, he chased after Helen Tina, who was returning to Helon Duchy.

Out of the seven grand dukes, Helen Tina had been the first to become disheartened. Right at the beginning of the battle, she'd instantly understood that this alliance matter had gone down the drain. At this moment, Helon Duchy had just been through a civil war, and its strength the weakest. Therefore, Helen Tina made a wise choice to immediately leave the valley and return to her duchy.

After two days on the road, Helen Tina passed down an order for the army to camp in a small mountain valley. After arranging the guards to keep watch on the surroundings, Helen Tina and Firewind went to take a bath at a small hot spring.

"It looks like only upon staring death in the face will they set aside their prejudices!" Helen Tina lay languidly in the hot spring, speaking angrily to Firewind.

The fire phoenix had transformed into her original body. She stood at the edge of the hot spring, cleaning her gorgeous feathers as she spoke in human tongue, "We don't need to worry about them, just let them bear the consequences of their own actions. With the way the situation is developing, they definitely won't be able to fight against that ruthless city lord."

"Right, I still owe that Brettel city lord six hundred thousand gold coins. Aii, this demon. What should I do?" Helen Tina asked the fire phoenix, her expression worried.

"Keep delaying it. Our duchy has just been through a civil war, and all of the wealth is concentrated in the hands of the aristocrats. If we draw six hundred thousand gold coins from our national treasury to pay him, I'm afraid Helon Duchy will officially be in trouble." The fire phoenix was also very helpless as she advised Helen Tina.

"But that demon is no generous, forgiving person. The longer we drag it out, the more I'm afraid that he'll create trouble for us." Helen Tina knew Han Shuo wasn't the kind sort. She understood how terrifying his power

was, so she was truly afraid that he would make a move on them.

As Helen Tina and Firewind were talking, a faint undulation spread from the outside to the opposite end of the hot spring. A shadow soundlessly appeared like a ghost in the darkness on the other side of the hot spring. Then, it suddenly stopped and stood quietly on a protruding rock.

“Hehe, it seems you understand me well, I’m truly honored. That’s right, this demon has come here today to collect the money, so pay up!” The gloomy shadow in the darkness suddenly opened its mouth to speak.

Helen Tina, who’d been bathing in the hot spring, let out a deafening scream. This familiar voice had been the object of her resentment for so long. Helen Tina didn’t need to see the person to know that Han Shuo had arrived.

Still letting out a scream, Helen Tina hastily ducked her smooth shoulders into the water, afraid that Han Shuo would see her white bare skin. The fire phoenix, who’d been cleaning her blazing red feathers, also let out a shrill scream. She flapped her wings and shot towards Han Shuo.

The fire phoenix flapped her wings once, sending a violent flame rolling straight towards Han Shuo. However, Han Shuo didn’t wait for the fire phoenix’s flame to approach. The spring water right before Han Shuo suddenly gathered into a water screen under the influence of magical yuan, churning back at the fire phoenix in a huge wave. It enveloped the flame that she’d shot out.

The hot spring water transformed into a water curtain, instantly extinguishing the surging flame. Not only that, even the fire phoenix was dragged onto the hot spring and became a drenched sorry-looking chicken.

Without waiting for the furious fire phoenix to rise in fury, Han Shuo instantly cackled, “If you guys value the lives of your underlings, don’t be in such a hurry to make a move.”

As these words fell, Helen Tina screamed at the fire phoenix, who was fluttering her wings and about to keep on attacking Han Shuo, “Big sister Firewind, don’t!”

Upon hearing this scream, Firewind immediately stopped. She flapped her wings to fly out of the hot spring and landed next to Helen Tina, before furiously shouting at Han Shuo, “What did you do to them?!”

Helen Tina was a woman, so when she came to bathe in the hot spring, all of the guards around her had to be female. The strength of these female guards weren’t bad, but Helen Tina knew that Han Shuo’s power was even more terrifying. She was worried for their lives, and she was well aware that Firewind wasn’t Han Shuo’s opponent, so she stopped Firewind upon hearing his words.

“Nothing, let’s just get to our business!” Seeing Helen Tina’s body shrink under the hot spring, Han Shuo first asked with a smile, “Grand Duke Helen Tina, your skin truly isn’t bad. Hehe, but you still owe me gold coins, shouldn’t you be paying them back already?”

“You, you demon, shut your shifty eyes!” Helen Tina yelled out, before saying, “I don’t have that many gold coins at the moment. Wait for a while, I’ll pay you back. Don’t worry, I won’t renege on my debt.”

Both Firewind and Helen Tina were experts with fire. This was why Han Shuo had chosen this hot spring to show himself. With this hot spring, ordinary fire magic was basically useless. Upon hearing Helen Tina’s words, Han Shuo said smugly, “Your Grace, lying is a bad habit. I’ve been here for a while already and personally heard your conversation. I think, you should just take out six hundred thousand gold coins and pay me back.”

“You, you’ve come for a while already?” Helen Tina was dumbstruck, before yelling loudly, “Then, you have seen me bathe. You despicable demon, sooner or later karma will visit you!!”

“Eh... Let’s not talk about this. Less nonsense, hurry up and pay it, or I’ll come into the water!” Han Shuo was a bit embarrassed at first. Honestly, he’d seen Helen Tina’s body from head to toe through the yin demon and even had a physiological reaction while doing so. Now that he listened to Helen Tina shout about this, Han Shuo was embarrassed to the point of anger, so he could only shout over her.



Helen Tina was so furious that her entire body was trembling. Upon hearing Han Shuo speak so unreasonably, Firewind would have already laid down her life to attack him had it not been for the still rational Helen Tina holding her back.

“Come down if you want to then. You’re a demon who already spread that vicious news. No one would want me now anyway, so just kill me already. I’m not paying you any gold coins.” Helen Tina was going insane because of Han Shuo’s torture. Her mind now blinded by fury, she disregarded all decorum and shouted at him.

Spitting out these words, she felt as if the grievances she’d suppressed for so long was gushing forth out like a torrent. She stood up in the hot spring, displaying her perfect body right in front of Han Shuo as she continued to vent, “Look! If you want to look then look! Just kill me, haven’t you been torturing me enough? How many evil vicious tricks you actually have, show me all of them!!”

Once a woman went crazy, it was basically impossible to reason with her. And that was precisely the portrait of Helen Tina at the moment. Ever since she’d returned from Brettel City, she’d suddenly discovered that her whole world had changed. It was all because of Han Shuo’s appearance that her life had been so completely screwed.

All of the previous looks of respect and admiration had become those of contempt and disdain. Even the originally loyal citizens treated her like she was an unclean woman, as if a violated woman didn’t deserve to be the grand duke of their Helon Duchy. Helen Tina, who’d always been quite proud, had to put up with many grievances and feelings of utter helplessness during this time.

Now, the culprit who’d caused all of this was standing right in front of her, aggressively threatening her without easing up, wanting to push her to the point of death. Helen Tina was unable to fight, nor could she escape. She simply had no way to deal with Han Shuo, always worried that he’d take the lives of her and the fire phoenix. Her rational mind had finally snapped.

Facing this onslaught, Han Shuo was more than a little dumbfounded. His eyes wandered up and down her perfect, stunning body. He took a few more glances at her full peaks and the grassy land under the abdomen which still lingered with some sparkling water drops. Han Shuo secretly swallowed. Looking at Helen Tina's fierce posture, fearless in the face of death, he didn't know what to do for the moment.

"I only want you to pay back the money. You shouldn't want to die at every little thing. There's hope as long as you are alive, I don't want to kill you." Han Shuo discourteously swept his gaze over Helen Tina's body again, before looking at her in the eyes and saying with a dry smile.

"It's because of your appearance that my life has lost all hope!!" Helen Tina screamed resentfully, furiously glaring at Han Shuo.

"I can't stand it, Helen, don't stop me, I'll risk my life with him!" The fire phoenix looked up to face the sky and let out a cry. She struggled out of Helen Tina's grasp, her entire body blazing with violent flames as she desperately shot towards Han Shuo.

Seeing the fire phoenix angrily hurl herself over, Han Shuo's palm lightly tapped down on the surface of the hot spring. He circulated the magical yuan before flicking up his hand. Water curtains rose up one after another from the hot spring, rolling towards the fire phoenix.

The furious rushing fire phoenix was hit by five, six water screens and once again swept into the hot spring. Han Shuo laughed sinisterly and shot towards the fire phoenix, saying smugly, "Lucky I chose this place, otherwise, it'd be somewhat troublesome."

"No. I beg you, don't kill big sister Firewind. Demon, I'll give you the gold coins!" Helen Tina burst out into tears and yelled loudly upon seeing Han Shuo shoot through the air towards the fire phoenix.

Han Shuo only intended to catch the fire phoenix. He hadn't expected Helen Tina to care about her so much. He smiled delightfully and said, "Very good, I won't kill her. Give me the gold coins."

"Helen, don't give him the gold coins. If you do, Helon Duchy will truly go out of control!" From inside the hot spring, the fire phoenix who was

flapping her wings and about to fly up suddenly shouted out.

Han Shuo was about to shut the fire phoenix up when he suddenly sensed several powerful presences approach. He furrowed his brows and had the yin demon scout them. Han Shuo's face changed into a stern expression, "Perhaps, your Helon Duchy is out of your control already!"

Helen Tina's heart took another shock at those words. She stared at Han Shuo and said, "What do you mean?!"

"There are people coming. One of them is a general in your army. I can see that the incoming people must belong to your Helon Duchy. It looks like you're in trouble." Han Shuo looked at Helen Tina.

Helen Tina and the fire phoenix traded glances. Helen Tina seemed to recover her rational mind upon facing something she could actually deal with. She turned her back on Han Shuo and stepped ashore, putting her clothes on.

The fire phoenix also rose out of the hot spring to return to Helen Tina's side. After Helen Tina put on her blazing red magic robe, she walked over to face Han Shuo. Her entire body radiated a refreshing light after a bath, giving him a feeling of stunning beauty.

"Demon, what exactly did you do to my guards?" Helen Tina inquired as she stood face to face with Han Shuo.

"Nothing. They are all outside. I only glided past them to come in here and set up a soundproof enchantment around you. However, they can't fight back against those people, that I'm sure of!" The majority of these female guards had the strength of journeyman and senior swordsmen. There were twenty-seven of them in total, staying about three hundred meters away from the hot spring where Helen Tina was.

These female guards were useless against Han Shuo, who could traverse the sky and tunnel through the ground. He basically didn't need to attack them as he could just soundlessly go underground to enter the hot spring area without disturbing any of the female guards.

"Protect the duke!" From around the hot spring suddenly echoed the

sounds of fighting and the surprised screams of the female guards.

When the sounds from outside reached this place, Han Shuo knew that the enchantment had been broken. Afterwards, the sounds of fierce fighting quickly approached, and three female guards broke through the trees with panic on their faces. The leader, a middle-aged woman, anxiously shouted, "Your Grace, Ferrodias has rebelled. He led people here to attack you! We can't stop him anymore. Your Grace, hurry and escape!"

At this moment, Helen Tina and the fire phoenix stood together with the three female guards. Helen Tina took out her magic staff and asked, panic in her voice, "How much longer until they reach this place?"

"Hehe, we've already come, haven't we!" The smug voice of a middle-aged man suddenly rang through the air. Then, an earth rider riding a warhorse in full body armor, suddenly appeared alongside thirty knights and six mages.

A long brown haired middle-aged man rode in front. His body was quite sturdy, so this must have been the Ferrodias the woman had just mentioned. Upon his appearance, he immediately led his people straight to Helen Tina. He first respectfully bowed ceremoniously, before saying with a smile, "Your Grace, you are completely surrounded. The knights of Helon Duchy no longer need you, so just tie your hands and resign yourself to capture!"

Helen Tina's pretty face flared up in rage. Her finger rose to point at him, accusing and enraged, "I never thought you would dare to betray me. When you were still a civilian, it was I who let you join my knights. From a civilian to a count, it's me who bestowed everything on you, and yet you betray me!!"

Shaking his head, Ferrodias said, "It's not me who has betrayed you, but rather your people that have betrayed you. I can only conform with the public opinion. Your Grace, there is no need to resist, otherwise you will see more unpleasant things."

Raising the magic staff in her hand, Helen Tina furiously said, "I won't satisfy your wishes!"

Finishing those words, Helen Tina was about to chant a magic incantation to burn the traitor in front of her to death. However, she had yet to complete the incantation, when the middle-aged female guard next to her threw out a huge, glittering ash gray net. The net caught Helen Tina and the fire phoenix by surprise as it shrouded them.

Helen Tina completed the magic incantation only to discover that her fire magic had produced no effect at all. The gray net above her head had sealed all of her magic.

“Aunt Wellie, even you have betrayed me?” Helen Tina’s heart sank into grief. She looked to the aunt who’d taken care of her ever since she was a little girl with a desperate expression.

The middle-aged women indifferently took a few steps back, her voice cold as ice, “Helen, accept your fate.”

“Hehe, Your Grace, I advised you to not resist or you’d encounter some embarrassing situations, yet you didn’t believe me.” Pausing for a bit, Ferrodias once again smiled, making Helen Tina despair even more as he said, “I will hand you over to Grand Duke Benedict Sackville. Even though you are no longer a virgin, that person is still willing to take fifty thousand gold coins for you. But of course, in his hands, I’m afraid that you will no longer be a goddess of his heart, but just a slave under his feet. Haha!”

Precisely at this moment, a polite voice rang out. “Everyone, you seem to have forgotten my existence!” Han Shuo stepped out, grinning at the traitors surrounding Helen Tina.

# Chapter 358: You're all done for!

Ferrodias and his companions had originally ignored Han Shuo's existence. In their eyes, such a youngling was not worth fearing whatsoever and therefore unworthy of any attention. However, only when Han Shuo spoke up, did Ferrodias finally deign to take notice of him.

"Who are you?" Ferrodias knitted his brows and looked at Han Shuo with displeasure before saying, "Well, regardless of who you are, since you're here, let's just say, you're out of luck!"

With a wave of his hand, Ferrodias signaled a knight beside him, "Kill him!"

From behind Ferrodias' back, a knight suddenly rushed out, charging straight at Han Shuo, who was still standing beside the hot spring.

Helen and the phoenix were imprisoned within a magical skill, and were subject to a barrage by a dozen or more archers. In addition, the three former members of Helen Tina's personal guard also aimed their weapons at the two individuals within the barrier. As a super rank magical creature, the phoenix would be able to make trouble even without using magic attacks.

But Helen's fragile body was only barely able to stand up against so many attacks. The phoenix didn't dare truly exert herself under these circumstances. That momentary hesitation was a fatal mistake, as a magic arrow punched through the phoenix's body. The phoenix fell with a gasp, weak and without a trace of power. As the phoenix felt her powers gradually fade, she looked at the calm face of Han Shuo before pulling on the edge of Helen Tina's dress, saying, "This is bad, the arrow tips are poisoned!"

Helen Tina was originally filled with despair. But when she heard the sound of Han Shuo's voice, hope reignited within her breast. As her thoughts took a rapid turn, she cutely yelled at Han Shuo, "Bryan, help me kill them!"

Han Shuo was only momentarily stunned by the unfamiliar sound of

Helen Tina's cute, coquettish voice that was usually reserved for loved ones. He took a quick glance at Helen Tina before a smile tugged at his lips. He teased back, "Dearest one, rest assured, you still owe me so many gold coins, how would I willingly let others capture you?"

Being spoken to like this, Helen Tina couldn't help but blush while secretly sighing in her heart. She would never have thought that, to survive, she would actually have to yield to this demon. But in actuality, when Han Shuo teased her with the words "Dearest one", it left a faint ripple within her heart. Although Helen Tina knew that Han Shuo was only teasing her, without knowing why, her heart still had a somewhat unusual feeling. Furthermore, her blushing cheeks apparently weren't just a pretense, causing her to feel extremely awkward and clueless on how to reply.

As for that senior knight charging over on a warhorse, Han Shuo never took a glance at him from beginning to end. Only when he arrived right in front of him did Han Shuo casually release a long snake-like purple flame, which violently spread through the high-ranking knight and his warhorse.

All everyone saw was the senior knight rushing at Han Shuo with his warhorse before suddenly igniting in purple flames. As the knight and warhorse braved a freezing cold chill, they gradually slowed to a stop before freezing at a speed clearly visible to the naked eye.

Han Shuo controlled the flame so that the senior knight and warhorse were within a hand's reach before freezing them both into a sparkling ice sculpture. Afterwards, Han Shuo casually used one hand to tip the man-and-horse ice sculpture over, causing their frozen flesh to fall and shatter with a loud bang.

Seeing his high-ranking subordinate senior knight tragically die in such a strange way, Ferrodias took another glance at Han Shuo. His gaze had now changed into a dignified and solemn look, continuing in an imposing manner, "Who on earth are you? The things that are happening in the Helon Dukedom is unrelated to you, so as long as you leave, I will not investigate this further."

Ferrodias had become apprehensive after Han Shuo had displayed his prowess. From start to end, Han Shuo seemed as if he barely used any of his strength. Although it seemed as if he was taking a leisurely walk around his own courtyard, he had still killed one of Ferrodias' senior knights in such a tragic manner. Thus, Ferrodias immediately felt that Han Shuo was somewhat enigmatic.

"Did you not have your eyes and ears open? You didn't hear the words I just said? Your Grand Duchess Helen is my woman, so take a guess, am I going to leave just like that?" Han Shuo lectured Ferrodias with displeasure, staring at Helen Tina as he spoke. He obviously didn't think much of Ferrodias.

"Humph, since you're looking for death, then you can't blame us!" Ferrodias understood that Han Shuo was determined to intervene. So, after a cold snort, he gave a command to the people behind him. The mages slowly scattered in preparation for a joint attack.

Being stared at by Han Shuo, Helen Tina felt humiliated in her heart. She knew that he was only joking with her when he said that she was his woman. However, Helen Tina couldn't help but to feel an indescribably strange feeling rise in her heart.

Suddenly a thought rose in her mind. Perhaps, it wouldn't be so bad to become his woman. But she immediately suppressed the thought right afterwards. Impossible! He's the reason why she had become a laughing stock, so she should be trying to kill him at all costs. How could she have such an absurd thought instead!

Han Shuo gently walked over to Helen Tina, gazing into her eyes as he said in an increasingly tender voice, "How could I possibly let you stay trapped? Furthermore, you owe me far more than just fifty thousand gold coins. Isn't that so, Helen?"

"You! Don't come closer. If you dare come closer, we will kill her!" The middle aged female imperial guard suddenly held a dagger to Helen Tina and shrieked in panic upon seeing Han Shuo approaching.

Shooting a glance at the middle aged woman, Han Shuo sighed in sorrow



before saying, “She is worth fifty thousand gold coins, do you dare kill her? Besides, you never had a chance to kill her!”

The moment the words fell, the earth suddenly trembled as several sharp spikes suddenly protruded from the ground, stabbing into the middle aged woman, the rest of the guards, and the nearby traitors. They were all left suspended on the protruding spikes just like that.

Ferrodias’ face changed greatly, as did the look in his eyes when he looked at Han Shuo. He scanned the ground beneath his feet with lingering fear. He feared a spike would suddenly burst out of the ground, impaling him to death. There had been a clear lack of Han Shuo chanting any magical incantations before the spike suddenly killed several of his subordinates. Ferrodias grew more and more stunned at this young man’s prowess.

Helen Tina and the phoenix were naturally safe and sound within the enormous magical net. They watched Han Shuo approach leisurely, and then listened to him say with a smile, “How about that? Even though I helped you deal with these people, I won’t add any additional payments. Instead, you just have to return the gold coins you already owe me. This is quite generous of me, right?”

Helen Tina looked at Han Shuo’s tender face in a daze while listening to his gentle and soft voice. She suddenly had a weird delusion. This version of Han Shuo was just like Benedict Sackville when he unrelentingly chased after her in a modest and urbane manner. That sort of tender, modest behavior made her feel like a goddess and made her fall into a trance.

“Helen, what’s wrong?” The phoenix beside her pulled on Helen Tina, who was looking at Han Shuo in a daze, and asked her anxiously.

Helen Tina suddenly stirred and noticed several of Ferrodias’ mages approaching them with incantations. As they drew close, Helen couldn’t help but snort, “If you don’t kill them, they would still kill you. I’m not interested in such deals.”

Han Shuo was stunned the moment those words came out. Soon after, he opened his hands to the approaching Ferrodias and said, “Alright, this

is not my business, you guys can continue. I'll just take my leave first. Truthfully, I am not too familiar with Grand Duke Helen, I was just making a joke with you guys, that's all!"

Ferrodias had been about to start killing when he was suddenly stopped in his tracks by Han Shuo's words. He hastily stopped his mages from finishing their incantations and said to Han Shuo, "Fine, I also don't want to be enemies with you. As long as you don't get involved in this matter, I will act as if this never happened."

"Sure. You guys continue. Bye now!" Han Shuo laughed lightly. It seemed like he truly intended to leave.

"You demon, I promise you. I already promised you, you thrice-damned demon, don't leave!" Helen Tina let out a panicked shriek as she hastily shouted at him.

"Why didn't you say so earlier? Don't waste my time!" Han Shuo stopped, then raised his hand again and said to Ferrodias, "My bad. You're screwed now!"

"Motherf\*cker. You tricked me. Get rid of him!" Ferrodias had originally decided against provoking Han Shuo after seeing a demonstration of his powers. But who knew Han Shuo would retract his words and use him as the butt of a joke? Suddenly, Ferrodias felt an uncontrollable anger rise in him as he shouted his orders.

Some of the mages had long since harbored a dislike of Han Shuo, they immediately restarted their incantations the moment they heard Ferrodias' urgent command.

"So what if I tricked you? All you are is trash. You are only fit to be played with!" Han Shuo said this with all smiles as he calmly took out the skeletal staff and chanted out a magical spell of some length.

Rows of undead creatures suddenly appeared around Ferrodias as Han Shuo chanted. More than a hundred of them appeared in the blink of an eye, while a squadron of gargoyles whizzed towards the still chanting mages. Frightened, they could only stop their incantations and frantically take cover.

“You! You! Just who on earth are you?!” When several hundred undeads surrounded Ferrodias, three of which were powerful evil knights, Ferrodias could finally no longer contain the fear within his heart and cry out in alarm.

Shrugging his shoulders, Han Shou said, “You’re about to die, why bother with so many questions?”

“Bryan. Bryan. You’re Bryan, the newly appointed city lord of Brettel City” One of the mages suddenly cried out in alarm. He had obviously heard the way Helen Tina addressed Han Shuo and had connected the dots, shouting out in alarm.

“Yep, perhaps you guys can die content now!” Han Shuo replied with a smirk. He waved his hand with the bone staff and caused an enormous undead creature to wink into existence, drowning the people beneath it.

Among these people, the most powerful was still earth knight Ferrodias. Han Shuo completely ignored the little mages. Their ending was easy to imagine after the enormous undead creature slammed into them.

Indeed. Even when the mages only had the gargoyles to worry about, they were still caught in a bad situation. Now, with hundreds of undeads, their little spells’ destructive power was fundamentally useless. On the other hand, although Ferrodias’ power was sufficient, just one evil knight alone was capable of preventing him from obtaining victory. Now, with three evil knights surrounding him, he was guaranteed to die tragically.

A miserable and mournful howl echoed from Ferrodias and his people. After the legion of undead attacked, the group of people who had been prancing around arrogantly just a moment ago, were torn into pieces. The terrifying screams could make one’s hair stand on end.

But when Helen Tina’s traitors screamed in a manner that could cause shudders up and down one’s back, she actually had a kind of delightful, carefree feeling. This was because she felt like she had always treated them fairly and could never have imagined that these people would actually one day betray her. Thankfully, Han Shuo was in the vicinity, otherwise, Helen Tina would probably have been captured and fated to be

## Benedict Sackville's slave

Helen Tina might have reluctantly accepted things if it'd been a rebellion from ordinary folk, but when those who she treated with sincerity betrayed her, it truly became hard to extinguish such intense hatred for them. After hearing the petrified screams, Helen Tina gnashed her teeth and shouted, "Serves you right. As traitors, this is what you deserve!"

"Pfft. I say, Miss Helen, they're already screwed, shouldn't you return the gold coins you owe me already?" Han Shuo laughingly walked in front of Helen Tina and gallantly helped Helen Tina remove the magical imprisoning net before prompting her to pay back the debt. He also smoothly stored the net into his space ring.

"You, are you finished yet?" Helen Tina looked at Han Shuo's smiling face and suddenly felt a belly full of anger. In the end, she couldn't help but to shout at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo said astoundedly, "What! Are you actually looking to renege on the debt. Hehe. You should know that although they're all dead, I can still very easily get rid of you. Even worse, I can directly bring you to Benedict Sackville and exchange you for fifty thousand gold coins."

"You dare!" Helen Tina hatefully stared at Han Shuo with wide eyes. After staying silent for a moment, she took a deep breath, as if fortifying herself and said, "Bryan, I have a proposal."

"What kind of proposal; let me hear it" Han Shuo asked.

"A marriage between us. The dowry is Helon Dukedom, what do you think?" Although Helen Tina was blushing and ashamed, her eyes were resolute as she looked deeply at Han Shuo.

# Chapter 359: You are not the only one

“Helen, are you crazy!? How could you even have such an insane idea?!” Even trapped in the magic net, the fire phoenix nearly deafened everyone with her shout, looking at Helen Tina with in disbelief upon hearing the latter’s words.

“I’m not crazy. Big sister Firewind, this is the only way to restore Helon Duchy’s stability and also stop others from looking at me with those eyes. Only when this demon marries me will I be able to wash the impurities off my body! The others will only believe his words.” Helen Tina heaved a long sigh as she said helplessly to Firewind.

With regards to Helen Tina being violated by Han Shuo, as long as Han Shuo stood up to speak the truth, it didn’t matter if there were still people who didn’t believe those words. Everything would be fine as long as he married Helen. At least, the people of Helon Duchy wouldn’t keep objecting to everything.

“But you know who he is! He’s the city lord of Brettel! The people of Helon Duchy still consider Brettel their personal hunting ground. I’m afraid that they can’t accept this matter at all.” The fire phoenix persistently tried to persuade Helen Tina out of what she considered the most foolish of ideas.

“It’s fine, they will gradually learn to accept it. I understand them, the civilians are the most easily deceived but also the most easy to calm down. As long as the rebellious aristocrats are removed, the civilians will behave as long as their livelihoods aren’t threatened.” Helen Tina said stubbornly. Her pretty eyes flashed with a cold glint as she seemed to think about visiting some murder and bloodshed on those rebels.

Han Shuo looked at Helen Tina from a distance, listening to the two women’s conversation. Her offer had greatly tempted him, since she was backed by the entirety of Helon Duchy. Han Shuo also had absolute belief that as long as he married Helen Tina, he could definitely use her hands to tame Helon Duchy into submission..Looking at it from the aspect of

absolute interest, this seemed to give nothing but profits without the slightest loss. The only thing Han Shuo was worried about was, once this matter was leaked out, the other three women just might not spare him. This was truly a difficult problem!

“What do you think? No matter how we look at it, a proud person like you won’t decline this kind of offer, right?” Helen Tina’s bright eyes stared at Han Shuo, her face slowly returning to her natural complexion as her embarrassment faded. She was simply discussing business.

“Eh... this... Actually, I already have a woman!” Han Shuo scratched his head, explaining his problem to Helen Tina.

“What woman? Is she even more valuable than the Helon Duchy?” Helen Tina wasn’t surprised. It’d be strange if someone like Han Shuo didn’t have any women. However, Helen Tina believed in her own value and that of Helon Duchy behind her. It should be enough to make Han Shuo accept her offer.

“Feelings are not things, and they can’t be measured by pure economical value either!” Han Shuo answered Helen Tina. His mind quickly spun as he tried to think things through. He smiled a while later and responded, “Your current Helon Duchy has powerful enemies outside and civil war inside. Even your grand duke position is in danger, so this dowry of yours isn’t exactly reliable!”

“Humph! If I’m to marry you with Helon Duchy as my dowry, of course there’s a condition. You must help me stabilize Helon Duchy. On the other hand, even if I marry you, Helon Duchy will still be mine to manage.” Helen Tina answered like it was a matter of course. She was determined to make such a decision out of consideration for herself, as well as her admiration for Han Shuo’s ability. Otherwise, even if he had really violated her, had he been an incompetent man, she absolutely still wouldn’t consider him.

“This means that you still need my help to stabilize the Helon Duchy. Then it can’t be considered as you giving me Helon Duchy as your dowry.” Han Shuo looked at Helen Tina with a supercilious smile, as he spoke in a

measured tone.

Helen Tina flew into a rage when she heard Han Shuo's words. She rolled her eyes at Han Shuo and said, "You demon, you'll even bargain with me about this kind of thing! After you marry me, I myself will become your person, so Helon Duchy will naturally become yours also. If you don't want to, then forget it! It's not like I'll die without you!"

Helen Tina had already tossed her self esteem into an abyss when she decided to discuss her marriage with Han Shuo. For someone as proud as her, it was already embarrassing enough to discuss this topic with Han Shuo face to face while pretending to be calm about it. She didn't expect him to be such a politician and be still weighing the gains and losses. This made Helen Tina feel humiliated, so she couldn't help but say so in her rage.

"Don't be agitated, don't be agitated!" Han Shuo hastily smoothed things over a little. He then adopted a stern face and a low tone, "Firstly, the position of my women won't change because of you. Moreover, this transaction temporarily cannot be made public; your position in the seven grand duchies is still useful for me. However, I will help you hold Helon Duchy in the palm of your hand."

Helen Tina's raging waves of anger slightly calmed when she heard Han Shuo's words. Somewhat puzzled, she asked, "What do you mean?"

"That is to say, you are just one of my women. Not only are you not the only one, but our relationship also can't be made public. It's still greatly useful for me if Helon Duchy remains as part of the seven grand duchies. However, I will consolidate the practical power of Helon Duchy in your hands, so you can keep governing Helon Duchy. What do you think?" Han Shuo explained.

Helen Tina quickly considered the pros and cons. She knew full well that the kind of man like Han Shuo simply couldn't be tied down by any woman. Of course, she also didn't think that she could tame him into docility. Therefore, although the first condition made her vaguely uncomfortable, she could still accept it for the bigger picture.

As for the second condition, after Helen Tina's train of thought reached its natural conclusion, she was immediately terrified. She herself was the grand duke of Helon Duchy. Being able to climb up to this position as a woman, she was naturally no fool. What did it mean for Helon Duchy alone to remain among the seven grand duchies? It was as clear as day to Helen Tina that Han Shuo had a desire, an ambition that spanned all seven grand duchies!

If there was one duchy in the seven grand duchies that rebelled secretly, it would definitely play a crucial role. This could change a war's status almost immediately, and help Han Shuo achieve his ambition. As her thoughts reached this point, Helen Tina's gaze at Han Shuo was somewhat different.

A man with ambition was always attractive to women. It was even more deadly for the women if this man possessed the strength to match that ambition. Especially to a woman who was unwilling to live a mediocre life like Helen Tina, this kind of temptation was even greater. Therefore, the more Helen Tina looked at Han Shuo, the more she found him pleasing to the eyes. The more she looked, the more outstanding he seemed.

"Helen, Helen!" The fire phoenix next to Helen Tina saw her stare dumbly at Han Shuo, her eyes sparkling with a brilliant light that made the former feel somewhat embarrassed. Helen Tina's gaze was clearly revealing lust, the unique feature of a boy crazy girl.

"What, big sister Firewind?" Helen Tina was startled. She looked to the fire phoenix, somewhat surprised.

"Eh, nothing!" The fire phoenix saw that Han Shuo didn't say anything else, so she coughed lightly to cover up her slip.

However, Helen Tina had been with the fire phoenix for many years already. Upon seeing the fire phoenix's expression, Helen Tina immediately recalled her behavior just now. She suddenly reacted fiercely, her face flushed red as she glared hatefully at Han Shuo, saying, "I can agree to your conditions, but how can you stabilize Helon Duchy?"

"Very easy. I'll just announce to everyone that the only that happened



last time when I captured was exhorting gold coins, and that I definitely didn't violate you or develop a relationship with you. Those rumors were just because my subordinates love to shoot off their mouths with their own speculations. Eh, this is actually the truth as well. It wasn't me who spread these vicious news."

"Other people may not believe if you say these things. But if they come from me, a fair portion of people will believe them. Anyhow, this isn't a bad thing to Brettel City either as it can even help raise the morale of the Brettel soldiers. So if it was the truth, I would have actually admitted to it with my personality."

"Of course, there will be people who won't believe. Your Helon Duchy will certainly have those people. However, I can just help you take care of those aristocrats who dare to resist. Bloodshed forges a solid regime, and you obviously understand this principle. You don't have to worry too much." Han Shuo leisurely explained.

"It really wasn't you who spread that news?" Helen Tina furrowed her brows in thought for a while after Han Shuo finished speaking before she looked at him.

Han Shuo shrugged as he gave her a wry smile, "It really wasn't me. I'm not that bored!"

"I don't believe you. I know how despicable and insidious you are!" Helen Tina said with resentment. Then, she suddenly thought better of it, saying, "Aren't you afraid that I'd run away? That after I use you, I will join the alliance to destroy Brettel City?"

"I certainly am, so I too have a condition!" Han Shuo laughed wickedly.

Helen Tina had a bad premonition when she saw Han Shuo laugh. She gingerly asked, "What condition?"

"Heh heh, I want your body first!" Han Shuo swept his lecherous eyes up and down Helen Tina's enchantingly curving body. He named the condition without the slightest bit of shame.

"No! You, you demon! Absolutely not! No!" Helen Tina had had a feeling

that Han Shuo's words would be unpleasant, but she still panicked and found it unacceptable when she officially heard his shameless condition.

"Helen, don't agree to it. He's just a liar!" The fire phoenix furiously said.

"If you don't agree, then this matter is over. You pay me the gold coins, and I'll leave this place. From now on, we'll be meeting each other across the battlefield." Han Shuo shrugged indifferently, seemingly not caring too much about Helen Tina's body, as if he wasn't the same person who'd just lecherously eyed her up and down.

For some unknown reason, Helen Tina felt her heart clench when she heard Han Shuo say they'd be meeting on the battlefield. Just thinking about that possibility gave her a feeling of discomfort. This kind of feeling made her extremely uncomfortable, but she didn't know why it was actually happening.

End of part one of the chapter.

Helen Tina gritted her teeth in silence for a while, before raising her head to glare resentfully at Han Shuo. She said with determination, "I agree, but only after you help me get rid of all of the hidden troubles in Helon Duchy. Otherwise, this matter is over here and now!"

"No problem. Haha, the beauty has personally sent herself to my door with a duchy as the dowry. Only a fool would refuse this toast!" Han Shuo was smug as his laughter echoed into the sky. He hadn't expected to stumble upon such an unexpected harvest on this trip to the seven grand duchies. It seemed that the evil bunch of Chester, Dick, and the others who'd spread those vicious rumors had done him a great favor. Women are truly a strange creature; their hearts were fickle indeed!

As Han Shuo and Helen Tina were talking, the miserable, tragic screams around them also gradually stopped. As he turned his head to look, Han Shuo found that none of the rebels, including Ferrodias, had escaped from the savage claws of the great undead army. All of them had fallen, corpses doomed to eternal silence.

But the surrounding area was a little bloody. With a beauty right next to him, Han Shuo felt that the scenery didn't look too good. He took out the

skeletal staff and chanted out a quick incantation, causing the group of undead creatures to slowly fade away.

“Alright. Let’s first leave this place and see if the army still heeds your command.” Han Shuo smiled at Helen Tina and said.

“Rest assured. Not everyone in my army is like that bastard Ferrodias. My family guards definitely won’t betray me, that I can guarantee!” Helen Tina said proudly.

Han Shuo actually believed this. From the moment he’d set foot into the seven grand duchies. Han Shuo already knew a little about Helen Tina’s situation. Her family clan was the largest aristocratic clan in the Helon Duchy, holding the majority of control over Helon Duchy’s soldiers. Otherwise, she would long have been overthrown by the rebels.

To Helen Tina’s clan, only with Helen Tina herself in the position of grand duke could the benefits of the clan be maintained. Once Helen Tina fell, her family clan would naturally suffer the consequences. Helen Tina understood this fact clearly, which was why she’d given various positions of power in the Helon Duchy to her family members. As such, she’d been able to sustain her position until now despite being opposed by the people and a minority of the aristocrats.

The seven great dukes of the seven grand duchies all followed the same practice. Once they successfully climbed in their positions of power, they would spare no effort to let their family members take over the important positions of the duchy. The benefit was that the power and benefits would remain concentrated in their family clan even when some domestic aristocrats opposed them. In addition, they could rely on the virtue of clan power to pressure those aristocrats. However, the incredible disadvantage was that not all of the trusted clan members was talented. If they held power in the duchy with mediocre ability, then not only was it impossible to fully exploit the potential of the duchy’s territory, the national strength would also gradually be exhausted.

“Alright, no need to be arrogant in front of me. If you don’t even have this little bit of ability, you aren’t fit to be my woman!” Han Shuo sent a

verbal jab at Helen Tina. Turning his attention to the fire phoenix, he frowned. The fire phoenix's entire body was powerless after being struck by the magic arrow. "The poisoned magic arrow broke off inside her body. This'll be a little troublesome."

"My body is only a little weak right now. With my race's natural healing ability, it'll only take a few days to recover!" The fire phoenix angrily said. Evidently, she hadn't adapted to Han Shuo's new identity, and her attitude was still unfriendly. After all, she had been putting her heart and mind into killing Han Shuo to take revenge for Helen Tina until today. Who would have expected that there'd be such a dramatic turn of events? This super rank magic creature had yet to fully accept the situation.

"No need to make such a fuss. You can't be my burden right now!" Han Shuo walked straight to the fire phoenix and firmly pulled out the broken magic arrow without caring about her pain. Afterwards, his left hand firmly held her body down despite her struggling and he placed his right hand on the wound.

The effect from the poisoned magic arrow had weakened her enough that her feeble struggling couldn't shake of Han Shuo's hands. A powerful suction force radiated through her body through Han Shuo's big hand. The poison overflowing her body quickly flowed out through the wound under the power of the force.

The poison in her body flowed into Han Shuo's palm that was touching her wound. As her previously suppressed power was gradually restored, the fire phoenix understood that Han Shuo was helping her, and she no longer trembled her feathers. Her struggling body gradually quieted down, her blazing feathers once again recovering their luster.

When Han Shuo let go, the fire phoenix once again felt her power overflowing. She happily let out a high pitched chirp and flapped her wings to shoot up into the sky, starting to swoop around joyously.

"Big sister Firewind, is, is she okay?" Helen Tina was very pleasantly surprised. Her eyes that looked at Han Shuo carried a somewhat different meaning, her body also involuntarily moving closer to Han Shuo.

Nodding, Han Shuo flipped his palm and flicked a pile of stinking blood on the ground. He then casually replied, "I've sucked out the poison in her body. You see her skipping and jumping around like that, does she look anywhere near injured?"

"Alright, consider it as us owing you a favor, thank you!" Helen Tina very reluctantly thanked Han Shuo. She was also a little apprehensive about the miracle he'd just worked. She was very clear about his astounding strength, but he shouldn't be a priest nor an alchemist. But even priests and alchemists didn't seem to have such a miraculous ability!

In the Profound Continent, once poison entered the blood, no priests nor alchemists could easily suck it out like Han Shuo had done. To Helen Tina, this was something incredibly miraculous. She suddenly felt glad about her decision, thinking how fortunate she was to avoid becoming the mortal enemy of this person. Otherwise, it would have brought about irreversible disaster to the Helon Duchy.

Taking advantage of Helen Tina's surprise, Han Shuo quickly reached out to caress her pretty, silky smooth, warm cheek. Helen Tina's pretty face looked shocked as she turned to face him. Enjoying the delightful smoothness of her skin, Han Shuo smiled gallantly and said, "We're already family, so why act polite?"

Helen Tina jolted out of her silent pondering and suddenly reacted. She flung her head back in alarm and retreated a few steps back. She glared hatefully at Han Shuo, saying, "We are not a family yet. You, behave, or I won't be polite!"

"Oh? Okay, I'd like to see how you'll be impolite!" Han Shuo paid no heed to Helen Tina's threat and stalked towards her. He found it somewhat interesting to tease this proud and arrogant grand duke.

"Bryan, can you stop acting like that? We need to have a proper discussion about the internal affairs of my duchy." Helen Tina changed tacks like the breeze, using a fatigued, weak voice to persuade Han Shuo upon seeing him approach.

Helen Tina knew full well that it was simply impossible to stop Han

Shuo head on with her power. Han Shuo's shocking strength was powerful as that of a demon god. She had almost lost the will to resist. Helen Tina was already considering this man as her greatest support. He might just be able to give her everything she needed. Subconsciously, Helen Tina had long since admitted defeat, which finally dawned on her when she saw Han Shuo draw near.

Han Shuo was startled. He looked closely at Helen Tina. At this moment, the weak Helen also had a kind of charm that roused an inexplicable pity in him. He didn't continue to aggressively approach her, but instead abruptly stopped his steps and said with a smile, "Then forget it. Let's talk about your duchy's affairs!"

"Ferrodias is just one of my senior knights. I'm absolutely sure he wouldn't have the guts to betray me without someone to encourage him. Humph! Currently in the duchy, only Marquis Kekaru hold the advantage in taking my place. He's always been impatiently waiting in the shadows, so I reckon he's prepared to strike a fatal blow to push me off the political stage. I dare say for sure that he is the person pulling the strings behind the scenes." Killing intent flashed in Helen Tina's bright eyes as she bit off her words.

"Very good. Now that we know who it is, I'll come to Helon Duchy with you, and kill all of those traitors, so they will never have the chance to even foster the idea of rebelling against you." Said Han Shuo coldly.

# Chapter 360: Receiving some benefits

When Han Shuo and Helen returned to the army station, it was just as she had said—her family's trusted aides were completely oblivious to Ferrodias' actions. He'd obviously been acting in his interest, and Helen's actions were written off as arresting and suitably punishing him.

Ferrodias' original plan was to capture and bring Helen to Marquis Kekaru of Helon Duchy. After Helen, the pillar of her family's army, disappeared, Kekaru would be able to defeat the Helon Duchy's army and become the duke with Benedict Sackville's backing.

After Han Shuo and Helen returned to the stationed army, they didn't openly appear before the army. That was mostly because Han Shuo had plenty of methods to privately meet Helen.

After dealing with Ferrodias, Helen began traveling back to the nearby Helon Duchy. She had prepared her cover story of being attacked by assassins on her way back. Because no one except her people had survived, the news of the revolt hadn't been divulged.

The next day, Han Shuo stealthily followed the army troops back to Helon Duchy. The Helon Duchy was as powerful as a province in Lancelot Empire. It too had five cities and more than ten different sized towns. Helon City acted as the capital city of Helon Duchy, located in the center of the duchy. The other four cities were each owned by the four marquises, although one was still reeling from their marquis' death at Helen Tina's hands during the previous civil unrest.

Marquis Kekaru was the lord of Seagate City, one of the four cities of Helon Duchy. Although he hadn't revealed any intentions of revolting during the previous unrest, he'd suddenly decided to rebel this time. This person had apparently waited patiently for the perfect moment for a long while now.

Han Shou and Helen returned to the Helon Duchy together. Along the way, Helen gathered her private army, totaling thirty thousand troops, Helon Duchy's most elite cavalry regiment, and all led by Helen's most

trusted family aides.

Seagate City was an unavoidable stop on the road back to Helon Duchy. After marching for two days, Helen's army finally approached its gates.

Since Helen was a woman and a famous fire archmage, she had always stayed within a spacious and luxurious chariot pulled by four war-horses.

At this moment, apart from Helen, an additional person, Han Shuo, had appeared in the chariot as well. Within the spacious chariot was a soft rug that felt amazingly comfortable to step on. There was also some blush, powder, alongside some fresh fruits that sparkled on top of a small shelf.

Helen lazily leaned into her seat and looked at the relaxed Han Shuo before saying, "Seagate City is Kekaru's territory. This cunning fox has always hidden his intentions in the past. Although I know he has done damnable things, I never could find an excuse to deal with him. Furthermore, he always has several experts protecting him. As long as he stays within Seagate City, it will not be easy for me to kill him."

"How many city guards are in Seagate City right now? If you returned now, would he dare open the city gates and let you enter?" Han Shuo casually asked Helen while rudely plucking a bunch of grapes from the side. While looking at Han Shuo's unperturbed attitude, Helen actually felt a comforting sense of security. It was as if she did not need to fear anything with this demon next to her.

"Although Seagate City has fifty thousand soldiers in total, only ten thousand of them are elite soldiers. The only way he can avoid outright battle is if he opens the city gates and welcomes me. Even though I can easily suppress him after entering Seagate City, I don't have any evidence that Ferrodias' revolt was secretly incited by him. If I act against him without any justifiable cause, I'm afraid the citizens and the nobles will raise a fuss." Helen lightly wrinkled her eyebrows, annoyance seeping into her tone.

Only after Han Shuo plucked the last grape off the bunch and wiped his hands on the expensive rug did he reply, "Simple. As long as I kill Marquis Kekaru and all of his successors, you can use the excuse of finding the



killer to take control of Seagate City.” Han Shuo continued, “Hehe, you are the duchess of Helon Duchy and you even have thirty thousand elite soldiers at your beck and call. As such, this is the logical move for you. Oh, by the way, you can also randomly arrange some people at the scene to falsely accuse your enemies of killing Kekaru. This will definitely hurt your enemies. Hm, in fact, I think Benedict Sackville of Narsen Duchy is a particularly viable candidate. What do you think?”

After being embroiled in Helon Duchy’s power struggle for all these years, Helen was well versed in scheming. Thus, after listening to Han Shuo’s suggestion, she smiled sweetly and nodded before replying, “Precisely my thoughts. As long as Kekaru and his heirs all die, I can justifiably allow my trusted aides to take control of Seagate City. Hehe, I already have the perfect candidate in mind. I already had this kind of a plan in motion during the previous civil unrest, it’s just that the assassins I sent were unable to complete their missions. But since you’re here this time, it will definitely be a success.

As expected from such a vicious woman. As soon as the discussion moved to this sort of topic, Han Shuo noticed a dazzling light shining from her eyes. Her mouth curved into a sweet smile that could seduce and arouse any man’s heart. Even Han Shuo felt a slight tug on his heart.

When this sort of woman hated a guy, they would try to bring about their death regardless of what cost they had to pay. However, when this sort of woman truly fell in love with a man, they would be willing to abandon everything just to be there for her man.

Han Shuo stared at Helen. Perhaps Helen didn’t hate him so much anymore, but he also knew that Helen was still not helping him wholeheartedly. Only when he thoroughly conquered her would she become a truly sharp weapon in his hands. Otherwise, he would only be harming himself.

To make such a person submit, both your body and mind was necessary to make her surrender. It was a long and hard battle for Han Shuo to have realized the importance of this. Only in this way could he influence her heart and slowly make her his vassal. One of the best examples of this was

Emily.

Thinking about this, Han Shuo lightly laughed and moved his face close to Helen who was lazily leaned backwards. As Helen's face paled in panic, Han Shuo suddenly pulled Helen on top of his thighs and rudely kissed her bright red lips, completely ignoring her will.

A very seductive fragrance entered Han Shuo's nose from Helen's body. This fragrance caused Han Shuo to become uncontrollably engrossed, just like how an alcoholic would be lost in the most excellent of wine. To his credit, Han Shuo did not actually kiss her without restraint. After a light kiss on Helen's intoxicatingly red lips, he chuckled and released Helen. Then, laughing at Helen's charmingly flushed face, he said, "I lost control of myself because you're just too mesmerizing. Haha. Since I will have to take care of your enemies soon, I should at least get such a benefit right?"

"You..... You perverted bastard! You just stole a kiss!!" Blushing hotly, Helen scrambled off his thighs and glared fiercely at Han Shuo. Originally, she wanted to rush towards Han Shuo and get revenge, but remembering that he was a tiger in lamb's clothing, she could only fiercely throw a crystal cup towards Han Shuo in a fit of rage.

He leisurely snatched the crystal cup out of the air. Cup in hand, Han Shuo leisurely poured out some wine and walked towards Helen hiding at the corner of the carriage, grinning, "Here, accept this cup of wine as an apology from me. Heh, as you know, I'm but a normal man while you are such a mesmerizing beautiful woman. It's a miracle that I didn't do anything else to you while riding in such a carriage. You better not anger me now!"

Being told off by Han Shuo like this, Helen felt her heart tremble as she angrily glared at Han Shuo. Even her slender white neck was starting to flush red. But in reality, being praised as a mesmerizing beautiful woman by Han Shuo made her a little happy. Since she would become his sooner or later, giving him some benefits in advance wouldn't hurt.

"Fine, take it as I've forgiven you for now, but you can't be so unruly in the future, especially when there are other people around!" Helen

hatefully glared at Han Shuo for a moment. In the end, she obediently picked up the wine cup and took a sip in defeat.

“Of course, when others are around, you are the goddess of Helon Duchy!” Han Shuo promised Helen first, and then said laughingly, “But when it’s only the two of us, you will be freely assaulted by me!”

“Humph!” Helen glared at Han Shuo for a moment and then seriously said, “Alright, you’ve kissed me and got what you wanted. Soon we will be entering the city and perhaps, Kekaru will even be entering the carriage to welcome me. So, shouldn’t you be leaving now?”

“No problem, I’ll leave right now!” Han Shuo answered with a laugh. Suddenly, Han Shuo appeared next to Helen like lightning and licked her neck before lightly praising her as he walked away, “So fragrant!”

A burst of mist slowly floated out of the carriage without alerting a single imperial guard nearby. As the mist slowly scattered due to a breeze, Han Shuo had already disappeared without a trace.

Left behind the carriage was a Helen whose white neck had just been violated by Han Shuo before he left. A constant burning sensation kept coming from her violated neck, causing her heart to tremble and her face to blush. In annoyance, she could only spit on the floor and lightly say to herself, “This damned brat! He really is a damned pervert. I really don’t know if I can deal with him until after he has taken care of my enemies. Ai, meeting him has really put me at my wit’s end. How annoying!”

A few minutes later, Helen’s army troops slowly stopped in front of Seagate City. A sentinel had already alerted Seagate City of her arrival beforehand. Thus, Marquis Kekaru, who was within the city, should’ve received the news of her arrival.

At this time, Kekaru was in a small building in front of the city gate. He had a dark expression on his face as he listened attentively to his trusted aides who talked unceasingly, remaining silent himself.

He was attired in noble robes, and was of noble stature. His gray sideburns give him away as past his prime. Clearly, he did not have an outstanding appearance. But his outward appearance hid a pair of

calculative eyes that seemed like he never ceased pondering.

“Sir Marquis, Ferrodias has died and the plan has most likely failed. Right now, you can be considered the biggest threat to the duke of Helon Duchy. Furthermore, that vicious bitch has never concerned herself with sentimentalism and likely knows that you are the instigator. You must not let her into the city, otherwise, we will definitely die as part of a bloody revenge.” The Seagate City administrator did his best to persuade the marquis.

“Yes father, this bitch is famous for her viciousness. If her elite army enters the city, our army will have no way of suppressing her. We can only borrow Seagate City’s defensive strength to stall and prevent her from entering the city. During that time, we can ally with other nobles before finally entering an official war.” Kekaru’s son, Kesega, was clad in luminous knight armor and did his best to persuade Kekaru as well. Nevertheless, Kekaru remained wordless as he walked back and forth while his eyeballs darted to and fro. It seemed that even he had become extremely anxious, losing his typical decisive nature.

“Father, hurry and make a decision. They will be arriving soon.” As the time ticked away, Kesega anxiously reminded him again after seeing Kekaru remain silent.

After a long silence, Kekaru deeply exhaled and said, “Open the gates and come welcome the duke with me. You guys cannot make any mistakes whatsoever!”

“Sir Marquis. This could cost us our lives!” The administrator hurriedly protested in fear.

“Don’t worry, even if she knows it was me, she doesn’t have any proof. Hmph! I’ve been in charge of Seagate city for so many years; both nobles and citizens support me. If she dares act against me without evidence, the citizens will not approve of her. You don’t need to worry, she shouldn’t dare openly take any action against me. But, if she still decides to use assassins like last time, we only need to be more vigilant and it will still be fine.”

“Furthermore, the time is not yet ripe for us to rebel. We could suffer a huge loss to the family forces she holds in her hand, and there’s no certainty we will come out victorious. But even if we do come out victorious, the conflict will just weaken Helon Duchy even further, and we’ll become the weakest among the seven Grand Duchies. Instead of such a result, we should continue controlling Seagate City and wait for a better opportunity.” Kekaru said to the two people.

After thinking about what Kekaru said, the two, although still unwilling, knew that his analysis was reasonable. Furthermore, knowing how futile it would be for anyone to try and change Kekaru’s decisions due to his decisive nature, they did not continue trying to persuade him.

# Chapter 361: Massacre

Helen's entourage smoothly entered Seagate City with a warm welcome from Kekaru, and was brought to a manor at the southern end of the city.

Along the way, Helen's charming face was darkened and unhappy. Previously when Helen had come to Seagate, the citizens who had heard the news would crowd and crane their heads for a tiny peek at her face. However this time round, apart from Kekaru's men, the road was only sparsely filled with citizens. These people only viewed her carriage from far away, not showing any signs of respect. This made Helen feel uncomfortable inside.

After properly arranging her personal guard at the manor, Helen declined Kekaru's offer of a banquet in her honor, citing tiredness. She feared that Kekaru would assassinate her in his own castle. She was afraid of Kekaru's schemes. Just like her, Kekaru was not a benevolent person. It was entirely possible that he would take action at the banquet.

On the other hand, Helen also didn't want to endure the inevitable unfriendly gazes at the banquet. She'd had enough of these looks of disdain. However, she couldn't kill them just because of their hidden looks of disdain.

This manor was where Kekaru received distinguished guests. It had a large area that was surrounded by Helen's thirty thousand strong personal guard. Helen was in the center of the area and was safe enough to sleep peacefully. The full moon slowly appeared in the night sky. At the door of a central luxurious and spacious room, ten guards stood tensely on duty. In the room, Helen was endlessly worrying alone.

Without any wind, the window voluntarily opened, and a cloud of grey fog suddenly flew in front of Helen. The fog stopped whirling when the window shut, revealing Han Shuo's figure.

"You're here!" Helen gathered her scattered thoughts, raising her head to glance at Han Shuo. She softly muttered, "Kekaru has always wanted to remove me from my position as Duke. He previously wanted me to marry

his son Kasega but I declined. His Seagate City has always not fully obeyed my orders. If it wasn't for me trying to prevent Helon Duchy from falling into turmoil, I would have long since acted against him, and not resorted to employing assassins."

"I'll make a trip there tonight. I'll help you handle him!" Han Shuo calmly looked at Helen, as though he had just uttered a simple and common thing.

"If it's possible, I want to work with you. I want to personally end his life. This person was the one who murdered my mother. I hate him!" Helen was a little unusual today, speaking to Han Shuo with some viciousness.

Wrinkling his eyebrows, Han Shuo considered for a while before replying, "How about this. You stay here, I'll bring him over and let you kill him yourself." Han Shuo didn't probe the statement regarding Helen's mother. Everyone was sure to have a few memories that haunted them. Han Shuo believed this incident was definitely not a pleasant memory. At times, to respect someone's privacy was more moving than expressing respect on the surface.

Helen raised her head and deeply looked at Han Shuo, unclear if she had thought of something sad, her gaze a little frail. She laughed at herself, saying, "Thank you. In the end, I'm still a woman. Seems like I also need a man's shoulder to lean on. After all these years, I'm truly tired."

Smiling and nodding, Han Shuo tried walking toward Helen. When he realized Helen's gaze wasn't alert, he continued to walk towards her. When he reached her side, Han Shuo lightly embraced her. Feeling Helen's shivering body, Han Shuo patted her shoulder and gently said, "It's alright. I won't ask about your past, but I will bring Kekaru in front of you. You can exact the price for his sins then."

"Bryan, I don't know if I should hate you. When I came over today, none of the citizens came over to welcome me. It looks like they've already started to reject me in their hearts. The main cause of this was you, but for some reason I can't hate you. Why, Bryan, why can't I hate you?" Helen leaned softly against Han Shuo's shoulder, her voice a tired, weak whisper.

“Perhaps you should hate me, but if you always listen to me, not only will I not let you hate me, I’ll help you gradually be happy again. I promise!” Han Shuo whispered in Helen’s ear, adding, “Alright, you should first rest for a while. To decrease your hatred of me, I’ll first start with Kekaru.”

Lightly pushing away Helen, who’d exposed her weakness in the quiet night, Han Shuo silently left the room like a ghost in the night, weightlessly floating toward Kekaru’s castle. To Han Shuo, his only prey was Helen. As long as Helen held the reins of Helon Duchy, he could covertly control Helon Duchy without wasting any men or resources. At an appropriate moment, this secretly traitorous Helon Duchy could become a hidden blade in the coalition army, bringing Han Shuo immense benefits.

Although Helen was the Duke of Helon Duchy, she was still a woman. The most reliable way to treat a woman was to conquer her heart. A man should be publicly overbearing in the day, but gentle and refined at night. They was equally lethal to a woman. Helen was of great use to Han Shuo. Hence, Han Shuo didn’t mind spending some time to thoroughly and securely have both her and her Duchy in his palm.

Deep in Kekaru’s castle was a secret room guarded zealously by soldiers. In that room were the three people from the morning, gathered again at night. “Father, that woman is staying in Seagate City. We must definitely kill her before she leaves. Otherwise, once she leaves, I’m afraid we won’t have another opportunity.” Kasega looked at his father Kekaru, once again proposing his idea.

“Lord Marquis, I’m afraid this is our only opportunity. If we really wait till she returns to Helon City, it would be hard for us to act even if we wanted to!” Administrator Mori similarly advised.

Kekaru’s eyes were still calculating as he replied to the both of them, “I also know that. However, she has thirty thousand elite troops by her side. Assassinating her is no easy feat.”

“Lord Father, she can’t always be hiding within her thirty thousand troops. We only need to find ways to make her leave their protection. It’s not difficult for us to kill her in Seagate City. We only need a reasonable



excuse.” Kasega replied.

“Lord, isn’t Young Master Kasega engaged to the Galileo Family’s Miss Lejeame? We can seize this opportunity to arrange their marriage in the next two days. With the Lord’s standing in the Duchy and with her being in Seagate City, she has no reason to not appear to express her congratulations. She can’t possibly bring her thirty thousand guards to the wedding banquet. As long as she comes, we’ll be able to kill her. What do you think of that?” Magistrate Mori’s eyes shone with maliciousness.

“Uncle Mori, this method isn’t bad!” Kasega smiled gladly, turning to Kekaru, “Father, what do you think?”

Kekaru’s eyes continued to spin in thought, only nodding after a while, saying “That could work. However, we have to be extra cautious, so I’m going to need to consider it more carefully. We can only act when we’re assured of success. This woman is not simple. We massacred her mother’s clan years ago, but she actually managed to escape. All these years, she’s clearly known that we were the culprits, but she’s never showed it. This calculating shrewdness is something no normal youngster would possess.”

“Hmph. I want to kill her the way the Lord Father killed her mother. This woman doesn’t give us face, going as far as rejecting my offer of marriage. And then she ended up being raped by an unknown brat. She brought that upon herself! What’s the use of a woman in such a high position? A guy still rode her in the end!” Kasega was still brooding over Helen’s rejection, and ridiculed her viciously.

“Capturing her is enough. We can’t touch her. I’ve promised Benedict Sackville to immediately hand Helen over once we captured her. After all, the thirty thousand family troops aren’t easy to handle. We still need to rely on Benedict Sackville’s help.” Kekaru reminded Kasega.

“Lord Father, I can still fool around right? It’s not even her first time anymore. Even when she reaches Benedict Sackville’s hands, he also won’t be able to tell! This woman has always been like a goddess high above, and I’ve long since wanted to sample the feeling of riding her. Lord Father, please allow me to taste this feeling!” Kasega seemed to be imagining the

scene of Helen being conquered by him as he pleaded with Kekaru.

Kekaru was still extremely doting on his only son. He also knew that after Helen had rejected Kasega, his son had toyed three maids to death before calming down. He hesitated a moment, before nodding, "Fooling around is possible. However, after that you must erase that memory. If not, once Benedict Sackville finds out, it would be bad. We still need to deal with that person in the future."

"Thank you father, thank you father! Haha. I've been wanting to ride that bitch for a long time!" Kasega smiled deviously and chuckled. Hints of obscene violence slowly grew in his face. Administrator Mori licked his lips, similarly forcing a few laughs as he itched on the inside. However, he knew there were things he couldn't touch. Hence, he naturally didn't dare to state any presumptuous requests.

As the three vicious vile characters were imagining a better future for them, a crisp abnormal sound suddenly came from under their feet. This secret room was underground, its perimeter reinforced with thick iron plates, impervious to the attack of blades, swords or magic. It was the safe haven where Kekaru discussed his evil plans.

Logically speaking, there shouldn't be such abnormal sounds echoing with the thick iron plates beneath their feet. Therefore, when that abnormal sound appeared, the three despicable people were stunned for a while, all of them looking dumbfoundedly at the ground. However, before they reacted, the previously soft abnormal sound suddenly amplified. The three of them were shocked. Kekaru was the first to react, shouting, "Assassins!"

With this shout, Kekaru was the first to rush toward the opening mechanism, trying to alert the surrounding guards. Kasega took out a knight's saber, focusing all his attention under his feet, ready to deal a fatal blow to anyone coming from below.

Clang!

An arc shaped disc violently burst through the ground with an ear piercing sound. The disc was extremely thick, and was obviously the iron

plate that protected their feet. At the same time, a figure dashed out of the circular hole in the ground.

Kasega gave a loud shout, his sword piercing towards Han Shuo, who'd used the Demonslayer Edge to cut open a large hole with much difficulty. Han Shuo had wasted more than ten minutes using the all-conquering Demonslayer Edge to cut a hole in the iron plate, inwardly cursing the designer of the building. He wielded the Demonslayer Edge to parry the attack.

With a spate of clear clangs and bangs, Kasega's knight saber was turned into scrap iron. One of Kasega's arms had gone the course of his saber and turned into bloody minced meat. As Kasega screamed in horror, Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge was suddenly flung out, pinning Kekaru's outstretched left hand to the wall. He'd run to the mechanism with much difficulty and had wanted to shout for help. The Demonslayer Edge was firmly embedded into the wall, continuing to pin his left hand to the wall, a distance from the mechanism.

"Damn it, who are you? Who let you in?!" Kekaru looked at Han Shuo, shouting miserably. His left hand was pinned on the wall by the Demonslayer Edge, fresh blood trickling downward in streams. The heart wrenching pain made Kekaru want to cry.

"My hand, my hand, ahhh...." Kasega's right arm was completely torn to pieces. Currently it looked like a skinned and sharpened slice of pineapple, streams of blood dripping from the meridians, gruesome beyond belief.

"Bloody hell, a birdface like you wants to encroach on my woman?!" Han Shuo snorted, ignoring the howls of the father and son duo. Walking to the front of the frightened administrator, he grinned as he asked, "Apart from old Kekaru's three sons, five daughters and forty seven assorted relatives in this castle, are there any others that have the qualifications to succeed his position as marquis?"

"N, no!" Magistrate Mori looked at the grinning Han Shuo, his fear causing him to shiver uncontrollably. After answering while trembling, he

cowardly kneeled before Han Shuo, crying, "This is nothing to do with me, don't kill me. I am innocent."

"Ok. Looks like we shouldn't have missed out on anyone." Han Shuo muttered to himself. Grabbing the administrator's neck with one hand, he said, "The deadly trap you just displayed is extremely interesting. I'm afraid that people like you are the most scary, I can't spare your life!" Han Shuo twisted his hand after he finished this sentence, making a clear crack ring out. The administrator, his back to Kekaru, hadn't shifted his position, but he was now facing Kekaru with an agonized wail on his face. It was apparent his neck had been broken.

# Chapter 362: Sinking into depravity

“You...who are you?! Don’t hurt us, we’ll give you anything you want!” Kekaru implored Han Shuo, trying to ignore the excruciating pain from his left hand.

“Heh heh, nope. You don’t have the means of giving me what I want!” Han Shuo casually responded, his hand forcing Kesega down on the floor. Kesega was in so much pain, he had long forgotten his delusional fantasies with Helen. Looking at Han Shuo’s hand pressing down, he felt a great force pushing down on him, leaving him incapable of moving a single step.

“Don’t.... Don’t kill me!” Kesega was paralyzed, and could only beg for forgiveness.

Pfft! Han Shuo’s hand grazed Kesega’s head. Magical yuan emitted from his hand burrowed into Kesega’s head, turning it into paste. His body slumped to the ground, now just a boneless mass of flesh.

Han Shuo walked to Kekaru’s side. Ignoring his screaming, he smiled, “Apart from you, your entire clan is dead. Although, you’re pretty lucky. I won’t kill you.”

“Fiend! You fiend, what grudge do you have against me!? Why are you doing this to me?” Kekaru blanched when he heard of his clan member’s deaths. He ignored the pain in his left hand and tore it free of the wall, charging at Han Shuo. He was consumed by the urge to at least land a couple of blows on Han Shuo.

Han Shuo focused his mental strength and cast a Soul Tremor spell. A stabbing pain exploded in Kekaru’s head before he could do more than take a few steps in Han Shuo’s direction. Dizzy from the pain, he stumbled forward a few steps before succumbing to the agony and passing out.

The Demonslayer Edge, still stuck in Kekaru’s left hand, flew into Han Shuo’s hand of its own volition. Scooping up the unconscious Kekaru, he dived back into the gaping hole in the ground, once again entering the depths of the earth.

If someone excavated the ground right now, they'd discover numerous tunnels meeting and separating across the city. Each of the tunnels opened up next to the various relatives of Marquis Kekaru living in the castle. Not a single relative was spared.

This intricate tunnel network extended several meters down into the ground. Even with several hundred people working on it, it would still require around 10 days to complete. The castle contained many of Kekaru's personal guard, as well as a number of mages. Under normal circumstances, the tunnels would immediately be discovered as soon as anyone heard suspicious sounds from beneath the earth. Obviously, some of these things could not be explained using common sense. As Han Shuo made his way through the tunnels, the tunnels collapse under the pressure of the earth. Once Han Shuo left, there were no traces in the ground beneath the castle that a tunnel had ever existed, let alone that intricate network.

The dark night was lit by moonlight, streaming down like mercury. Under the light caress of the evening breeze, Han Shuo easily slipped into Helen's mansion. He released a black fog magic as he did so, shrouding himself in a black mantle. Even the moonlight had been completely obscured.

Helen was alone in the residence, not knowing why she was starting to worry about Han Shuo. This kind of feeling bothered Helen. She had never been worried about the safety of a man before, especially a man that should have been the target of her hate. However, she had no way of controlling her internal emotions. Knowing what Han Shuo was attempting, she became more agitated every minute and every second that Han Shuo was gone, fearing that Han Shuo wouldn't be able to return safely.

"Please don't run into any trouble!" Helen muttered, with her eyebrows furrowed and a worried expression on her face. The room lights had long been extinguished. Helen stood near the window, staring off in the direction Han Shuo left. The moonlight played across Helen's white skin, seeming cold and desolate. It was a moving sight, and birthed pity in the

heart of anyone who was watching.

When the black fog magic neared the mansion, Helen first felt the moonlight disappear. Looking around, the corners of Helen's lips lifted. Giving a soft laugh of joy, she opened the window wider, and took a few steps back. When Helen opened the window, the breeze blew in a cloud of gray dust. The window silently closed, and a gray figure gradually materialized.

"Are you alright?" Helen didn't ask Han Shuo whether Kekaru had been killed, but first inquired about Han Shuo's condition. It seemed that, in the depths of Helen's heart, Han Shuo's safety was more important than whether Kekaru lived or died.

When he heard these words, Han Shuo noticed the change in attitude she had towards him. His heart unconsciously growing warm, he smiled and gently said, "Thank you for your concern. I'm alright."

The upper portion of his left hand that was carrying Kekaru was already frozen by the cold air currents. Not a single drop of blood had been spilled, nor would the smell of blood permeate the room. Not even a hair of evidence would be left behind.

Having finished speaking, Han Shuo fully reformed, carrying Kekaru. Helen immediately saw the unconscious Kekaru. Helen's eyes, so warm when looking at Han Shuo, gradually filled with an unfathomable hate when looking at Kekaru. She said, "I've finally gotten my hands on you, old dog!"

Giving Helen a meaningful look, Han Shuo carried Kekaru to a room further inside the mansion. Casually throwing him into the room, Han Shuo cast a silencing spell around the area. Having cast the spell, he said to the murderously cold Helen "Alright, you can wake him now. Kill him slowly, I'll stand guard outside."

Perhaps it was because Helen had been suppressing her hate for so long, having waited for several years, that she didn't say a word to Han Shuo with her nemesis at her fingertips. Wearing an icy expression on her face, Helen entered the room that once served as a storage room. When the

door slammed shut, Han Shuo didn't spare energy on eavesdropping. He casually walked over to where Helen was sitting before, and took out another cup of wine. Pouring himself a full glass, he sipped the fine wine as he pulled out a thick necromancy book, immersing himself in study.

Apart from the spell "Plague", Han Shuo had already mastered all of the spells that an arch needed to know. His mental strength was already at the level of a grand magus, and he spent all his time studying the art of summoning creatures from the underworld.

Old fey zombies, mummy lords, and bone demons. These three creatures could all be controlled by archmages, though their more advanced summoning techniques differed slightly. When Han Shuo was summoning, a contract was often made with immediately after summoning. As a result, Han Shuo could easily summon them into this world.

When summoned, these kinds of low-level creatures didn't have the ability to resist, arriving at Han Shuo's whim, not knowing to think whether to go or not. Starting from evil knights, the summoning techniques became vastly different. Even if Han Shuo could feel the presence of the evil knights, he would have to expend a large amount of energy to crush their resistance. Only then would he be able to control their actions, using the power of a contract to summon them to this world.

Summoned creatures at the grand magus level all had their own consciousness. Their power was far greater than creatures of other levels. Even in the underworld, creatures of this level acted as ambitious overlords. At the very least, they would be loners that most inferior creatures did not dare disturb.

Not only did these creatures have their own will, but they were also haughty and arrogant. A simple contract wouldn't be able to bind them. It was exactly because of this that the summoning techniques for them were much more complicated and mysterious, including deep probes for spiritual power, in order to understand the temperament of the underworld's creatures.



Apart from this, when a contract was formed between a necromancer and an undead creature, the necromancer required sufficient strength in order to make the creature pledge its allegiance, otherwise they would have to deal with that creature's resistance.

During the process of resistance, the summoner had to use their energy to suppress the creature being summoned, as well as maintain the accuracy of the summoning ritual. Any mispronounced syllable or hand gesture was unacceptable. The interconnected energy patterns would fail and the backlash from the failed summoning would hit the summoner. It was highly likely that the summoned creature would then be trapped between two planes, forever unable to return.

Han Shuo was currently studying the details of each of the high-ranked undead creatures. The old fey zombie's claws and teeth were razor sharp, with nimble movements. Their body structure was similar to those of silver apes, though they were obviously smaller. However, the old fey zombie had the silver apes' sharp claws and teeth, and were just as fast.

The mummy lords were as strong as the stoutest rock. Laying in a coffin all day, their speed was poor, but they were strong. In addition, they were corrosive, capable of mixing a death aura with streamers in their bodies. As such, they were equally hard to fight against.

Bone demons were comprised entirely of large bones that were held together. Out of the three undead creatures, bone demons were the most unique of them all. Since their entire body were formed from bone, if the bones that formed them were strong and filled with death energy, then the power of the bone demon would be even more terrifying. In addition, they had excellent defensive properties against both physical and magical attacks.

If needed, the bone demon could also fire out the bones on its body. The force of these bone projectiles was terrifyingly high; a single projectile was enough to deal a fatal blow. After firing the projectiles, the bone demon could reattach the projectiles to its body. However, if the bones that made up the bone demon's body didn't contain a large amount of death energy, then the bone demon would be both slow and weak, and would be severely

injured by both physical and magical attacks. Bone demons could be big and strong, or they could be small and weak. As such, bone demons were the most variable amongst the three magical creatures.

However, Han Shuo knew that the bone demon modified with wings by the little skeleton would certainly be strong. It'd been rebuilt by the little skeleton with bones from the high ranking creature in the forbidden land, and contained a portion of the high-ranking magical creature's energy. Forged from these bones, the bone demon would absorb death energy at a faster pace in the other dimension. The creature could fly, which meant that it possessed sufficient intelligence to control gravity. Otherwise, that bit of rotting flesh on its bones wouldn't have allowed it to fly with such agility.

Han Shuo had grasped the characteristics of the three creatures, but the power of their souls were different. He was currently focused on the old fey zombies. He knew that he needed to find the right method of deploying his mental strength to ensure a response from an old fey zombie, in order to successfully use the contract to summon the creature.

Just as Han Shuo was studying the thick tome with furrowed brows, he suddenly heard a devastating scream that tore its way out of the room. The magical boundary suppressed it so that the guards couldn't hear, but Han Shuo caught every hint of it. He knew that this was the final agonizing wail that Kekaru had uttered before he died.

This was indeed the case, as Helen walked out a short while after with her hands covered in blood. She ran towards Han Shuo, sobs wracking her body as she held him tightly before he could prepare himself.

The sharp stench of blood and Helen's own fragrance wafted into his nostrils. He wasn't opposed to the smell, but didn't want the guards outside to detect it. He lifted up his left hand slightly and shut the open door. A vortex churned in his hand as it carefully sucked away the scent of blood. After a round of weeping, Helen finally calmed down, and the vortex had coalesced the stench of blood into a slowly rolling bloody pearl. It was still vibrating slightly as it sucked in all the scent of blood from Helen, not letting the slightest bit drift outside.

"I'm all better now. I'm sorry for getting you dirty!" Helen slowly pushed Han Shuo away and saw that she'd dirtied him all over with fresh blood. She apologized, as translucent tears still hung from her eyelashes.

"Don't worry about it. Why isn't Firewind by your side? She should be with you at this time!" Han Shuo had only just discovered that the usual omnipresent Firewind wasn't there, and asked in bafflement.

"Sister Firewind doesn't like it when there are too many humans around her. Unless there's something special, she won't appear when too many people are around. She's made her camp in the forests of the valley. I usually just call telepathically if I need her. Since you're with me, there's no danger to my being, so I didn't summon her." Helen explained.

"I see!" Han Shuo responded, then said, "I also have a super rank magical pet, but he's a dark dragon. That guy seems to love hanging out in crowds all day. In any case, the more the merrier! It seems that not all super rank magical creatures are the same."

"You even have a dark dragon!" Helen was astonished.

"Mm hmm, he's evolving into his second stage at the moment, so I put him somewhere safe." Han Shuo replied.

Helen looked at him, stunned and was about to express how amazing he was. She immediately thought of all the magical parts to him and felt that she didn't need to make a big deal of this bit. She suddenly saw that his chest was covered with blood, but was quickly distracted by the rotating, bloody pearl in his left hand. "What's this?"

"I don't want the scent of blood to spread beyond this room. I've coalesced them into a drop of blood." Han Shuo explained.

"You're an amazing person!" Helen still couldn't help but sigh with amazement, then pulled him by the hand to the bathroom. Her face reddened for some reason as she said lowly, "Why don't you wash the blood off yourself first? You're surely uncomfortable."

Han Shuo's heart lurched when Helen spoke thus, and when her smooth, boneless small hand tugged on his wrist, Han Shuo could feel the

sensuous beauty of her hand. Light started gleaming in his eyes as he looked at Helen with some more anticipation.

Kekaru's mansion for guests was exceedingly opulent. Helen's rooms alone were filled with more than ten room of various sizes. The powder room, bathroom, living room, bedroom, storage room, and laundry room were all present and decked out lavishly. Han Shuo's Brettel City castle was like a country farm when compared to this.

There was a wide, oval shaped bathing pool in the center of the bathroom. There was a small magic formation beneath it, with one Firespark Stone providing the heat. The water within the pool was maintained at a comfortable temperature, and Helen's face became redder and redder within the haziness of the water mist. She actually tenderly helped Han Shuo out of his clothes.

When Han Shuo's clothes had been taken off, his 190 centimeter tall body was the epitome of a perfect male body as it was fully revealed in front of Helen. Every inch of his skin and muscles were filled with explosive power, and he seemed to be a poised, vicious hunting beast even when standing at ease. His naked body gave others an overwhelmingly dominating ferocity.

Han Shuo's buff body encompassed a wild power and was reflected from Helen's eyes. When she took off the clothes on his lower body, she raised her head to look worshipfully at the towering man. She seemed to sink into a bottomless inescapable abyss.

"Is this demon-god like person to be my man in the future?" Helen murmured deeply in her heart, looking at Han Shuo with mesmerized eyes as she speechlessly stared at the spectacle before her.

# Chapter 363: Twelve Ubiquitous Shadows

As the completely naked Han Shuo looked down at Helen, who was looking back in a daze, Han Shuo revealed a grin that was as brilliant and bright as the sunshine. As he walked towards the middle of the pool, water began rippling outwards. The water wrapped itself around him as he started to clean his bloodstained body.

Only after hearing the splashing water sounds did Helen Tina wake up from her enraptured state and start scolding her weak will. After looking at Han Shuo's broad and healthy back, she shook her head, seemingly trying to scatter the detailed figure lingering in her mind. She smiled sweetly and said tenderly, "Alright, you should wash up first, I'll wait outside."

"Hehe, and here I was thinking that you would bathe with me. Well, if you actually come down, I promise I won't do a thing, alright?" Han Shuo turned his head and laughed brightly before suddenly teasing her with an invitation.

Helen grew flaming red, like she was intoxicated. She seriously considered what was just said before smiling tenderly, "No, I'm afraid I won't be able to control myself and directly jump into your arms. Hehe. Okay. Properly clean yourself first. I'll come back after you have properly cleaned yourself."

Han Shuo was momentarily startled. But because the sentence confirmed Han Shuo's charisma, he laughed out loud and happily said, "Alright, I'll wait for the day you truly set aside your modesty then!"

Helen threw her head back in a lovable laugh. For several months now, her heart had been covered in a depressing haze, but now it seems like she has finally pushed away the black clouds and allowed the rainbow within to spring forth. With an exceptionally happier mindset, she left behind a tinkling laugh, ringing through the air like a silver bell. After Helen left, Han Shuo stayed in the public bath, leisurely cleaning all the bloodstains off him. Afterwards, Helen switched with Han Shuo and began cleaning

herself as well.

Han Shuo sat crossed legged within the guest room, drinking a cup of good wine and reading his thick book of necromancy while waiting for Helen to change into a loose, comfortable bathrobe. Seeing Helen's amazingly beautiful appearance, as lovely as a lotus flower rising from the water, Han Shuo first smilingly gasped in praise. Then he waited for the corner of Helen's mouth to curve into a smile before finally sighing lightly, "Your Helon Duchy is currently rife with internal troubles, and is mostly likely the weakest power among the seven grand duchies. While you were originally allied with Benedict Sackville, it is most likely that he's the mastermind behind Kekaru's betrayal and has probably been interfering with your national affairs. But our first priority is the internal strife. The sooner we settle that, the less likely that we'll see any more negative developments."

Seeing Han Shuo bringing up this topic, Helen creased her eyebrows and lightly sighed before saying, "Even if this bout of internal strife never occurred, my Helon Duchy would still be the weakest among the seven duchies. We have limited resources within our national borders; our ores and rations are naturally lacking in comparison to the other dukedoms."

Over the past years, I have continuously traded our warhorses for rations from Narsen Duchy. I've also engaged in trade with the other duchies and the distant Brut Merchant Alliance for war materials. My nation was never destined to become prosperous from the start. Now, with the unceasing internal strifes as well, my Helon Duchy is really facing disaster after disaster. So when you blackmailed me out of six hundred gold coins, my grand and magnificent Helon Duchy was no more."

As if suddenly remembering Han Shuo's blackmailing, she hatefully eyed Han Shuo and heavily snorted with irritation after finishing her words.

Only after Han Shuo awkwardly forced a couple of laughs, did he open his mouth to say, "Honestly, if you hadn't become hostile with the Lancelot Empire and decided to use Brettel City as a hunting ground, the merchants of the Lancelot Empire would've completely solved your problems. Lancelot Empire has no means of getting warhorses, thus, if

your dukedom sold your valiant warhorses to them, you will definitely receive significant benefits in return.”

Han Shuo continued “Unfortunately, even those greedy merchants do not dare to rashly come here after the stories of massacres and raids on Brettel City. To those merchants, all of the seven grand dukes are as dangerous as savage beasts and fierce floods. Thus, they naturally won’t open trade with you. Consequently, you will also be unable to use the natural resources within your borders and gain the goods you need.”

“Humph. In reality, your Lancelot Empire was asking for it. At the time, if it wasn’t because your Lancelot Empire wanted to conquer us seven grand duchies and enter our borders, killing and looting everything, would we have suddenly stopped our bickering? Would we have recklessly formed an alliance to defeat your Lancelot Empire?” As if suddenly remembering the time when the Lancelot Empire’s army troops arrived like savage beasts, Helen’s voice had an undercurrent of anger even as she continued to have a charming expression on her face.

“The relationships between nations will always be either that of the conquered or the conquerors. Every nation’s king will always use whatever methods they have at their disposal to expand their territories. Lancelot Empire is like this. Kasi Empire is like this. Even the seven grand dukes are like this. Otherwise, what would be the point to the unceasing strife between them?” Han Shuo conveyed this eternally inarguable fact to Helen before laughing wryly, “The past is unrelated to us. But with our current relationship, we can privately smuggle and participate in some shady business. Do you have any completely trustworthy subordinates at hand?”

“Naturally. My family’s trusted aides can be completely trusted. No matter what kind of decisions I make, they will always support me.” Helen proudly said.

Han Shuo nodded his head and said, “Great. Let’s do it like that. It so happens that I can also use Lancelot Empire’s war materials and exchange them for your Helon Duchy’s warhorses. Hmm, rations can also be included. This exchange will be beneficial for both of our sides.”

After listening to Han Shuo's words, Helen smiled sweetly and agreed, "Our Helon Duchy's warhorses are widely renowned. How many horses and how much gold are you planning to pay?"

"This sort of business should be discussed by our subordinates. We only need to focus and make decisions on the big picture." Han Shuo shot a glance and lightly smiled at Hele before saying, "Don't think about trying to tempt me with things like seduction. I will personally organize suitable talents within Brettel City that will discuss this with your subordinates. Thus, we won't need to discuss it precisely and accidentally hurt our feelings!"

Hearing Han Shuo's words, Helen spat on the floor saying with a red face, "Who has feelings for you! You treacherous and stingy man, I can't even get a small advantage off you!"

"Alright. Alright. I am going on a trip tonight. You should be extra careful. Right now, Kekaru's family are all dead, and it's best if you take precautions as soon as possible. Starting tomorrow, you'll become extremely busy, so now's not a good time at all to talk about our love and passion for each other." Han Shuo said to Helen.

"You. You actually killed Kekaru's entire clan!" Helen was suddenly frightened and was unable to react for a moment, staring appalled at Han Shuo.

"Mm. Don't worry, any kinsman with the qualifications to succeed his dukedom is dead. Even several of his loyal subordinate will not be seeing dawn. Tomorrow, you'll see true chaos erupt in Seagate City. You should probably seize an opportunity to get rid of Kekaru's corpse. Additionally, create a mess to show that you suffered an assassination attempt. Even better, you should also capture a few people and make them seem like they're from Narsen Duchy." Han Shuo said to Helen with a smile.

"Well done, well done!" Helen trembled in joy before smiling sweetly. Her eyes glittered with a sinister light as she said, "Rest assured, I am an expert at such things. At this time tomorrow, Seagate City should be within my grasp. I have waited for such a day for far too long."



“Hehe. I like it when you emit such confidence. Alright, I will leave for now. You should summon Firewind and guarantee your safety first.” Han Shuo finally left after repeatedly warning her.

Back at the Lancelot Empire’s Dark Mantle organization, agents could be seen everywhere. After Han Shuo had arrived in Brettel City, the Dark Mantle’s stronghold had gradually strengthened as Candide personally prepared members to infiltrate Brettel City who Dick later arranged to go to the seven grand duchies.

After becoming a two star Dark Sun in the Dark Mantle, Han Shuo used his privileges and expanded the number of secret agents. He commanded Jack to set aside a hundred thousand gold coins as operational funds for the agents who would infiltrate into the seven grand dukedoms. With enough funds, they could set up their own stronghold within the dukedoms and gradually scale in power and influence.

As Brettel City’s city lord and Dark Mantle’s two star Dark Sun Envoy, Han Shuo only needed to arrive at any one of the major cities amongst the seven grand duchies to find the Dark Mantle agents. After meeting these agents, Han Shuo would receive all the latest information concerning those cities and use them to build a direct communication link to Brettel City.

The night before Han Shuo assassinated Kekaru, he’d left a message within Seagate City. After Helen left, Han Shuo headed straight towards that area. Right as Han Shuo entered the streets, he suddenly noticed that the entire Seagate City had erupted like an overturned nest of ants. Squads of imperial bodyguards wearing incomplete armor and fearful faces started going house to house in a manhunt.

Suddenly, Seagate City was enveloped with the sounds of iron hoofbeats of warhorses and the panicked screams of civilians. As Han Shuo looked at this kind of situation develop, he immediately realized that the massacre at Kekaru’s castle had already discovered by the people. Otherwise, there would not be such a chaotic situation at Seagate City. The city gates were locked down and civilians could not leave the city without permission. A couple of Seagate City’s knight captains had

terrified expressions as they walked out of Kekaru's castle shouting out to lock the city gates. Afterwards, they directly headed towards Helen's manor.

These individuals were just some small and insignificant outer members of Kekaru's group. Perhaps, they didn't even know that Kekaru had thoughts of betrayal. Now, suddenly seeing Kekaru's castle becoming an enormous murder case, they first believed that the enemy duchies were invading with their armies. Thus, they arranged soldiers to defend the city gate while rushing towards the true grand duke of Helon Duchy.

Before he'd even entered Seagate City, Han Shuo had already realized that there were already a couple of Helen's chess pieces amongst these people. Currently, Kekaru's power structure had been swept clean by Han Shuo. Thus, the individuals without the qualifications to become the high-ranking official of Seagate City's army suddenly became the ones with the most power. They were naturally able to hold temporary office as the commander-in-chief.

As Seagate City descended into chaos, Han Shuo quietly arrived at the messiest street furthest from the chaos. Next to a courtyard was an elderly man wearing a panicked expression looking in all directions, waiting. The major news of the huge changes at Seagate City had not arrived here, but the city guards were still advancing in all directions. Perhaps the elderly man wore a panicked expression because he had already received the news.

After Han Shuo suddenly stopped, the elderly man was obviously frightened for a moment as he hurriedly retreated backwards. After noticing the tablet that Han Shuo revealed in his hands, he loosened his breath and saluted respectfully, "Honorable Sir!"

"Let's go. Bring me somewhere we can chat!" Han Shuo said. The elder did not hesitate to bring Han Shuo along the very messy street. Only after walking past six blocks did they stop inside a small farm. The farm was raising a few thin and weak warhorses while the horse-shack was filled with stinking weed.

After arriving here, the elderly man entered a small room made of thatch. After entering the room, the elderly man threw a couple of glances outside the shack through a small hole before finally opening the secret pathway under the bed. He then stepped aside, letting Han Shuo enter first.

After passing through a dark tunnel, they finally arrived at a underground private hideout with three rooms. There were four individuals inside wearing four different expressions. They were dressed in either business type clothing or farmer type clothing. They were all extremely shocked at the sight of Han Shuo. Only after Han Shuo showed the tablet in his hands did they slowly calm down. They hastily bowed before saying, "Honorable Sir Envoy!"

The individuals within the Dark Mantle only obeyed the high ranked individuals within the Dark Mantle. Thus, Han Shuo did not use his identity as the Brettel City's lord, but instead only used his identity as the Second Dark Sun envoy to make them docile and obedient.

"Mm, we're all on the same side, so don't bother with formality!" Han Shuo said indifferently before bluntly sitting down on the central seat. At this moment, the elderly man that let Han Shuo enter first entered as well.

"Informing Sir, Seagate City has broke out with an extremely frightening murder case. Seagate City's Honorable Marquis Kekaru's entire family as well as all of his clan members have been massacred. We have just received this information. This event will completely alter the power struggle within Seagate City." The elderly man paid his respects and hastily reported the groundbreaking news to Han Shuo.

The search had only just begun in the core regions of Seagate City. Being able to receive accurate information in this remote and dirty region was a feat in and of itself, and left Han Shuo extremely satisfied. Nodding his head, Han Shuo said, "I already know about such things. You are doing well."

"Honorable Sir, the Helon Duchy's grand duke is currently residing within Seagate City. This vicious woman will definitely seize this chance

to take control of the city. Now with Kekaru's entire family wiped clean, we still don't know whether this was done by this woman or not. However, according to our intelligence, this woman should not have such power at her disposal. Thus, we believe it was not done by her....." The elderly man strenuously creased his eyebrows and analyzed, seemingly wanting to come to another clue.

Han Shuo waved his hands, stopping the elderly man from continuing. He smiled. "That's enough. Let's not talk about this for now. I will write a letter and you just need to dispatch someone to give it to Dick. We don't need to discuss anything else."

Hearing Han Shuo's words, the elderly man immediately stopped his speculations and respectfully nodded, "As you command, honorable sir!"

Taking out a piece of paper and a pen, Han Shuo wrote a flowery letter in a very meandering way before sealing it up and handing it over to the elderly man. He smilingly asked, "What is your name?"

"In response to the honored envoy. I am Delante, a Third Dark Star and the person currently in charge of Seagate City. In the past, I was doing missions in the southern part of the empire. However, I migrated to the seven grand duchies under Candide's command." Delante replied very respectfully.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo smiled, "Place this letter in Dick's hand as quickly as possible."

"I understand, Sir!" Delante answered.

Inside the Dark Mantle, there was always be a secret magic array that connected directly to others located in other cities. However, only the Dark Mantle could grasp such technology and generally only with a grand space magus could they set up such a technological marvel. However, there would naturally be no need to use a huge amount of financial resources just to create a magical array to communicate with Brettel City from the seven grand duchies. Thus, they could only use this kind of old-fashioned way of communicating.

After Delante carefully put away the letter, Han Shuo once again looked

to him for more news about Seagate City. Only after Delante had gone on at length did Han Shuo finally say, "Alright. All of you must properly conduct your business here at Seagate City. The Empire will not forget your former contributions. All the information you gather, all the missions you do, they will all be recorded by the Dark Mantle." After all the other Dark Mantle members heard Han Shuo's statement, they bowed, showing their compliance.

"Right now, Seagate City is dangerous beyond any semblance of doubt. Take extra care and do not be exposed by any means." After repeatedly warning them, Han Shuo left the secret stronghold and disappeared into the darkness of the night.

Han Shuo stopped in the deepest parts of the jungle outside of Seagate City. Using the earth elite zombie, he created a secret cave within the earth and set up the transportation matrix that connected to the Cemetery of Death to directly return there.

Calculating the time, Han Shuo knew that the twelve mystical demons should be emerging from the refining process. He'd gone to Helon Duchy alone this time. As long as he had the twelve mystical demons, Han Shuo would basically have twelve shadows that would be of immense help.

Compared to original demons and yin demons, not only did the mystical demons have more wonderful uses, but they could also range ten times as far from Han Shuo. As long as the twelve mystical demons came out, they could scatter and hide within any nook and corner of Seagate City. Even if Han Shuo did not take one step out of his room he could still monitor the entire situation of Seagate City through the twelve mystical demons.

# Chapter 364: Secret art of possession

Within the Cemetery of Death, dark dragon Gilbert was still in the midst of evolving. Further in, the mystical demon cave had long since stopped operating. Inside the grimace shaped mystical demon cave were twelve blood red agate-like blood pearls. The blood pearls rolled around the mystical demon cave like droplets, following a special path.

Han Shuo arrived in front of the mystical demon cave and waved. A lump of blood light shot out, piercing toward the twelve drops of blood red agate-like blood pearls.

Crick crack...

The crisp sounds of twelve eggs cracking floated through the air. The twelve blood pearls fragmented, each blood pearl emitting a clump of blood mist. The blood mist gradually agglomerated into something bigger, forming ferocious ghostly figures. The twelve mystical demons differed in shape, but were exactly the same. When the twelve mystical demons were all floated in front of Han Shuo, they each swallowed their respective fragmented blood pearl into their abdomens before flinging their heads back and hissing toward the sky.

Han Shuo released the remaining yin demon from his body. One of the mystical demons pounced forward, devouring the released yin demon, chewing it thoroughly before swallowing it.

With a thought, the twelve mystical demons fluttered like ghosts towards Han Shuo, transforming into twelve droplets of blood, entrenching themselves around Han Shuo's demon infant, absorbing the energy the demon infant exuded.

The mystical demons were of a higher level than the yin demons. With the existence of the mystical demons, the yin demon was no longer of use. It would be caught and eaten by the mystical demons even if it hid within the body. Han Shuo also knew that a low level demon leader like the yin demon had no way of surviving within his body. Hence, it was better to just let it be eaten by the mystical demons, lest it continue absorbing the

energy within his body.

At the separate demon realm, the energy that Han Shuo's demon infant was able to release was incredibly rich. The mystical demons, interlinked with Han Shuo's blood, only needed to absorb a small portion of energy within his body to be infinitely useful to Han Shuo. In comparison to the lower levelled origin demons and yin demons, the mystical demons were able to separate from Han Shuo for longer distances. If a mystical demon could possess another person's brain, it could separate itself from Han Shuo with no obstacles.

Once a mystical demon possessed a person's brain, it would feed on the person's brain everyday, not requiring replenishment by Han Shuo's internal energy. At the beginning, by feeding on the person's brain, mystical demons could gradually alter a person's thoughts, affecting his or her judgement.

As time passed, and the person's brain had been fully consumed by the mystical demon, the mystical demon would become their substitute, becoming a mystical demon in that person's body, free for Han Shuo to use. This was equal to the most brilliant arts of puppetry. The final result was a puppet body for the mystical demon to use, only lacking the original person's soul.

Once a mystical demon started its possession, as the mystical demon's owner, Han Shuo could already control the person's thoughts and easily obtain the target's secrets. Even if the person hadn't died yet, Han Shuo could still use the mystical demon to change their decisions, making them inadvertently follow Han Shuo's directions.

With these twelve mystical demons, as long as Han Shuo could let them latch onto the minds of the seven grand dukes, Han Shuo could completely rely on six mystical demons to control six dukes. He would be able to influence their judgement and decision making from the start. At the end, when the mystical demons had consumed their brains, Han Shuo would be able to thoroughly control them.

On the other hand, even outside of possession, the mystical demons had

a variety of uses. The omnidirectional, traceless scouting was the demon skulls' innate ability. The mystical demons, similar to the yin demons, could also easily take Han Shuo's appearance and even speak, essentially becoming another Han Shuo.

The strength of the mystical demon was of course incomparable to Han Shuo himself. However in critical situations, it could become Han Shuo's substitute. This was equivalent to giving Han Shuo twelve extra lives. Although the mystical demon was weaker than Han Shuo, it still had an advantage over ordinary experts, being able to toggle between corporeal and formless figures. In a battle, they could attack in a swarm, fast enough to only leave behind a trail of bloody light. They were very hard for ordinary people to deal with.

With the twelve mystical demons nestled in his body, Han Shuo now felt more confident. Seeing that the dark dragon Gilbert had not woken up, Han Shuo took out the skeleton staff to open the enchantment surrounding the Cemetery of Death and headed toward the Valley of Sunshine.

Within the Valley of Sunshine, the water zombie Han Shuo left in the place of extreme water had sent a message. The water elite zombie was ready to emerge.

Flying the distance from the Dark Forest to the Valley of Sunshine, Han Shuo did not openly enter through the front gate as he did not know the current situation in the Valley of Sunshine. He instead descended from the sky into a secluded corner, and then directly snuck into the place where he was refining the elite water zombie.

This storefront was Han Shuo's personal property. The Soul Destroyer mercenary band did not station anyone here, but sent people to occasionally clean the place. When Han Shuo entered the shop, he realized the place was clean, with no spiderwebs anywhere inside the building.

This haunted and cursed store was quite famous within the Valley of Sunshine. After many had mysteriously died within its premises, ordinary



people would take a roundabout way whenever they reached this area. Nobody dared to pass by this place. At first, blood water demons had made their home within the store, but had been quickly been destroyed by Han Shuo. However, he had then laid the Asura Illusion Formation, which was equally dangerous.

Han Shuo easily entered the underground place of extreme water. Han Shuo already had the experience of dealing with the earth, wood and fire elite zombies. Hence, he didn't waste much time extracting it from the place of extreme water. Compared to the other three elite zombies, the water zombie appeared extremely normal. Apart from its body having an additional amber colored armor, it did not have any other noticeable features.

Han Shuo had some ideas with regard to the water elite zombies' abilities and wasn't in a hurry to make it display its skills to him. After he had set a 'Dark Seal' on the water zombie, Han Shuo summoned the little skeleton and handed the water zombie off to him. Shortly after, he sent both of them back to the other dimension.

With the water zombie dealt with, Han Shuo didn't continue staying in the Valley of Sunshine, lest he been seen and give the Cairo mercenary band a bad impression. The Valley of Sunshine was currently still under their control. Han Shuo's actions of stealthily entering was already scoffing at those in power.

Han Shuo wasn't clear about the current relationship between the Soul Destroyer mercenary band and the Cairo mercenary band. However, there was no need to unnecessarily be in conflict with the Cairo mercenary band. Hence, once the matter of the water zombie was settled, Han Shuo silently left the Valley of Sunshine and headed toward the hidden location of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

Every time he came over, Han Shuo always discovered that the Soul Destroyer mercenary band had a distinct change. This time, it was even more so. Unknowingly, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band had already become a large thousand-strong mercenary band. In recent times, recruitment must have expanded like wildfire. With Han Shuo's financial

support and Trunks' own abilities, it's no wonder the Soul Destroyer mercenary band had the strength to contest for the Valley of Sunshine.

This time around, Trunks wasn't in the secret grounds. Han Shuo found out from Grant that Trunks had gone to secretly meet with the female bandit Janet and should be back soon. Ever since Trunks found his long lost younger sister Annie with the female bandit Janet, he frequently found excuses to look for Janet. On one hand, he could see Annie, and on the other, he could negotiate with Janet on when they would help Annie take revenge.

The female bandit Janet was also a bold, straightforward yet odd woman and was quite agreeable with Trunks. As time passed, the two gradually became more familiar. One was from a mercenary band in the Valley of Sunshine, the other from a large bandit group outside the Valley of Sunshine. The two leaders actually unwittingly established a good friendship.

Han Shuo was also surprised when Grant said this. No one expected that Trunks was actually able to get along well with that tomboy. This Janet was like a man. Her words were bare of womanly gentleness, and she even used foul language from time to time. Add that to her preference for women, she could be described as an exception amongst women. Who would have known that Trunks could still be able to establish a friendship with her. It looked like Annie played an important part in the friendship between Trunks and Janet.

Han Shuo waited for half a day. Midway, Odysseus's group returned and had a few drinks with Han Shuo whom they hadn't seen for a few months. Everyone was in high spirits.

Trunks definitely did not treat Odysseus' group shabbily after they joined. As the members in Odysseus' group were quite strong, they gradually gained prestige in the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. They had formed a tacit understanding and had mutual trust. Hence, they generally could complete the harder missions, and were very popular in the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

While Han Shuo, Odysseus and the rest were drinking and chatting, Trunks returned and laughingly joined in the army of people having food and drinks. These battle-hardened mercenaries were all very forthright and were generally men who had large bowls of alcohol and meat. They believed in true masters and had the attitude of enjoying life.

The newer additions to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band initially didn't know Han Shuo's identity. But when a few veteran mercenaries divulged Han Shuo's identity, these new additions all revealed worshipping gazes. Some of the young mercenaries couldn't remain calm, and even excitedly proposed a toast to Han Shuo.

Although Han Shuo didn't visit the Valley of Sunshine often, he had left behind deeds worth of stories every time he came. He'd defeated both the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band's current leader, Florida and Adam Menlo, the head of the House of Menlo. Particularly during the battle in the valley, Han Shuo had appeared all of a sudden and allied with Cairo mercenary band's leader Laureton, assisting him in leading the Cairo mercenary band's experts out of the valley. His hand in illing the Church of Light's grand magus, Ferguson, was even more widespread within the Valley of Sunshine.

Even when Han Shuo wasn't physically in the Valley of Sunshine, stories about Han Shuo continued to spread in the Valley of Sunshine. Han Shuo's reputation played a large part in attracting young mercenaries to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. Trunks had really benefited from Han Shuo in attracting so many young mercenary experts that had potential and yet were willing to do their utmost to enter the mercenary band.

"What's the current situation?" After the loud drinking in the square, Trunks and Han Shuo went alone to a secret room within the mountain.

Trunks laughed wryly before saying, "The Soul Destroyers have a good momentum going for now, but that's also why the other four large mercenary bands have started to raise their guard. Even the previously amicable Cairo mercenary band has become less friendly towards us. It's been a delicate balancing act, and there's always a fear of having the four mercenary groups banding together to deal with our Soul Destroyer

mercenary band. In any case, there's a strong undercurrent at play in the Valley of Sunshine. Like a powder keg, all this situation is missing is a single spark.

Han Shuo nodded, replying, "This was inevitable from the start; everyone wants a piece of the rich pickings known as the Valley of Sunshine. With its ideally placed location in the middle of three countries, controlling the Valley of Sunshine would reap large quantities of gold coins and some hidden benefits. For mercenary bands that seek to expand rapidly, controlling the Valley of Sunshine is the fastest channel for growth."

"I agree. In any case, the current situation is slightly chaotic. Our Soul Destroyer mercenary band has temporarily refrained from any activities that end up with us seizing power. It was precisely because I have shown no interest in maintaining order in the Valley of Sunshine that the other mercenary bands have not acted against us for this long. Instead, I've secretly allied with Janet to brainstorm ways to obtain revenge for Annie."

"However, our enemies include Florida, Butcher Gustav and the much harder to deal with Kasi Empire's Bradley. Bradley Pillon? Pillon is the biological brother of Kasi Empire's emperor. I'm afraid that I don't have any means to deal with him for the time being. Currently, Janet and I are in discussion about a plan to first kill Butcher Gustav."

"Butcher Gustav and Florida have engaged in shady business dealings for a long time. Striking down Gustav will also deal a blow to Florida's strength. In this way, I will slowly bleed Florida to death. After I've obtained sufficient strength, I would deal with Kasi Empire's Bradley Pillon. I want to leave him for last." Trunks spoke, his words dripping with hatred.

"How about I help you to first get rid of Gustav and Florida first, since I'm already here in the Valley of Sunshine. Although the two of them have decent strength, they aren't a threat to me. If I want to kill the two of them, they definitely wouldn't be able to escape." Han Shuo pondered for a moment before suggesting a course of action to Trunks.

Trunks resolutely shook his head as he replied, "I appreciate your good

intentions. However, I want to personally visit my vengeance on these three, in as agonizing a fashion as I can. Annie is like a biological sister to me. For her to have suffered such a large grievance, I must let those bastards repay their debt in blood!”

Han Shuo sighed lightly when he saw Trunks’ persistence, nodding as he replied, “Since that’s the case, I’ll stay uninvolved then. Oh, Gilbert is currently at my place. He is at a crucial stage of his second evolution, so it’s unlikely he’ll be able to help you. Be more careful while you are alone.”

“Understood, be at ease and go settle your own matters. Leave the Valley of Sunshine to me. I will contact you when there is truly no other solution. Ha, I heard you even got rid of the Brut Merchant Alliance’s Redbud Knights. It seems you’re getting stronger and stronger!” Trunks sighed in admiration.

The distance between the Dark Forest and the Valley of Sunshine wasn’t very far. As mercenaries were all people who travelled extensively, news was always fast and abundant. Han Shuo wasn’t at all surprised that Trunks was aware of his exploits.

“Hehe, that was all Celt’s own bad luck. Mm, you know where Dark Mantle has people in this place. If there’s any especially important matters, you can contact me through them. Of course, you can also leave a message at the address I gave you. I believe that with you in the Valley of Sunshine, the entire Valley will belong to our Soul Destroyer mercenary band sooner or later. I’ll be off, then” Han Shuo laughed as he spoke.

Trunks replied expansively to Han Shuo’s statement, saying, “Be at ease, I’ve eaten one of your pills and am now a great swordmaster. In the whole Valley of Sunshine, who else is my match apart from that violent berserker Laureton? Furthermore, we are different from the berserkers. We have an unlimited set of possibilities to break through. I believe that with the passing of time, my strength would eventually surpass Laureton. He can only become thrice berserk. I’ve never heard of a berserker who could be four times berserk!”

Han Shuo didn’t say much when he saw Trunk’s confidence. With

Trunk's reminder, Han Shuo had also remembered his promise with Ancient Lizard King Dagassi. He'd have to make a trip to visit the dwarf valley to collect the forged weapons and deliver them to the lizardmen in the underground world.

Using the Art of Demonic Ninth Heavens, Han Shuo headed for the dwarf valley. From the dwarf valley, he collected more than a thousand freshly forged sharp weapons. These weapons all contained a tiny portion of black iron ore, causing their sharpness to far exceed ordinary weapons.

The travel-worn Han Shuo didn't stay long in the dwarf valley, flying quickly to the entrance of the underground world. He then shuttled through the intricate and complicated tunnels of the underground world, directly heading for the area where the lizardmen lived.

Han Shuo was not aware of the specific instructions the Ancient Lizard King Dagassi had given the lizardmen leader when he'd previously introduced Han Shuo. However, thanks to Dagassi's instructions, the lizardmen leader was incomparable respectful toward Han Shuo. This made Han Shuo feel a sense of responsibility toward them, similar to how he treated the forest trolls.

Han Shuo's brain worked continuously as he headed to the lizardmen's territory, silently thinking. Apart from the forest trolls and the dwarf valley aboveground, he now had the completely docile lizardmen underground. If he added the nearby Soul Destroyer mercenary band in the Valley of Sunshine, this was also quite a large power.

If he could harmonize these powers together, it would form an exceptionally large force in the Dark Forest. Perhaps it might even be able to alter the situation in the Dark Forest?

# Chapter 365: Mysterious matriarch

When Han Shuo reached the lizardmen's living area, the first thing he heard was actually the cacophony of fighting. Looking around, Han Shuo saw the whole place filled with dark elves, charging toward the lizardmen's caves within the large reddish-brown mountain.

The lizardmen hid within the caves of the reddish brown mountain, using their crude weapons to defend against the dark elves' attacks. These dark elves were all dressed in different colors, including violet, black, light green and several other colors. They were clearly an alliance of different clans.

There were almost ten thousand dark elves, but only a small portion were actually attacking the large mountain. Nearly seven thousand of them were still spectating outside, yet to participate in the attack.

There were a few handsome looking youths among the dark elves. Each of them had a particularly ancient scent coming off them, giving Han Shuo a headache. By virtue of that scent, Han Shuo could tell that their true age did not match with their youthful appearance.

There was also a tent of purple veils in the middle of the handsome youths. Han Shuo could sense a monstrous presence within the tent, evil yet somehow charming. When he tried to probe the tent with his consciousness, the person within instantly reacted, sending a wave of aura back along the route of Han Shuo's mental energy.

Han Shuo was shocked, concealing his own aura in a hurry. He gave up on the idea of directly barging through, deciding to use the earth elite zombie to open a secret passageway into the center. Han Shuo decided to meet up with the lizardmen's leader before planning his next move.

Based on the aura, Han Shuo sensed the vast strength of the person inside the purple veil tent. Although this person's strength was not as monstrous as Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, it was much stronger than the typical great swordmaster or grand magus. Han Shuo carefully pondered for a moment. This person's aura felt roughly as strong as Lawrence's

master, sacred swordsman Karel Ascot. When he reached this conclusion, he was aghast.

Han Shuo had never thought that he would meet such a strong expert in the underground world. With Han Shuo's current strength in the separate demon realm, the Demonslayer Edge and the little skeleton, he could still manage a fight with such an expert. However, this expert was also accompanied by a few talented youths with particularly strong auras. Although they couldn't hold a candle to the expert in the purple tent, they would pose a major problem to Han Shuo.

Furthermore, there were still more than seven thousand dark elves surrounding them. Han Shuo wasn't presumptuous to think he could fight against this group of formidable dark elves by himself.

Using the earth elite zombie to create a passageway, Han Shuo travelled toward the center of the reddish-brown large mountain. Along the way, he constantly heard waves of clinks and clangs from battles. It seemed like just above him should be where the dark elves and lizardmen were fighting.

When he'd left the underground world the previous time, Han Shuo had discovered the location of the core zone of the lizardmen area, as well as the method to directly contact the lizardmen. After Han Shuo hurriedly made his way to the central area, he used the Demonslayer Edge to cut open the hard rocks, directly breaking through to a crucial gathering point in the mountain.

The crucial junction was a large ring-shaped cave. It was about as big as a basketball court, and its ceiling was covered with bright red sharp stones that looked like they might drop at any moment. There were stone plinths spread over the whole cave. These stone plinths had been ground down by the lizardmen until they were flat and suitable for sitting.

At present, a large group of lizardmen had gathered. It looked like they were discussing ways to deal with the dark elves. When Han Shuo appeared, the lizardmen head was pleasantly surprised. In the lizardmen's tongue, he lept to his feet and jabbered a few sentences, leading the bunch



of lizardmen in a bow towards Han Shuo.

“True God’s envoy, you must be here to save us. We have been waiting so long for you.” The lizardmen’s head used the common tongue in as respectful a manner as he could.

Wrinkling his eyebrows, Han Shuo replied, “The True God must have already left this place. What’s the matter with all those dark elves outside, why would they dare to come here?”

“Lord envoy, not long after the True God left, all the dark elves in the underground world unexpectedly stopped their internal conflicts, having all been subdued by a dark elf named Adele. It is said that this dark elf could communicate with their beloved evil goddess, Rose. She possessed an evil strength, unifying all the underground worlds’ dark elves in one short month.”

The leader hastily explained more, “She has led the dark elves in constantly attacking us lizardmen the past few days. However, these bastards currently still do not dare confirm if our true god has left. Hence, they have unceasingly probed us, but don’t dare to truly force their way in.”

The dark elf named Adele had suddenly appeared after Dagassi left. She had managed to unify the scattered dark elves in a short month, forming the single most terrifying power in this layer of the underground world. When Han Shuo heard the lizardman leader’s explanation, he was a little confused. He did not know how Adele had suddenly appeared and even seemed to know a little bit about Ancient Lizard King Dagassi.

Without a doubt, the expert that had felt Han Shuo’s mental probing was the dark elf Adele. If not for fear of Ancient Lizard King Dagassi’s presence, based on the strong aura Han Shuo felt from her body and the strength of the ancient dark elves beside her, they would have long since broken through this place and enslaved all the lizardmen.

As for how this dark elf Adele appeared, this wasn’t something Han Shuo had the time to think about at this moment. Coming to the underground world this time around was precisely to fulfill Han Shuo’s

promise to Dagassi to protect the lizardmen. Hence, once the lizardmen's leader had explained the situation to him, Han Shuo immediately took out all the weapons he had brought in the spatial ring this time round, saying, "I have brought these weapons for all of you. Don't worry, I'll help you in repelling the dark elves together."

"Many thanks, Lord Envoy!" The leader of the lizardmen gratefully kowtowed in thanks.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo didn't have much to say. Looking on as the lizardmen leader arranging manpower to rapidly distribute the weapons, he then released all twelve of the newly refined mystical zombies. Ten of the mystical zombies flooded the whole complex cave, while the other two flew out of the reddish brown colored mountain, hanging over the sky and spying on the dark elves' movements from a distance. At the dark elves' campsite, a handsome youth asked, "Matriarch, it's been five days. The lizardmen are completely unable to resist; should we start our main attack?"

"Let's wait a while more, I felt a weird aura just now. It actually tried to spy on me. When I wanted to search for the source, the aura vanished. This is quite strange." A lazy yet bone-chilling female voice wafted from the tent. When the few hundreds of "young" dark elves beside the tent heard this voice, they all went a little dry in the mouth. A wave of trepidation arose from their hearts.

"Matriarch, what kind of existence is that large lizard? Hasn't he already left? If not, he would have already come out and attacked us." A handsome dark elf gulped before respectfully speaking up.

"You ask me, but who should I ask? Same as you, I just escaped from that dreaded place. Do you think I'm omniscient? However, I already heard legends about him when I was alive. All of you are still a little young. I guess your ancestors hadn't mentioned it to any of you. In any case, you all just need to remember, he is a extremely strong lizard!" The female voice within the purple veil tent seemed to hold a hint of blame, but it still sounded comfortable and tantalizing to the ears.

“Matriarch, I really can’t figure it out; why did he not assist the lizardmen to clear the underground world when he broke out from under the gourd mountain? With such a strong figure around, the lizardmen could have eradicated us dark elves without much effort!”

“The few of us were even imprisoned by those undying black dragons in the layer below at that time. He shouldn’t have any difficulty in conquering this entire layer, so why would he delay till now?” Another handsome youth was puzzled as he spoke up too.

“Idiot, have you been imprisoned for too long?! Didn’t you listen to the children’s descriptions? I’m afraid even the dark dragon race from the layer below wouldn’t be able to deal with this giant lizard. Do you think we can obstruct him with just the few of us?” The voice from inside the tent came out laced with anger. Then, as if the anger was never present, a seductive laugh accompanied her next words, “As for why that large lizard hasn’t retaliated against us, it definitely isn’t because it’s afraid of us. With just the few of us, we are definitely not a match for a strong existence like him.”

“Then, who is he afraid of?” The dark elf that had previously asked the question followed up.

“All of you are idiots! It is because your faith in the goddess is not sincere enough, that even after living for so long, you still can’t feel her presence deep within your soul!” The goddess within the tent scolded. The antiquated elves standing around were all extremely submissive, every one of them agreeing profusely. However, after being reprimanded by Adele, these old farts faintly understood the meaning of her answer. It seemed like the powerful lizard’s hesitation should be due to their goddess, and not because of them.

“Alright, let’s wait a while more. Previously, the captured lizardmen said that their true god had already left and would not return to this place. That is why we are here. Otherwise, I definitely wouldn’t dare bring the few of you idiots here to throw away your lives. I suspect that large lizard has truly left. If not, it would have long since charged out to kill us.” Adele patiently explained to the few old fellows.

At this moment, a dark elf holding a bow suddenly rushed out from within a cave. He reached the front of the purple tent, looking surprised as he reported, "Matriarch, those lizardmen have suddenly gotten hold of some sharp weapons. These weapons looked like they were tailor made for the lizardmen. They hold the weapons with ease and can easily slash through our bodies. Furthermore, for an unknown reason, there is suddenly an influx of undead creatures within the caves. These undead creatures have blocked the passageways, helping the lizardmen resist our attack.

Adele's cry in surprise traveled from the tent, making the elves around her shudder in silent pleasure. After, there was a period of silence before Adele replied, "It should be that necromancer named Bryan, it can't be wrong then. Looks like he was the one who had just tried to spy on my existence. Sikong, make a trip. See if you can find that necromancer and bring him to me."

The dark elf who had continuously asked questions listened respectfully and nodded. Without any further ado, he leapt forward like a feather and entered the cave. Sikong took out a blue crystal ball the size of a human head and held it with both hands. As he travelled within the caves, the crystal ball gradually absorbed the black silk like thread that escaped from his palm. These threads slowly floated within the blue crystal ball, forming a line after another that depicted the passageways of the cave.

A plume of faint blue gentle light twirled out of the crystal ball like a fish, looking like it was sensing the complex passageways within the cave. A map for a large portion of the cave was gradually depicted within the blue crystal ball.

Han Shuo was still at the central lizardmen cave. Through the twelve illusory mystical demons, Han Shuo overheard the dark elf matriarch Adele rebuking the other dark elves and roughly understood that they had escaped from the prison of the dark dragon clan on the layer beneath him. As for how they escaped, Han Shuo wasn't too sure, but from listening to Adele's conversation, these few dark elves that had suddenly appeared should've lived for a very long time.

Once the dark elf Sikong entered the cave, a mystical demon had already detected him and clearly saw the activity within the crystal ball that he held. Han Shuo, who was in the midst of arranging the lizardmen's formation for resisting the dark elves, suddenly shouted to the lizardmen leader, "Help me look after these guys for a while, I'm making a trip!"

Finishing his sentence, Han Shuo flew out of the area. The mystical demons had been floating around in the complex passageways for quite a long time. Thus, Han Shuo had long since familiarized himself with the terrain, finding the dark elf that had entered the cave system in a very short period of time.

"Are you looking for me?" Han Shuo suddenly appeared from within a far-off cave, facing the dark elf Sikong who still held the crystal ball in his hand.

"Eh. I never would have thought you would appear on your own accord. Necromancer, when previously you had foiled our plans, I did not expect that you still dared to appear this time around!" Seeing Han Shuo voluntarily appear, Sikong gladly laughed, shining the blue crystal ball in his hand towards the sky.

Out of a sudden, all the absorbed lines within the crystal ball bursted out from the crystal ball. The blue lines started crisscrossing, quickly forming a giant net which rapidly enclosed the entire cave, with ten of lines entangled around Han Shuo.

"Haha, a mere necromancer actually dares to foil our noble dark elves' plans. You must be looking to die!" Sikong confidently proclaimed toward Han Shuo who was caught in the blue spiderweb. Completing the chant for a spell, the crystal ball that had released countless blue lines slowly floated and followed him in flying out of the cave.

Being trapped in the blue spiderweb, apart from feeling the binding force, Han Shuo also felt a weak force leaking out which continuously weakened his mental strength. Although this dark elf Sikong appeared handsome and young, he must have already lived for countless years.

The dark elves' lifespan was much longer than humans. As long as they

weren't killed by others, it wasn't difficult for them to live for hundreds of years. Although a dark elf's strength wasn't completely measured based on their age, a majority of the older dark elves were much harder to deal with compared to younger dark elves.

The dark elves also had the advantage of practicing a few sinister spells. Dark elves that had lived for hundreds of years were often all dark mages that were exceedingly hard to deal with. Furthermore, as the dark elves worshipped the Evil Goddess Rose, they could also possess a special kind of strength, and hence were usually hard to fight against.

Looking at this confident old dark elf, Han Shuo wasn't worried in the slightest, even entangled in the blue spiderweb. After Sikong had said his piece and planned to drag Han Shuo out of the cave, Han Shuo grinned toward Sikong, revealing a weird smile. He then whistled, and a blood mist shot out of him. The Demonslayer Edge was like a soaring dragon with a blood red light trail, completely slashing apart the blue spiderweb that was entangling Han Shuo.

When the old dark elf Sikong saw Han Shuo's sudden outburst of violent aura that sliced through his blue spiderweb in an instant, he started panicking. When Han Shuo stared at him while chuckling weirdly, Sikong rapidly calculated, suddenly realising that he had no certainty of beating Han Shuo. The aura from Han Shuo's body made him tremble, and he ran away without saying another word.

# Chapter 366: How do you want to play?

“Since you’ve already come all this way... Don’t even think about leaving!” Han Shuo’s face split into an evil grin as he executed the “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts” with his Demonslayer Edge, letting the sky be segmented by a bloody red light.

The Demonslayer Edge produced sharp, bloody lights one after the other. Together, they became a mass of bloody red light that swept towards the seemingly young dark elf, Sikong. As Sikong saw this whirling mass of bloody light releasing a deadly, terrifyingly baleful aura that seemed sharper than a honed blade, he began retreating even faster.

The “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts” closely and relentlessly pursued Sikong like a parasitic apparition. Along the way, it came to the not so spaciouly drilled underground passageway from which Sikong had entered. An enormous hail-like downfall of broken rocks fell as the “Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts” tore through the tunnel, forcefully broadening the underground passageway by a fold.

As the couple of dark elves entered, they saw a mass of red blade-like lights closely pursuing Sikong. One of them yelled, “Protect the elder!”

A few truly young dark elves bravely stood in front of Sikong without thinking about their own safety. Torn and crushed by the bloody light, their remaining pieces of their minced bodies were scattered among the rocks below.

After experiencing the bloody light’s powers, Sikong was truly frightened out of his wits as he began to run at a breakneck pace. The crystal ball that had been grasped in his hands all along began glowing a misty blue, using a bit of the evil goddess’s power bestowed within. The light from the crystal ball began rapidly weaving a protective screen as thin as a cicada’s wing as it wove through the air like a snake.

The bloody light bombarded the top of the protective screen. The intricate linking of thousands of strands of light gave the faintly radiating blue a powerful defense and began rapidly shredding the multiple bloody

red lights. As the protective screen that was as thin as a cicada's wing shattered with a loud bang, Sikong had long since seized the chance to tumble out of the cave, albeit frightened and his back damp from cold sweat long ago.

Sikong had obviously realized that although he had already lived for a couple hundreds of years, he really wasn't a match for the Han Shuo inside. As one's age increased, one's fear of death also increased, and Sikong was no exception to that. The moment he experienced Han Shuo's power, he immediately threw away the thought of fighting Han Shuo to the death. Instead, he began retreating even faster than before, directly fleeing until he was in front of a purple veil tent.

"Matriarch, forgive my incompetence, but there is a young necromancer inside with an incredibly powerful ability. Not only could I not capture him, but I was even forced to retreat back here!" Sikong's nerves were frayed as he trembled when reporting to Adele within the purple veil tent.

"Idiot, if you can't even take down a young necromancer, then all your years of life has been truly useless!" Adele, who had been smiling merrily, suddenly became angry after hearing what was just said.

Ten silk-like black grass strands that were as flexible as tentacles extended from within the purple veil tent, firmly binding up the fearful Sikong. The black strands seemed to be even more tenacious than metal, causing the trussed up Sikong to feel his limbs gradually lose blood. Sikong's breathing gradually became laborious as his body trembled and his veins began to pop from the pressure exerted by the silky strands.

The surrounding dark elf elders all began feeling apprehensive as they helplessly looked at Sikong, bound by the silk as his skin began to tear and blood began to cover him from head to toe. Even though Sikong was her favored boy toy, no one dared to plead for mercy. Women were the most vicious indeed. If she even felt the tiniest dissatisfaction, she would immediately began treating them cruelly, causing blood to lavishly decorate the ground.

Sikong felt a bone-piercing like pain. Yet, because he was bound too



tightly, he couldn't even scream. Instead, he could only softly whimper. Nevertheless, he still did not dare to beg for forgiveness, seemingly extremely afraid of Adele.

Breaking the unbearable silence, Adele coldly snorted within the purple veil tent, only after seeing Sikong faltering for breath. Afterwards, the black light binding Sikong slithered back into the purple veil tent like a demon snake.

Due to his weak and paralyzed body, Sikong collapsed on top of his own pool of blood. Only, he continued to persevere as before, kowtowing and happily saying, "Thank you Matriarch, many thanks for your mercy, Matriarch!"

The purple veil tent was suddenly lifted by a light-purple colored arm. An arm that could send the hearts of men into a fluster, it brimmed with a bewitching luster, an alluring, full and boneless arm. After the tent-flap was lifted open, a beautiful woman appeared. She was like a bringer of catastrophes, capable of making all living things go crazy for her as she knitted her brows, walking out from inside.

The beautiful woman's entire body was covered with an exotic, light-purple skin. Yet, she had a head full of long emerald-like green hair and two sharp ears, indicating her race as an elf. She nearly possessed all of the characteristics of an absolutely beautiful fairy. With a soul-stirring and attractive charm, she only needed to stand in front of men, without moving or speaking at all, to fill men with desire. An unrestrained desire would fill their hearts and loins as men drank in her sight like the finest alcohol. All they would want would be to jump her, fiercely pressing her below them and conquering her.

This matriarch of the dark elves, Adele, was undoubtedly an extremely pretty, coquettish, and dangerous beauty. Just a glimpse of her smile was seduction of the highest quality, capable of causing people to become unconsciously obsessed, willingly falling into oblivion for eternity.

Lightly sighing with deep feeling, Adele walked next to Sikong, attired in a purple dress that hugged her curves. Deep emotions seemed to burst out

of her chest as she said helplessly, “How could I bear to kill you? Over the endless years, there were only a couple of you that accompanied me, allowing me to feel a hint of joy while imprisoned within this dark underworld. But, although none of you were talented, handsome youths, you should still amount to more by now by now. After all, you’ve lived for such a long time, such an endless number of years, so how could you still not have attained even a wee bit of additional courage, becoming increasingly timid instead?”

Sikong only trembled slightly while his body lay immersed within a pool of blood. He seemed to be seriously listening to Adele’s lecture without a word.

Adele shot a glance at Sikong, lying next to her leg and curled within a pool of blood. She sighed once more, expressing her exasperation with their failures. She suddenly raised her head towards the huge brownish red mountain in front of her and yelled towards the lizardmen’s dwelling place, “Hey necromancer, let’s both come out and have a chat.”

This shout seemed to have formed through the convergence of a thousand sound waves. Unexpectedly, it directly passed through the intricate and sophisticated mountain holes, descending right into the mountain’s core. Even if Adele hadn’t deliberately used her mental strength to amplify her voice, Han Shuo would still have heard Adele’s yell through his two mystical demons constantly watching her.

After Adele finished speaking in the common language of the humans, she once again yelled in the language of the elves. The dark elves, originally doing their best to infiltrate the lizardmen’s cave, suddenly withdrew like a current of water. In an amazingly short period, the dark elves managed to reorganize themselves outside. When Han Shuo saw all the dark elves withdrawing through the mystical demons, he realized that it was definitely due to Adele’s command. Knitting his brows, he hesitated for a moment before calmly walking out of the cave. Only, he didn’t go too far from the cave.

After Han Shuo left the cave, several lizardmen that were currently tracking Han Shuo quickly reported his movements to the leader of the

lizardmen. After the leader learned of this news, he told the lizardmen to follow him outside. When Han Shuo was standing not too far from Adele, the lizardmen leader arrived behind Han Shuo with his people.

When Han Shuo walked out from within the cave, he only caught a glimpse at the dark elf matriarch, Adele, before being immediately taken aback. However, Adele's beautiful face that could make all living things go crazy, only made Han Shuo astonished for a moment. Han Shuo's willpower had been tempered too often for this sort of trick to work. His expression remained natural as he spoke, "Well, I've come, so what do you want to chat with me about?"

"Hehe, that big lizard. It left already, right?" Adele smiled sweetly as the surrounding young dark elves obviously swallowed their saliva.

Unexpectedly Han Shuo nodded with a smile, not hiding the truth, "Correct, he has indeed already left this place. I can't say when he'll be back, but even if he doesn't come back anytime soon, hehe, I will still help these lizardmen people. If you have any intentions of enslaving the lizardmen people, then we can continue to play."

Adele had likely decided to cause a commotion today after constant probes up until now. They'd even discovered that Degassi had left. Thus, Adele was most likely feeling confident attacking today. However, since Han Shuo has entered the underground world, he would naturally try his utmost to help the lizardmen people deal with the dark elves' encroachment. He would also not need to rely on a vague lie to preserve the lizardmen's safety at all.

Adele started unceasingly laughing, causing Han Shuo's heart to undulate. She amusingly sized up Han Shuo, saying, "Continue to play? Now that the big lizard has left, are you capable of stopping me, all alone?"

"Who knows?" Han Shuo calmly said while the corner of his mouth evoked a pondering smile as he looked at Adele and said, "Do you want to test me?"

"It's only natural that I would want to test you. After all, you were able to

force Sikong to withdraw. This clearly indicates that you're definitely out of the ordinary. Only, young man, how young are you? I believe, considering your human age, no matter how strong you, you still must have a limit. I also don't believe you can obstruct our march to conquer the underground world." Adele tactfully smiled, brimming with confidence.

Shrugging his shoulders, Han Shuo said, "Then we have nothing to chat about. How do you want to play? No matter what kind of method you want to use, I'm willing to accompany you. Hehe, if it's body-on-body combat, I would welcome it even more, haha!"

Even if the lizardmen leader's people as well as countless undead creatures were behind him, Han Shuo was not completely assured of victory facing this Adele. After all, just Adele's personal strength was enough to keep him busy, and the couple of pretty, handsome, and obedient dark elves who had lived for so long also had strength that couldn't be belittled. Additionally, they had even brought approximately ten thousand dark elf experts.

However, Han Shuo did not believe that Adele would fight him to the death to defeat the lizardmen people. Thus, he had no fear as he threatened Adele, even going as far as leering at her.

# Chapter 367: Burying the hatchet in each other's flesh

“Body-on-body combat in bed.....” Adele suddenly smiled enchantingly, her delicate beautiful body trembling as she gazed at Han Shuo with limpid eyes. Her eyes were like a pool of spring water, as if wanting to draw Han Shuo deep into its depths with its beautiful scenery.

The dark elves were a race that were naturally lascivious in nature, just like the dark dragons. This was especially the case for female dark elves, where seven out of ten of them were harlots.

Adele, flirtatious and charming to no end, was evidently a well-known figure. The few dark elf elders by her side ought to have also taken their turn as her bed-warmer. She was unabashed whilst speaking of such matters in front of so many subordinates. Instead, she was actively engaged, seemingly willing to put aside the dignity of her position to immediately engage Han Shuo in carefree, uninhibited grinding.

“Heh heh, the madame’s outstanding beauty enchants everyone. If you are truly interested in this aspect, I will definitely do my utmost to accompany you.” Han Shuo also felt his heart itch when he saw Adele’s enchanting smile. Adele was obviously a ravenous, wanton woman, seemingly born seductive. On the other hand, Han Shuo had never been a sanctimonious knight, barely concealing the desire that existed in his heart.

Adele couldn’t help but give Han Shuo another once over after his response. The tall and imposing Han Shuo was like a javelin as he stood there, giving off an overbearing might. His handsome yet dispassionate looks, his imposing height and a body covered in violent and explosive muscles weren’t things the beautiful but thin dark elves by her side could compare to.

The more Adele looked at Han Shuo, the faster her heart beat. Her rosy small tongue subconsciously licked her brilliant red lips, her delicate peach colored face flushing red as if she were intoxicated, flirtingly

enticing.

There were gulping sounds from the dark elves who watched Adele from the side, including a few female dark elves who had special urges. They really would have directly rushed to embrace Adele, if not for the misgivings that rose from her strength and prestige.

“Little fellow, you are truly an interesting human. Although the humans I’ve seen all contained naked lust in their hearts, all of them acted as decently as they could on the surface, but transformed into savage beasts once they got into bed. Hehe, you are different from them. Even in front of so many people, you actually don’t bother concealing your desire at all. This is truly unexpected.” Adele softly and slowly mused out loud as she smiled and gazed at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo bowed courteously in response to Adele’s praise before looking at her with a smile. Although he didn’t reply, an imposing manner that didn’t fear any threats naturally radiated outward.

“Hehe. If you have it in you to make me acknowledge your strength, I’ll certainly accompany you in a battle in bed.” Adele slowly walked toward Han Shuo as she finished her sentence, smiling seductively as she said, “It is now time for you to prove your strength.”

Han Shuo remained silent, before retrieving the skeleton staff from his space ring. He then said to Adele, “I hope I can satisfy you. Heh heh. Honestly speaking, I’m certainly very interested in you!”

Adele was just about to answer when she noticed the skeleton staff in Han Shuo’s hands. Her expression changed as she carefully looked at Han Shuo’s staff a few more times. Only then did she ask, a hint of horror in her voice, “The skeleton staff! You’re from the Calamity Church?”

Han Shuo was shocked as he looked at the skeleton staff that was tightly grasped in his hand. He thought quickly, why do all the older fellows in this world seem to recognize the skeleton staff? Since Adele immediately thought of Calamity Church when she saw the skeleton staff, it seemed that she had not lived for that long, at least not as long as Ancient Lizard King Dagassi.

“When did the Calamity Church’s influence reach the underground world? What is your relationship with the lizardmen? Could it be that you want to protect these stupid lizardmen?” Adele chattered on without waiting for Han Shuo to reply. Seeing Han Shuo remain silent, Adele furiously continued, “Forget it. If you insist on protecting these lizardmen, I will show you some face. However, the underground world is our territory. If you’re thinking of conquering the underground world, the dark elves will definitely resist to our deaths.”

Hearing Adele’s impassioned speech, Han Shuo, who’d originally ready to fight a round with Adele, suddenly froze. Han Shuo understood from Adele’s tone that she did not fear him, but clearly feared the Calamity Church. She did not dare to make a move against the lizardmen due to Han Shuo being someone from the Calamity Church.

The Calamity Church was a sinister existence throughout the whole Profound Continent that incited terror just by their name. The dark elves, who were similarly considered evil, naturally knew of Calamity Church’s formidable prowess.

Among the sinister powers and evil races in the Profound Continent, the Calamity Church was without question the number one most evil power. Even for someone like Adele, once she saw Han Shuo holding the skeleton staff, she immediately admitted defeat and renounced enslaving the lizardmen without Han Shuo even saying a word.

There was a period of time in which the skeleton staff was synonymous with the Calamity Church. The one who wielded the skeleton staff was absolutely one of the top figures in the Calamity Church. When Adele saw the skeleton staff appear in Han Shuo’s hand, she did not have any doubts, treating Han Shuo as a high ranking figure of the Calamity Church. She immediately extinguished any intention of becoming enemies with Han Shuo.

An evil power like the dark elves did not fear any country in the continent. These countries normally would not set foot in the underground world. In addition, a country’s strength was limited. Hence, Adele did not fear them even if they really set foot in the underground

world. However, the infamous Calamity Church's viciousness and persistence toward their enemies would cause any party to be terrified. Even if someone was in the underground world when they provoked the Calamity Church, they would also be faced with a never-ending, fearsome retaliation.

Adele had just returned from the layer below. She definitely did not want to immediately offend the number one most evil power in the world. Hence, she voluntarily conceded in front Han Shuo.

A flurry of ideas passed through Han Shuo's mind. The Calamity Church's identity was indeed worth of being the Profound Continent's most feared evil power, if just mentioning its name unexpectedly led to experts like Adele admitting defeat. He reacted quickly to Adele's words.

"Since you recognize the skeleton staff, you obviously know my identity. Heh heh. The lizardmen's true god Dagassi has close ties with the Calamity Church. Perhaps you do not know that Dagassi has already left this place and would not threaten the dark elves. However, Dagassi had requested that the Calamity Church would take care of the lizardmen when he left. Therefore, we will not let the lizardmen be enslaved by the dark elves.

"The Calamity Church does not have unfriendly intentions toward the underground world's dark elves. In fact, we have all been invaded by the light side, and should not be fighting internally. If you could give the Calamity Church face and not cause trouble for the lizardmen, I believe this will end as a very pleasant encounter." Han Shuo portrayed the image of a high-ranking figure in the Calamity Church, speaking proudly yet respectfully to the dark elves' ancestor Adele.

"Of course, since the lizardmen are under your protection, the dark elves will not attack them from now on." Adele didn't hesitate, giggling as she replied, "Distinguished friend, since you have come to the underground world, you definitely must come be our guest in our dark elf territory."

As expected, Adele immediately agreed to Han Shuo's request. She then giggled as she sincerely proposed an invitation. Adele even cast a soul-



wrenching coquettish glance Han Shuo's way as she made the proposal. Han Shuo felt an unbearable itch from the blatant seduction.

End of Part 1 of the chapter.

Even war was avoided at this point. Simply due to the skeleton staff in his hand, Han Shuo had extinguished Adele's ideas for enslaving the lizardmen, and even had her sincerely invite Han Shuo in an attempt to build a favorable relationship.

Han Shuo did not expect this, and the outcome was obviously more ideal than he could have imagined. Han Shuo turned around to look at the lizardmen's leader, grinning as he said, "I'll be making a trip. I believe the dark elves will leave you alone in the future."

Within the underground world, the slow-witted lizardmen were not as well-informed as the dark elves. The lizardmen leader had never heard of the existence of the Calamity Church. However, he understood from Adele's words that Han Shuo hailed from an outstanding power and this power was dreaded by even the dark elves touted as the strongest in this layer.

The dark elves were already this layer's strongest race to begin with. Now that they had renounced their internal conflicts and gathered together, this strength had reached extraordinary levels. In addition, they now even had a mysterious group of experts. The lizardmen's leader understood that if they were to fight to the end against the dark elves, it would only lead to their deaths.

Now that he saw Adele had taken the initiative to let them go, the lizardmen leader naturally did not foolishly say anything and only bowed respectfully toward Han Shuo, saying, "Thank you, Sir Envoy!"

Han Shuo nodded as he left with Adele, who had been smiling enchantingly by the side. They began to make their way to dark elf territory. The territory occupied by the dark elves was the most vast and fertile in this layer of the underground world. Han Shuo continued to make light conversation with Adele as they travelled

Evidently, Adele was extremely curious about Han Shuo's identity. Along

the way, she continuously probed for clues about Han Shuo's true status in the Calamity Church. However, Han Shuo constantly evaded her probing, not revealing the slightest bit of information. Truthfully, Han Shuo was unable to divulge any secrets even if he wanted to, as he wasn't familiar with the Calamity Church or their internal structure.

However, Adele had closely examined the skeleton staff once Han Shuo had brought it out, and had felt the bizarre strength it contained. Hence, she didn't suspect Han Shuo's identity at all. The more ambiguously Han Shuo spoke, the more Adele felt that Han Shuo possessed an extremely high-ranking position in the Calamity Church. For Han Shuo to already be wielding the skeleton staff at such a young age, it already sufficiently illustrated that he wasn't a simple character.

The merrily beaming Adele didn't forget to try and seduce Han Shuo on the way back. She didn't sit in the purple light veil tent, but instead walked alongside Han Shuo, swaying her hips and sashaying her butt enticingly with every step. From time to time, Adele would inadvertently brush up against Han Shuo, the sides of her beautiful legs coming into contact with him again and again. This caused Han Shuo to be unceasingly aroused throughout the whole journey, his "lust" rising rapidly.

Adele was clearly very apprehensive of the Calamity Church and was full of reverence toward Han Shuo. When she discovered that Han Shuo wasn't willing to reveal his identity, Adele didn't continue to probe further, and instead introduced the scenery along the way to him.

The underground world wasn't as dank and wet as rumored. Although it was truly in eternal night, the ceiling thousands of meters above the underground world sparkled with strange light. Furthermore, plants that glistened grew everywhere, causing many places in the underground world to be as fully light as a brightly lit day outside.

Similar to the world above, the underground world had its own mountains and streams, so much so that the beautiful scenery in those places was even more magnificent than those above ground. The coquettish Adele was someone who also indulged in beautiful landscapes. She wasn't at all in a hurry to return and had simply ordered a portion of

the group to return first. She then personally led a few hundreds experts on a detour with Han Shuo, showing him various exotic landscapes.

The dark elves were the overlords of this layer of the underground world. Adele had absolute confidence in her own strength, and believed that there weren't many living creatures that could threaten her in this layer. The batmen and earth goblins they ran into along the way all went into hiding when they saw Adele's group, as though hiding from a demon. They seemed extremely afraid of Adele.

Adele finally brought Han Shuo to her dark elf territory after visiting twelve spectacular scenic locations in the underground world.

The dark elf territory was a vast patch of forest where all kinds of bizarre plants grew. Dozens of towering trees grew tall, vibrant with life. The abundant, enchanting emerald presence of life nourished a forest that seemed to be brimming with vitality.

The way forward was filled with all kinds of verdant and thick plants, with just a hint of evil in their presence. There were many beautiful demonic spider webs that stretched across the trees that seemed to reach for the sky. Within these spiderwebs were crystals of various colors that seemed to be using the network of webs to absorb the forest's energy. There were also many small red, purple and black spiders that actively moved about the forest. They had friendly dealings with the dark elves, and served as their defensive scouts. When the spiders saw Adele appear, they danced elegantly on top of the ancient trees, appearing to be narrating something to Adele.

The evil goddess Rose worshipped by the dark elves was rumored to have the head of a human but the body of a spider. Han Shuo did not know the truth of this matter, but based on the situation he saw, there may be some truth to the rumors. Adele could obviously communicate with the small spiders, ordering them to work for her.

The further in they went, the more lush and tall the various ancient trees were. There were many wooden houses located in the center of the forest brimming with natural energy. Some of the houses were formed from

woven branches while many tall houses were previously ancient trees that reached the skies, but had since died and withered. These ancient trees formed a simple yet gorgeous palace when they were hollowed out, appearing extremely exotic.

The dark elves had an innate fondness toward fine objects. Their palace buildings boasted delicate patterns carefully carved into the outside trunk. These patterns served no other purpose and were purely for aesthetics. Many dark elves were very accomplished in the arts, and every magic weapon they made were incomparably refined. Although the dark elves' magic weapons might not be the best in the continent, they were definitely the most beautiful and refined.

Along the way, Han Shuo recognized the dark elves' pursuit of artistic excellence above everything else. From the buildings, armor, clothes to even food and religious offerings, every object or activity had to be artistically beautiful.

"This is the dark elves' most important territory in the underground world. As the matriarch of the dark elves, I am honored to have brought you here." Adele smiled sweetly as she directly brought Han Shuo toward the interior.

All the dark elves in the area respectfully bowed in greeting when they saw Adele approach. Adele possessed an extremely prestigious position among the dark elves. As she was able to communicate with the evil goddess Rose, her status was similar to Han Shuo's position among the lizardmen, both appearing as their respective god's messenger.

However, as Adele was also a dark elf, her position among the dark elves was even higher. That the constantly warring dark elves could unite together after her appearance was testament to her vaunted position.

"Madame is too kind. I instead should be honored to be able to be here." Han Shuo grinned as he answered.

Adele led Han Shuo to a wooden palace that had previously been an enormous ancient tree. After entering, Han Shuo discovered that the floor was covered with carpets embroidered with complicated patterns, and the

surrounding wooden walls had the strange image of the evil goddess Rose portrayed as a half-human, half spider. Many suspended crystal chandeliers glittered with bright, gorgeous radiance, imparting the place with a natural splendor.

At this moment, Adele clapped her hands and five alluring female dark elves, all with different skin colors but equally beautiful, suddenly walked out. These five dark elves wore thin yarn skirts, their expressions were either shy, provocative or pure, with all their gazes focused on Han Shuo by Adele's side.

"Properly attend to our distinguished guest!" Adele smiled faintly, giving her orders to the five beautiful and seductive dark elves.

The five young female dark elves walked together towards Han Shuo, all of them carrying fruit plates and wine glasses, lightly smiling with unique expressions as they headed over.

# Chapter 368: Going on a Punitive Expedition

This banquet was no different than the ones at home. Served by the five young, pretty dark elves, Han Shuo drank fine wine and ate tender meat in extreme comfort. As per Adele's command, the five young dark elves wore revealing clothing and smiled sweetly as they plied Han Shuo with more wine. Intentionally or not, the elves lightly brushed their bodies with Han Shuo, setting his lust aflame.

As Han Shuo seemed to be fall into an intoxicated haze, Adele meaningfully glanced at the couple of dark elf elders who had been smiling obsequiously since the start. Adele's lovers withdrew themselves from the room with smiles on their face.

After the elders left, Adele gave another meaningful look towards the five dark elves that served Han Shuo. All five of the dark elves were equally beautiful, and began to undress in front of Han Shuo. They then slid into his arms as they smiled charmingly at him.

"Haha, honorable guest, enjoy these beauties. If you feel like these five girls are still unable to satisfy you, then I will willingly serve you." Adele smiled enchantingly towards Han Shuo as she took the initiative to depart.

"How about all of you simply come at me together then!" Han Shuo let his hands rove unabashedly over the dark elves who had just jumped into his arms, while inviting Adele with a smile.

Adele rebuked him with a light laugh, "How will that do? I am the matriarch of the dark elves, and I definitely can't serve you alongside them. Hehe, I am actually better than all five of them alone, so only if you can satisfy all five of them can you possibly let me feel satisfied. However, you need to show me some proof first, hmm?" After saying these words, Adele did not remain any longer. As she looked at Han Shuo start making moves on the five young dark elves without restraint, she endured the restlessness in her heart and left, gently chuckling.

The instant Adele left, Han Shuo unrestrainedly pinned down a mostly naked and delicate dark elf who'd been in his arms. A long and hearty laugh sounded as he began a punitive expedition to conquer their bodies.

The twelve mystical demons silently left Han Shuo's body, spreading out to cover the dark elves' territory. Two of the twelve mystical demons were ordered to follow Adele and determine the purpose of her departure.

As the full bodied girl under his body tactfully begged for forgiveness in a sweet and soft voice, Han Shuo reached out a hand to pull over another girl. This dark elf possessed a purple skin-toned body and long, dark purple hair. He couldn't help but grope her own well-rounded breasts as she gazed at him blushing. She was just like a blooming purple rose.

Failing to repress her innermost desires, the dark elf under Han Shuo's body instantly started shouting in a joyous and high spirited manner. The trembling and unrepressed shout was akin to a melodious and enchanting song that could dissolve a person's heart. As the other three dark elves flushed with excitement, they began to tangle together with a wordless croon.

The dark elves were known for their lasciviousness, the female dark elves especially so. As the three dark elves started to walk towards Han Shuo, two of them had a bashful expression. The other appeared somewhat aloof, emitting a different kind of charm. However, when they truly started battling with their bodies, the originally shy and blushing dark elves actually started gradually becoming wild and uninhibited. Before Han Shuo had even truly overwhelmed them with ecstasy, they had actually already become wild themselves.

As Han Shuo continued his punitive expedition on the dark elf under his body, he saw Adele, through the mystical demon's gaze, arriving within a luxurious room two floors below. Sikong and those few male dark elves were waiting there. Besides them was also a young male elf.

The joyous and extremely spirited clamor from Han Shuo's room constantly entered this meeting room. Adele's face was a stunning crimson as she looked like a worm was writhing in her heart. Her visage

expressed her great desire to immediately replace the woman under Han Shuo's body.

Subconsciously licking her red lips lightly once more, Adele forcefully repressed the restlessness in her heart before asking Sikong, "Tell me what occurred in the battle between the two of you again."

Sikong was still deeply wounded, blood marring his arms and face. With a deep breath, he quickly summarized the confrontation between him and Han Shuo in a soft voice. After he was done, he also added, "Besides the intense smell of a necromancer on his body, he also cultivates an incredible fighting aura. Oh, that's not right, it doesn't seem very much like a fighting aura, since it's so suffused with evil. It's highly likely that he's a high-ranking member of the Calamity Church."

"Of course you imbecile, as if I needed your warning! Being able to hold a magical staff with human skulls already clearly shows his identity. The only thing I don't understand is that big lizard's actions. Why would it make such a shady transaction with the Calamity Church. This is truly odd." The devastatingly beautiful Adele's eyebrows creased as she voiced her doubts.

"Matriarch, do we still need to deal with the lizardmen? This person's age is still young, so he's definitely not a match for you. Now that he's entered our domain, should we take advantage of the situation and be rid of him?" A different dark elf elder piped up.

"You fool! Since he'd dared to enter our domain, he's definitely confident in his ability to leave. Let alone leave, he surely has a way to send out information. You fools, can't you use your brains?!" Adele snapped.

Adele shot a glance at the only young dark elf here after scolding them. Her voice tinkled with a laugh as she tenderly said, "Young child, I heard you met this human before when following Dana?"

"In response to the Matriarch, this person has come to the underground world once previously. He started off helping us deal with a young dark dragon. However, because Chief Dana targeted him, wanting to capture everything in one fell swoop, he somehow betrayed us and left more than



half of us dead. In the end, he even stole the Eternal Sigh of Darkness 1 and made that dark dragon his magical pet.” This young dark elf respectfully reported.

Adele started and hastily inquired, “What? The Eternal Sigh of Darkness is in his hands?”

Nodding, the dark elf replied, “Yes Matriarch, he stole it from the hands of Chief Dana. Last time when we went to deal with the lizardmen, that big lizard crushed Chief Dana to death. A lot of us saw him then too. I’m sure it’s him.”

“Dark dragon, he made a young dark dragon his magical pet.....” Elder Sikong muttered to himself before suddenly saying in astonishment, “Matriarch, that dark dragon wouldn’t be Gilbert, the son of Gilges, the head of the dark dragons, would it? When we left the underground world, we promised Gilges, that old bastard, that we would be responsible for finding his son.”

When she heard Sikong’s words, Adele’s expression changed, “That’s very likely. That young lewd dragon and this Bryan have similar temperaments. They’re probably running together. If that’s indeed the case, we definitely must not move against him now. This person is not someone we can provoke.”

“Matriarch, then what do we do? Are we going to just let the lizardmen go?” The young dark elf hastily spoke, seeming to have a deeply-rooted hatred for the lizardmen

Adele shot a glance at the young dark elf and responded, “And just how important are the lizardmen? This underground world houses so many races, and they are by no means crucial. Besides occupying a few mines, they have no other accomplishments. The present situation will not change whether or not we provoke them. However, if we can strike a good relationship with this Calamity Church fellow, perhaps we will be able to return to the world above and forcefully reclaim the fertile lands of the damned forest elves.”

The young dark elf was pleasantly surprised to hear those words, “We

can actually return to the world above and even take back everything that belonged to us from the hands of the forest elves?”

“In this world, there is no such thing as impossible!” Adele confidently said.

As Adele and several dark elf elders spoke, their ears had been constantly taking in the unrestrained moans from above. But when their conversation reached this point, the sounds from above suddenly started gradually calming down. It quickly dwindled into silence, and not a single dark female elf’s voice sound.

As Adele knitted her brows to listen for a moment, she suddenly couldn’t help but feel alarmed. She noticed that not even one of her subordinates had come down. All five of those dark elves were actually from a group within the dark elf race that were the most skilled at sex and the most in need of vigor. Their lasciviousness wouldn’t topple even after going through ten guys in a night. According to Adele’s instructions, after they’d dealt with Han Shuo, they would send a signal to inform her.

However, from the present situation, it seemed that the elves had already submitted. Not a single one of the five harlots had sent a signal or continued to make any noise.

“Why is there no more noise?” An elder asked suspiciously.

“He’s probably finally incapable of continuing. To be able to last so long, it seems like this human actually has some tricks indeed!” Another elder replied.

Adele shot a glance at the two elves and lightly humphed before saying, “You think everyone is useless like all of you?”

“Heh, can one human be capable of subduing those five sluts in such a short time?” One elder sneered.

“You’re right!” Adele disdainfully shot a glance at him before muttering, “Do I actually have to personally take the field?”

Adele’s body started growing hot from head to toe after speaking, her cheeks turning an alluring blood-red. Without taking another look at the

couple of male dark elves here, she twisted her waist, excitedly swaying her buttocks to and fro as she walked upwards.

When Adele finally arrived, she saw Han Shuo's completely naked body casually sitting on top of a chair, a smile on his face as he gazed at the restless Adele burning in flames of passion. At Han Shuo's feet, five wanton dark elves lay on top of a rug like five balls of cotton. They seemed to lack the strength to even raise their fingers in greeting.

Adele merely shot a glance at Han Shuo's spirited and fierce thing on his lower body before suddenly feeling a tremble in her heart. Then, looking at the scene that had become a mess, the throbbing in her heart became increasingly intense, and she was sure that the sound of her thumping heart was echoing across the room.

"I've been waiting for you all along!" Han Shuo smilingly looked at Adele as he opened both of his hands in an inviting manner, "How about coming here, my lady!"

Adele suddenly emitted a moving moan as the clothing on her body drifted towards the ground like pieces of a feather. She unreservedly displayed a perfect, naked body that was ravishingly beautiful out in the open. Then, like a moth flying into flames, her plump butt directly fell on top of Han Shuo who sat upright on a chair,

Han Shuo and Adele simultaneously emitted a loud moaning sound that brimmed with endless joy and satisfaction.

In the room that Adele had left, the male dark elves left were discussing things, seemingly disbelieving the words Adele said before she left.

However, after Adele's prolonged moan traveled into the room, the faces of each and every one of the male dark elves became extremely unsightly. From the moment her voice rang out, it signified that her judgement was correct. That Han Shuo had indeed conquered the five dark elves in a very short time frame and had now started his expedition on Matriarch Adele.

Some human males were indeed stronger than dark elves in this field. However, the ability of female dark elves in this field was also very well-known throughout the Profound Continent. Even if an unusually endowed

and gifted human male confronted a female dark elf, they wouldn't have any advantages whatsoever. Those first five wanton dark elves were actually well-known figures among the dark elves, but who would've expected that Han Shuo would deal with them with ease?

Now that Adele had personally taken the field, the previously disdainful words that she said to them became fact. This seemed to resemble a slap to a face and caused their self-respect in this matter to suffer an enormous humiliation.

"What a frightening fellow. Seems like only the matriarch can make him succumb!" Sikong said towards the few people beside him as the blood on his face gradually faded away. The other people had a noticeably envious look. However after Sikong's words, they also all nodded and said, "Naturally!"

Sikong and the others were originally Adele's lovers. This was a normal situation within the dark elf race; but even with all of them together, they still weren't a match for Adele. Perhaps, because they knew how frightening Adele was in this respect, they were constantly afraid of Adele deep in their hearts and were unable to raise their heads.

As Sikong and the others resumed their discussion, another prolonged moan came from Adele above. The complexion of the five elders changed greatly after hearing this. Sikong couldn't help but to cry out in alarm first, saying, "How is that possible!"

The others also had faces filled with incredulity. Each and every one of them looked at each other with dismay, not knowing what to do. From that prolonged moan, they could obviously recognize that Adele had climaxed.

But, without waiting for the five dark elves to react, Adele suddenly emitted another extremely carefree moan and let out a shrieking "No". The five black elves were once again stupefied. Amongst them, Sikong was aghast, "He's still going, can it be that even the matriarch is also unable to continue?"

"Impossible. Even if the matriarch climaxes, she still shouldn't say the

word 'No'. Perhaps she's purposefully putting on an act. You all should know that the more weakly a woman resists, the more likely a male will orgasm torrentially and delightfully!" Among them, a dark elf elder thought for a moment before analyzing with great pomp.

The other dark elves immediately reacted. Amongst them, Sikong drew many inferences and suddenly said in realization, "The matriarch is truly powerful. It seems like her recent moaning sound is just to confuse this terrifying human."

"That must be so. What kind of person is the matriarch? As if such a young and vigorous fellow is capable of conquering our matriarch!"

"Mm, We seemed to have overthought the situation. It seems like the matriarch has once again earned herself another servant between her legs."

As the couple of dark elf elders discussed and believed themselves to be infallible, Adele's panic-stricken voice became louder and louder above them. An unceasing shrieking sound started, "No. Don't, don't do this, I beg you!"

"The matriarch's act is so genuine. It seems like he will soon be done for!" Sikong continued to voice his opinion.

"Ah.... Damned Sikong, hurry and save me, save me!" Suddenly, after Adele's wretched and mournful howling, she unexpectedly started shouting for assistance.

Sikong leapt up with fright and spoke, stunned, "Did you hear that clearly?! The matriarch is shouting for me to save her, could something have truly happened?"

"Ah.... Just kill me, you demon, just kill me!" From above, Adele screamed frantically without a hint of joy at all.

The dark elf elders finally started reacting at this time, suddenly realizing that a very major incident must've happened above. They rushed out of the meeting room with a shout as they hastily made their way upstairs.

They barged into the room and gaped at the sight that greeted them. Adele was firmly pressed down on top of the chair and was being vigorously pounded from behind. But that wasn't what transfixed them. Adele's body seemed to visibly age, as if the wheel of time had quickened by a thousand times.

Her long hair on her head gradually started becoming grey. Following this change, Adele's powerful aura also began to slowly flow into Han Shuo's body, causing his originally mellow aura to start to soaring unceasingly.

"Hey, you guys came!" Han Shuo's big arm firmly pinned down Adele as he continued his punitive expedition. Turning his head towards the couple of dark elf elders, his smirk seemed to turn into a somewhat ruthless smile.

"Let go of our matriarch, otherwise, we will kill you!" Sikong hissed severely as he pulled out the crystal ball he'd used previously.

"I'm almost ready, just wait a moment!" Han Shuo laughed as he started pounding in an increasingly fierce manner. Soon after he began exerting himself with a burst of speed right in front of the dark elf elders, he flung his head back, howling loudly with elation as his body began to uncontrollably tremble for a short burst.

As he finished, he took another look at the dark elf matriarch Adele. At that moment, the ravishingly beautiful Madam Adele, whose looks could fell cities and topple empires, had become a grey haired, loose skinned dark elf granny. Her skin didn't have the slightest luster of life to it. It was clear, she would never again regain her youthful radiance.

From his space ring, Han Shuo cheerfully and happily took out another shirt and put it on. Han Shuo, having just absorbed all of the power of Adele's body, only felt an unprecedented contentment as he faced the several dark elf elders with a smile. "Adele's dead. You guys should all go die too!"

# Chapter 369: Traitors

Adele's death, coupled with Han Shuo's ruthless words sent chills over the dark elf elders. Especially Sikong, who had personally fought Han Shuo, was deeply affected.

Sikong, who'd been the first to suggest coming here, didn't feel the slightest desire for revenge upon seeing Adele's corpse. He actually shrank back as a fearful look crossed his face, "Wh-what do you want?"

Han Shuo laughed, and grinned as he said, "I want your deaths of course!"

"You also gain no benefit if we die, and you might not even be able to defeat the five of us." Sikong opened his mouth again, his expression becoming slightly calmer. "Let's negotiate."

It was at this time that the naked elf girls lying on the carpet slowly woke up groggily. Upon seeing the situation, they panicked and ran to the elders, screaming, "Elders, Save us!"

The dark elf elders were unsure of what to do when they saw the five naked bodies running towards them. They didn't have much time to think however, as the five elf girls all ran into the embrace of various elders. Still wearing an expression of fear, they gabbled, "We're scared! Let's leave this place!"

Pfft.

Sikong stared in disbelief at the delicate dagger protruding from his stomach, then stared with disbelief at the squirming girls in his embrace. However, their faces no longer held any trace of fear now, but instead wore expressions of indifference.

The other elders met the same fate as Sikong. Each of the elf girls that had barreled into their embrace had struck a fatal blow with daggers into each of their chests, all with cold vicious expressions on their faces.

"Trying to kill you folks in your own territory wasn't easy. Heh heh, but it seems the people who want you dead are your own people!" Han Shuo

explained with a smile, coldly watching Sikong fall into a puddle of his own blood.

“W-why?” Sikong asked the dark elf girl, unable to accept the situation.

“Why did you old bastards come up from down below? All of the races were doing just fine until you came and stole our spots, becoming our slavers! Keke, every race has them, not to mention us dark elves. As long as you die, then we’ll become the true holders of power amongst the dark elves!” The dark elf girl coldly smiled. She squatted and grasped the dagger tightly, shoving it even farther in. Sikong’s eyes widened, and went glassy, never to see again.

All of the dark elf elders were extraordinary magic users. However, they would have never thought that their own subordinates would act against them, and immediately fell victim to the dark elf girls’ covert ambush.

Emitting a small sound of inquiry, Han Shuo flew towards one of the dark elf elders like lightning. One of the elders had just struggled to his feet from a puddle of his own blood when Han Shuo placed his palm on the elder’s back. An explosive sound rang out from within the elder’s body. This elder, who had not fallen in the sneak attack, was finally dead for good.

Having made preparations for hand-to-hand combat with Han Shuo, Adele had not posted any dark elf sentries nearby. Knowing that she would likely be loud, she would likely not want her subordinates to hear her, as she was the main wielder of political power amongst the dark elves. As a result, she had dismissed her bodyguards.

This made it so that even after the battle had finished, there were still no sentries who were aware of the earthshaking situation that had occurred. They were still busily going about their own business in the distance.

“Didn’t you say you’ll work with us? Why did you still kill Adele in the end?” A dark elf girl named Shialan asked Han Shuo with puzzlement as she wiped her bloodstained arm on the carpet, putting on her gauze thin clothes.

After Han Shuo’s display of strength from pushing all five of them down



in such a short time, Siyalin and the rest had made a proposal to Han Shuo, hoping that Han Shuo would help kill Adele and the elders. However, they were tactfully declined by Han Shuo.

Shrugging, Han Shuo said with resignation, “Adele acted against me, so I suddenly changed my mind.”

When Han Shuo said these words, he sighed lightly. There seemed to be several red strands moving around in his body. Two black dots were being seemingly harried by the red strands into the palm of his hand. The skin of Han Shuo’s palms suddenly burst open, and two blue spiders the size of beans emerged.

Two balls of flame materialized in Han Shuo’s palms, turning the two blue spiders into ashes. Han Shuo blew, and the ashes vanished in the air.

Han Shuo originally hadn’t intended to act against Adele. However, it’d become apparent that Adele was conspiring against him. With Han Shuo’s level of power, it was utter simplicity to discover any oddities within his body. Judging by Adele’s use of two spiders to infiltrate Han Shuo’s body, it was obvious that she didn’t have any good intentions.

These two spiders were implanted into Han Shuo’s body when he and Adele had been kissing passionately. He hadn’t even felt them in the heat of the moment. Had Han Shuo not been as powerful as he was, he never would have known that Adele was acting against him.

With Han Shuo’s temperament, he wouldn’t hold any kind feelings towards Adele since she made the first move. During their fierce body-on-body combat, Han Shuo suddenly used the demonic secret technique to absorb Adele’s energy, taking yin to replenish yang.

Adele was a strange dark mage and also had a strange energy in her body. This energy was completely different from the other forms of energy Han Shuo was familiar with, containing some sort of evil, wanton power. Han Shuo had detected a trace of evil divine power within the energy, and assumed that it must have come from the evil goddess Rose. It was precisely because Adele’s body contained this kind of depraved evil power that she was so powerful as a mere dark archmage. She’d resisted madly

when he was draining her yin, but she only had the power of a mage. When faced with Han Shuo, whose physical body was as tyrannical as a magical beast, her struggling was futile.

When using the demonic technique to drain Adele's energy, most of the absorbed energy had been from the dark goddess Rose. After filtering out the impurities, only a fifth of the original amount was left. However, even this small amount of energy nourish Han Shuo's magical yuan. The demon infant in his body was gaining more and more sentience, loosening Han Shuo's inhibitions.

As for Adele's mental strength, it wasn't something that the secret technique could harvest. Unfortunately for her, under Han Shuo's relentless "Soul Tremor" spells, it was impossible for her to focus enough to concentrate her mental strength to attack him.

"It seems that the strength in my heart has been getting stronger recently. Could it be that I'm on the verge of a breakthrough to the carnal realm?" Han Shuo suddenly began to doubt his progress. Recently, he had been feeling the strong urge to "subdue" every pretty girl he came across. Even towards enemies, Han Shuo had the urge to behead them, with wild thoughts of massacres and other brutality oozing their way into his thoughts.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo temporarily dispelled those thoughts from his head. Glancing at the five elf girls who had finished dressing themselves and were standing in front of him, he said "Alright, these old bastards who were preventing you from taking power are all dead. Now can we talk about matters relating to us?"

Shilan nodded her head, and said "Leave the rest to us. We'll give you five hundred thousand gold coins as long as you give us the Eternal Sigh of Darkness. We'll also promise not to disturb the lizardmen. What do you say?"

"No problem." Han Shuo readily agreed, taking the bow he'd acquired from Dana. "It's useless in my hands anyway; it's a very good deal for me to exchange this for five hundred thousand gold coins."

Adele and the dark elf elders weren't carrying anything that was of interest to Han Shuo. Perhaps it was due to the fact that they had just arrived from the layer below, but they lacked the opportunity to collect any wealth, meaning that Han Shuo couldn't loot any satisfactory war spoils off them.

"In addition, we agree to establish long-term agreements. Here in the underground world, we have many things that you people aboveground lack. I believe that these things could be exchanged for some fine wine, as well as some fine art, including gems that increase power. With those items, we dark elves can craft beautiful magical weapons. If you were to sell them outside, they should be items that nobles fight over to acquire." Shialan said to Han Shuo.

"Haha, don't worry, I won't let you down. Of course, you also have to satisfy me as well. Let's get rich together!" Han Shuo happily said to the five dark elf girls, who were about to become the next group of dark elf elders.

# Chapter 370: Summoning the Old Fey Corpse

After Han Shuo departed dark elves' territory, the five female dark elves worked together to drag the corpse of Adele and the dark elf elders into one of the deepest cellar rooms. They falsely claimed to others that Adele and the other dark elf elders had already begun touring the world above.

After a couple of days, the cellar was suddenly filled with tens of thousands of small spiders. It seemed as though every spider in dark elf territory had somehow made their way into the cellar. Somehow, none of the dark elves within the territory detected these spiders.

Tens of thousands of small spiders were densely packed together, completely filling up the cellar. As the spiders crazily squirmed on top of Adele's body, the small spiders began spitting a strange, magical silk one after the other. As the silk fell onto Adele's body, the small spiders began drying up one after the other, losing their lives. They had spat out their very own life force along with the silk.

This process continued for some time. Finally, after the tens of thousands of small spiders that had entered the cellar room had all spat out their life force, they all died within the cellar room.

Adele's dried up and shriveled body slowly began weathering. After a few days, only white skeletal bones remained. However, within Adele's skull, there was actually an additional thumb-sized blue pearl that emitted a blue haze. The pearl was filled with the evil goddess Rose's evil power, similar to what Han Shuo had previously absorbed.

One day, this blue pearl suddenly burst, expelling hundreds of thousands of blue colored threads of silk. They inserted themselves within the bodies of the several dark elf elders that had already died. The silk actually began extracting strands of blue light from within the elders' body. Within just a moment's time, the body of all the several dark elf elders had completely transformed into ashes, blown away on the air. Then, during the middle of the night, the blue colored pearl slowly flew out of the cellar, flying

towards the temple of evil goddess Rose.

In the middle of the temple, an innocent and pure young female dark elf was facing the statue of Rose, piously praying. This dark elf young lady appeared to have the age of a sixteen or seventeen year old human girl, seemingly uncorrupted by the profoundly lewd and evil cultures of the dark elf race. She worshipped Rose's statue, looking like a most devoted believer.

While facing the statue of Rose, she kowtowed continuously while murmuring in the language of the dark elves. Suddenly, the blue pearl flew over her head and hovered there. Then, the blue pearl abruptly burst, emitting blue colored rays of light that tightly wrapped around the young lady below.

After the blue colored pearl emitted its tremendous power, it began transferring that power into the young lady's body. The young lady began to shriek in pain, but the strands had tightly wound around every inch of her body, even sealing her mouth. So even her wretched screams were stifled as she struggled in vain.

The young lady's originally jade-green pupils gradually turned white. The muffled shrieks also began to gradually quiet down. After a while, the blue pearl, along with the hundreds of thousands of blue strands of light, slowly began merging into the young lady's body. The blue colored light continued to linger within the young lady's body as she collapsed in front of the statue. Only when it was nearly dawn did the blue light completely disappear, and her pupils gradually regain their previous jade-green look.

When the young lady stood up and faced the statue, she performed a rite in deep gratitude. Then, she gnashed her teeth and said, "Bryan, I will make you taste every iota of my suffering. I swear, I will use the same method to kill you!"

At that moment, a carefree and wild laugh echoed from the Cemetery of Death, brimming with the sound of joy and comfort.

An approximately two meter tall old fey zombie stood in front of Han Shuo. Its body was covered with long, green hair, and its teeth and claws

looked razor sharp. At long last, Han Shuo had successfully summoned it, and it wasted no time in roaring its displeasure. This advanced ranked zombie was actually not being restrained by the laws of the heavens and earth of the Profound Continent. Instead, it was clamoring in an immensely loud voice that spread powerfully throughout the Cemetery of Death, mixing with Han Shuo's wild laughter.

After the old fey zombie roared, it raised its head and saw the creator of the contract in front of him. Unexpectedly, it shot straight towards him. Its speed made it seem like a bolt of green lightning as it flew, its one-meter long talons humming through the wind. It had an astonishingly and incomparably imposing aura.

"Damn it, it seems like it wasn't entirely successful. There's another part that needs fixing. Otherwise, this formidable zombie would not have immediately attacked me right after arriving within this dimension. If this was during an actual battle, the necromancer would have been screwed." Han Shuo cursed softly. Seeing the old fey zombie charging at him, he hurriedly took out the Demonslayer Edge.

Han Shuo's left hand grasped a skeleton staff. A quick wave and incantation later, an enormous bone shield crashed in front of Han Shuo right before a sharp bone spur could skewer him. The old fey zombie's attack crashed audibly into the shield, with the latter exploding fiercely. The old fey zombie tumbled to the ground from the force of the impact.

The bone shield summoned by a grand magus was considerably more powerful and covered a wider area. Thus, when the old fey zombie charged towards the bone shield, it couldn't pierce through the bone shield's defenses. It was only capable of cracking the shield.

Without waiting for the old fey zombie to scramble back up, the Demonslayer Edge suddenly flew out of Han Shuo's hands. The screech of metal striking metal rang out as two of the old fey zombie's sharp claws were severed. However, Han Shuo was still shocked as he wondered exactly what on earth the old fey zombie's sharp claws were made of. Only two claws had been shorn off after the Demonslayer Edge's strike descended, and that too with difficulty.

Han Shuo knew in his heart just how sharp the Demonslayer Edge was. Furthermore, after tempering it meticulously once more with enormous amounts of killing intent, it could effortlessly split rocks and chop metal. Han Shuo truly had never anticipated that this old fey zombie would actually be so frightening. When the Demonslayer Edge chopped downwards, it had only snapped apart two of its sharp claws.

The old fey zombie fell to a sitting position, baring its fangs and howling loudly once more. Then, it once again launched itself towards Han Shuo as he also began waving the skeleton staff in his hands again. This time, a hundred or so bone spears appeared, breaking through the skies. Although they were incapable of piercing the old fey zombie, they were enough to force it to backtrack in retreat.

Taking advantage of the respite, Han Shuo relied on the contract's powerful connection to the other world and used the skeleton staff to forcefully return the old fey zombie back to its world.

It was not that Han Shuo feared the old fey zombie. It wasn't a difficult task for him to kill this old fey zombie with his strength. However, because the old fey zombie had begun launching attacks towards its master right after being summoned, Han Shuo knew that there was a problem in his incantation. Thus, the most important problem currently was how to chant the summoning technique properly and not to continue dilly-dallying with the old fey zombie.

After Han Shuo left the underground world, he had stayed within the Cemetery of Death for a few days and practiced grand magus ranked summoning techniques. After studying intensively for such a while, Han Shuo had slowly starting grasping the technique. Because of this, he was finally capable of summoning the old fey zombie from another dimension today.

"The old fey zombie immediately started to attack me after arriving at this dimension. It must be because it was not completely under the restricting power of the contract. Otherwise, it would absolutely not dare to attack me." Han Shuo muttered to himself while knitting his brows and reconsidering the details of the summoning technique he had just used.

He took out that thick tome of necromancy and once again began reading it earnestly. After a little while, he suddenly had a thought flash into his mind as he cried out, “Ah! Was I supposed to make the contract mid-way through?”

When Han Shuo had used the summoning technique to call forth the old fey zombie into the Profound Continent, he’d first used the incantation to create a connection with the other dimension. Then, after chanting some syllables to locate the old fey zombie’s position, Han Shuo’s mental strength had instantly traversed through an endless distance of the boundless space, before arriving at the other dimension. Finally, Han Shuo would then randomly target an old fey zombie with his mental strength.

Following these events, the mental strength must then be used to firmly suppress the old fey zombie that was targeted. Then, while the old fey zombie was being suppressed and was incapable of resisting, the zombie must be dragged into the space tunnel. The old fey zombie would then pass through the space tunnel before finally descending on the Profound Continent.

However, Han Shuo noticed an annotation in a remote corner of the cryptic book. It stated that when a creature was in it’s original dimension, that would be when it was in its most formidable state. However, when it left its dimension and entered the space tunnel, it would enter its weakest state. But when it descended onto a material world, it would restore its power once more.

It was only natural that zombies would always be at their most formidable when freely traversing through their own undead world. But after arriving within the material world of the Profound Continent, they would begin suffering to a certain extent due to a lack of intense death energy.

Even so, zombies were still capable of exhibiting a powerful force within material worlds. As long as there were living creatures in the material world, death energy would certainly exist from the departed spirits. Although the death energy wouldn’t be as pure and condensed as their own world, it would still be able to provide the zombies with necessary



strength. Additionally, with the death energy that was innate to the zombies, their strength would also be on par with their strength on home world even if they descended onto the Profound Continent.

However, the process of entering the material world inevitably required entering through the profound space tunnel. This distance should have originally been distant beyond measure, but was shrunk to the span of an instant under either the powerful influence of the contract, the caster's mental energy, or rules of space encompassed in the contract.

According to the differences in one's mental prowess as a necromancer and one's skill at chanting spells, the speed with which a zombie entered through the space tunnel from its dimension and entered the material world would also differ. The stronger a necromancer was and the better they understood the essence of necromancy magic, the less time a necromancer would waste on incantations.

Under normal circumstances, when a magic apprentice became an archmage, it would take three to five seconds for a zombie to leave its dimension and enter this material world. As for Han Shuo, he could already be considered as at the grand magus rank. Thus, he only needed a brief second.

If the spell was cast by a sacred magus necromancer, then the time to traverse the space tunnel would be calculated in the milliseconds. As a result, the zombie would descend onto the material world in a flash right after the incantation was complete. (The process of chanting the incantation was in reality just a way to communicate with the creature in the other dimension. It was a string of events related to finding, suppressing, and binding the creature to the contract.)

However, regardless of whether one was a magic apprentice having just entered the world of necromancy, or a sacred magus who had already deeply understood the essence of necromancy as a sacred magus, a summoning always required traversing space tunnels. This was true whether the summoned creature was the weakest skeleton warrior or the most frightening undead bone dragon.

Although the time to travel through the space tunnel depended on a magician's strength, this step was unavoidable. According to this note, it seemed that regardless of how strong the undead creature was, they all became extremely weak when brought into the space tunnel devoid of death energy.

According to the contents within the book, taking advantage of that moment of weakness to enforce the contract was the most logically secure method. Han Shuo seemed to have suddenly comprehended something as his heart somewhat stirred. He began to chant the spell once again. After carefully concentrating his mental power to an optimal state, he connected with an old fey zombie in the other dimension as the syllables of the incantation rose and fell.

During the spirited struggling from the old fey zombie, Han Shuo's mental energy burst out like a mountain flood, suppressing the zombie's struggle. Following the continued chanting of the necromancy spell, Han Shuo's mental energy gradually eliminated the old fey zombie's resistance. He then drove the old fey zombie to enter and cross through the space tunnel with the appropriate syllables.

The moment the old fey zombie faded into the space tunnel, Han Shuo immediately exerted all his strength to rapidly conclude the contract in less than a second. One second later, the old fey zombie suddenly descended in front of Han Shuo in the Cemetery of Death,

After lightly exhaling, Han Shuo brightly gazed and stared attentively at the old fey zombie that had just been summoned; he would be prepared for any sudden contingencies. This time, the hideous looking old fey zombie didn't make any movement whatsoever. It wasn't like last time, charging wildly towards Han Shuo.

After deeply and attentively watching the old fey zombie for a while, Han Shuo gradually grew happier in his heart. He tried to transmit a command. The old fey zombie immediately began flying in a circle. Although, Han Shuo felt a feeling of impatience verging on loathing from the old fey zombie for forcing it to do such a pointless action, it continued to fly according to Han Shuo's command. Resistance was impossible under the

contract's power.

“Success. I’ve finally succeeded!” Han Shuo wildly laughed out loud as he felt a strong sense of satisfaction taking over his heart. Obviously, this time’s incantation was a success.

The necromancy grand magus level old fey zombie summoning technique had finally truly been realized under Han Shuo’s assiduous hard work. Being able to successfully use this meant that grasping the next summoning techniques for the bone devil and mummy lords would now become much quicker and easier.

# Chapter 371: A woman's heart

Using the Cemetery of Death's transportation array, Han Shuo arrived at an desolate area within an underground abyss near Seagate City. After summoning the elite earth zombie to tunnel to the surface, he left the underground abyss and hurriedly headed towards Seagate City.

With the kind of power Han Shuo had at his fingertips, any city's defense was as useful as a paper shield in front of him. He swooped in unseen, landing in a deserted corner of Seagate City. After which, he made his way casually to the manor Helen had taken as her residence during her first trip. However, only after Han Shuo arrived at that place did he notice that Helen and his personal guards had already left Seagate City long ago.

He changed headings, soon arriving at the Dark Mantle's stronghold at Seagate City. He called for Delante, and soon found out that Helen had already swept through the city in a bloody purge. She'd gained complete control of Seagate City.

The letter that Han Shuo sent last time had already entered Dick's hands. According to Han Shuo's commands, Brettel City had begun spreading another rumor of how Helen had absolutely never been in an intimate relationship with Han Shuo and how the previous rumor about Helen's rape was just an assumption made by his subordinates.

Furthermore, Brettel City also made a formal statement attesting to the veracity of their new rumor. This was quickly and deliberately spread widely throughout the seven grand duchies. Indeed, that alone convinced a majority of people. However, some narrow-minded people were still as before, disbelieving in the authenticity of this message.

As this official statement and its accompanying rumors started to spread through the duchies, some of the citizens of the Helon Duchy who deeply respected their grand duke Helen began to believe in her again. Helen originally felt that it was beneath her dignity to come out and testify as to its authenticity in public. But after facing so many impassive faces and thinly veiled contempt, she took advantage of the situation to finally stand

up to say her piece to the public after Brettel City sent out its statement.

Helen agreed to an evaluation of her body held by the various nobles of the Helon Duchy, overseen by several ladies of prestigious, virtuous reputation. Three old specialists dispatched by a couple of powerful nobles to examine Helen's body finally confirmed that Helen was indeed a truly intact virgin.

After the powerful nobles and ladies published a formal statement together, all the citizens completely believed the authenticity of the situation, clearing Helen in their eyes. Perhaps because the citizens felt that they had insulted their own grand duke's reputation, they all began grieving, lamenting, and even reflecting on their previous actions of despising Helen. After going through this event, the citizens of the dukedom began viewing Helen with an unprecedented level of respect and admiration.

Taking advantage of her citizen's newfound faith, Helen swiftly and decisively rooted out several political enemies in rapid succession, completely cleaning her court of conspiring nobles and disloyal aristocrats. After she had finished her blood spattered massacre, there wasn't a single noble left in the entire Helon Duchy that ever dared rebel again.

At this moment, Benedict Sackville, who had originally treated Helen with incomparable disdain and indifference, immediately sent an ardent letter to Helen. On one side, he bitterly and hatefully expressed his remorse. On the other, he was like his former self, stubbornly starting to pursue Helen again.

At the Helon Duchy residence within Seagate City, Helen held up the letter that was filled with his touching words of love. She tore the letter into fragments with a cold sneer as she spoke to Firewind by her side, "I have thoroughly and clearly seen through the true face of Benedict Sackville after this event. What he was pursuing all along was Helon Duchy, and never me. Back then, when all the citizens and nobles of the Helon Duchy rebelled against me, not only did he not extend a hand in help, but he even schemed against me in the shadows. Yet now that I've

restored my power within Helon Duchy, he has once again begun to chase me like an annoying fly. It seems that only the Duchy has ever been the true target of his affections.”

Firewind had transformed into her human form, and so nodded at Helen’s words. “I told you long ago that Benedict Sackville wasn’t a trustworthy person. Politicians, they always act for their own benefit. This person’s hypocritical behavior makes me feel nauseous. I really don’t know how you could have willingly cooperated with him before.”

Helen’s tender and beautiful cheeks slightly reddened from Firewind’s words. “Sister Firewind, I was just using him, that’s all. It was just a thing between nations. Narsen Duchy has the same enemies as me, so I was just using him to defeat the enemy. That’s all.”

After pausing for a moment, Helen’s face became even redder. She hesitated for a moment, and asked Firewind somewhat cowardly, “Sister Firewind, what do you think of Bryan?”

Firewind blanked momentarily before gritting her teeth with hate. “That despicable and baseless person?”

Without knowing why, Helen’s heart itched ever so slightly when she heard Firewind call Han Shuo a despicable and baseless person. It was as if the depths of her heart was unwilling to heard anyone vilify Han Shuo. Even someone as intimate as her sister Firewind was not an exception.

“Mm, exactly that Bryan. Sister Firewind, what do you think of him?” Because Helen and Firewind had such a close relationship for so many years, she naturally didn’t rebuke her and even looked expectantly at Firewind.

After Firewind had flung out her earlier sentence, she shot a glance at Helen and noticed an expectant expression within her eyes. Firewind had already noticed that Helen didn’t have a single bit of her previous resentment. Firewind sighed in her heart and forced a laugh as she said, “Helen, this Bryan is even harder to deal with than Benedict Sackville. I could even sense a little bit of his filthy thoughts being directed towards you when he was facing Benedict Sackville. Furthermore, he wears a

hypocritical expression that is completely at odds with his innermost thoughts.”

“However, when I’m together with Bryan, I’m completely incapable of sensing his heart’s mood. He seemed like a bottomless cold pond, an unfathomably grim feeling. As for going even deeper, that is something I have absolutely no way of prying into. Ai, that man is too powerful. If he wanted to kill us, we couldn’t even put up a decent fight, let alone survive. I know we can’t defeat him, but I also don’t know if your methods are truly the right way of doing things.”

Firewind knew that Helen had already unconsciously developed feelings for Han Shuo. Han Shuo indeed had the ability to attract any woman. However, this type of guy was simply a type of poison for a woman. If one became addicted then it would be hard to free oneself. However, to the ambitious and exuberant Helen, only an equally ambitious kind of tyrannical person was the most suitable for her.

Han Shuo was exactly this kind of person. Looking at it from Helen’s point of view, the frighteningly powerful, decisive, and fierce Han Shuo was filled with a deadly attractiveness. If Helen had such a guy constantly supporting her, then it wouldn’t be a bad thing even if the seven grand duchies warred all year round. Alas, this guy schemed way too much. It was clear that he would never be satisfied with just one Helon Duchy. When he begins trying to seize all the seven grand duchies, Firewind didn’t know if it would be Helen’s good fortune or misfortune to follow him.

“Sister Firewind, I already know what I want. Benedict Sackville can’t give me the things I want, but I think Bryan can. Additionally, I don’t know why but I’ve noticed that I can’t feel any hatred for him. Perhaps, I am just too sentimental. I can hate someone to the bone, but I can also transform this hatred into love after something’s happened. Ai.....” Helen heaved a sigh as her voice became laden with emotion.

As Firewind and Helen pondered within the duke’s home, a ball of light mist slowly drifted over. After passing the courtyard, it rose in spirals, before finally descending down towards Helen’s window.

Right as Helen was about to talk to Firewind, she noticed a light mist gently appearing and slowly rising in spirals. She couldn't restrain the pleasant surprise in her heart as she rushed to cheerfully say, "He's here."

The Firewind Phoenix started, staring blankly. Then she started sensing an evil aura slowly filling the room. This aura of necromancy and demonic magic on Han Shuo's body was somewhat taboo to Firewind. Thus, seeing the light mist coming, Firewind knitted her brows and retreated a couple of steps back, increasing the distance between her and the gradually materializing Han Shuo.

"You came?" When Helen saw Han Shuo calmly appearing, she suddenly had an impulse to throw herself onto Han Shuo, entering his bosom. But the joy on her face was indeed genuine and sincere.

"Mm, I was delayed for a few days due to some things. But, all is fine. Now that you've seized Seagate City, the entire Helen Duchy should be more secure than before, correct?" Han Shuo nodded and smiled. Looking at Helen's sincere and joyous face, Han Shuo was feeling truly happy in his heart indeed. He was happy that this girl was gradually falling deeper into his snare of love.

Helen had rooted out her political enemies in a short time through a bloody purge, reconsolidating her hold on the Helen Duchy. This sort of decisive move made Han Shuo somewhat admire Helen's ability. Thinking about how this woman had ascended to the highest point within Helen Duchy, it seemed that she really did have some methods to her name.

Seeing that Firewind was also here, Helen didn't feel it appropriate to act excessively intimate. So after her initial delight, she immediately got down to business, "Oh right, the thing you mentioned last time; how is it going?"

"My people have arrived within Seagate City. Only, because I had yet to arrive, they never dared to get in touch with you. Mm, they are currently right outside. I believe Helen Duchy is completely within your grasp at the moment, so I ought to be able to secretly conduct some business deals now, right?" Han Shuo laughingly replied.

Seeing that Han Shuo was talking, Helen took advantage of the situation



to give Firewind a meaningful glance. As Helen's face reddened with some shyness, she blushed with shame and said to Firewind, "Sister Firewind, please invite them in."

Seeing Helen's face that seemed like it was surging with a longing for love, Firewind sighed in her heart. How would she not know that Helen wanted to send her away so Helen could say some intimate words to Han Shuo!

"Yup, I'll be right back!" Firewind replied before directly walking, headed outside. In her heart, she couldn't help but to silently curse Helen for paying more attention to a lover than to a friend.

Right after Firewind left, Helen immediately reddened, retreating a few steps back as she looked at Han Shuo getting closer with every step. She softly said, "Wh-What do you want to do this time?"

Helen retreated until she was flat against a wall. Leaning against the wooden wall, she blushingly said in a low voice, "This is the the Duke's official residence, you had better not act recklessly."

Both of Han Shuo's hands suddenly pressed down on the wooden wall on either side of Helen's shoulders. Looking at Helen overcome with panic, Han Shuo felt an additional feeling of conquest filling him as he beamed straight down at her. "The Helon Duchy is completely in your control. According to the agreement, shouldn't you be taking the initiative to serve me in bed?"

Helen suddenly grew frantic as she secretly thought how this scoundrel was actually so shameless to brazenly ask for such a reward. However, it made Helen's heart began pound at an increasingly faster pace as she blushingly pleaded. "Give me some more time, I am still not prepared. Also, I just proved to the people that I'm still pure and innocent. If you immediately take me, someone might see through this."

Han Shuo began having second thoughts after she said this. That would indeed true. If Helen experienced sex for the first time, an experienced person could immediately see through her. However, Han Shuo was extremely confident in his abilities. He believed he would definitely be

able to alter the impression Helen gave to others to the point where it could mask the clues.

“Fine then. I will once again give you some more time.” Han Shuo’s sudden response came after a moment of thinking. Just enough time for Helen’s nervousness to reach its peak. Right as she relaxed, Han Shuo suddenly laughed mischievously, “However, shouldn’t I receive some interest first?”

As soon as those words hit her, Helen’s heart that had just been pacified suddenly began to race. Bashfully and secretly raising her head to shoot a glance at Han Shuo, she noticed that a burning passion had started to smolder in Han Shuo’s eyes. She then hastily lowered her head, softly saying, “Wh-What do you actually want to do?”

“A kiss!” Han Shuo laughed.

This guy is indeed still the same, a pervert. Helen sighed surreptitiously. However, she wasn’t actually mad, only somewhat bashful. That’s all. Helen hesitated for a moment, thinking since he’d agreed to not do that thing, it only seemed fair to give him a little benefit. Then, her thoughts suddenly became disorderly. She secretly thought in her heart, I will be his sooner or later anyways, so why does it matter...

When her thoughts reached this point, Helen closed her eyes, raised her head and blushingly waited for the incoming kiss. However, after waiting for a while, Helen didn’t hear the slightest noise. She opened her eyes, her gaze doubtful as she looked at Han Shuo, who was gazing back at her with a face full of smiles.

Pointing at his own lips, Han Shuo said, “I want you to take action and kiss me!”

Th-this bastard. He is so shameless. He actually wants me to personally kiss him! Helen’s maiden heart started to thump wildly. Even her neck flushed red. The blush started spreading down the rest of her body. She had no idea what to do and bashfully blushed with shame.

“Hurry up, otherwise Firewind and the rest of them will soon be here. If you don’t kiss me before they enter, then I’ll just have to kiss you right in

front of them.” Han Shuo looked down at Helen as he teased her.

Helen felt frantic after hearing those words. Picturing what Han Shuo said, Helen became even more afraid within. She sighed inwardly as she closed her eyes, stood on her tiptoes and lightly reached towards Han Shuo’s big lips with her charming face. Their lips touched, and they kissed.

# Chapter 372: Teacher of the State

## Stratholme

This kiss was destined to be brief due to Firewind's approaching footsteps. Han Shuo only managed to have a little taste before it ended. He didn't have the chance to probe into Helen's sweet fragrance.

Just as Helen was feeling baffled about how Han Shuo was not as avaricious as he had been before, she also caught wind of Firewind's nearing footsteps. After raising her head to look at Han Shuo with her limpid eyes, she immediately realized that it was not because Han Shuo was not avaricious, but rather, it was because Firewind was already here.

Before Firewind had even arrived, Han Shuo had entered the bedroom to get a sip of tea. On this expedition, a couple of merchants from Lancelot Empire had come to Helon City alongside Fabian. Although these merchants were on very good terms with Brettel City's Chamber of Commerce, Han Shuo would not allow them to discover the relationship between him and Helen.

Even Fabian had no clue of the exact circumstances. He had only come because he heard from Dick that this would be a safe trip. Fabian was loyal and devoted to Phoebe. Although his relationship with Han Shuo was also extremely strong, Phoebe was Fabian's true master. Fabian would always be there to support Han Shuo, for any other matter. However, if he discovered that Han Shuo had an additional woman, which happened to be Helen, Han Shuo was unable to predict how he would respond.

If Fabian had honestly reported to Phoebe about Han Shuo's playboy-like actions, Phoebe would probably create some kind of noisy disturbance due to her jealous nature.

When Firewind brought Fabian and the Lancelot Empire's merchants along, she had only shot a glance at Helen's face and discovered her lingering sweet blush. After subconsciously pursing her lips, Firewind couldn't help but start thinking askew and blaming Helen, giving her an angry eyeroll.

Attempting to gloss it over, Helen coughed due to the awkward atmosphere. She secretly cursed at Han Shuo. Only then did she look at Fabian and the merchants with a smile, before saying, "Welcome to my Helon Duchy. I believe everyone knew what we would be discussing today before entering this room."

Fabian had only heard from Dick that Helen wanted to conduct some secret business deals merchants from the Lancelot Empire. With Fabian's sensitive sense of a profiteer, he immediately smelled a great opportunity for profit and gold upon receiving the invitation. Currently, as the person in charge of the Helon Duchy, grand duke Helen had a hundred percent control over the Helon Duchy. With such a character taking the initiative to invite people, no matter which merchant group came, they would definitely receive ample benefits.

Fabian smiled faintly and bowed respectfully. "Of course. Our Boozt Merchant Guild is capable of providing the Helon Duchy with everything it needs. Additionally, we will also purchase some goods from your Helon Duchy at a reasonable and fair price. Both of our parties will definitely benefit from such a business transaction."

As Helen and Fabian conversed, a bodyguard reported from outside the room, "Honored Duke, they have arrived."

"Have them come in." Helen gracefully and elegantly commanded.

Shortly after, a party of seven walked in. The vibe they emitted made them seem quite similar to Fabian and his people. Each and every one of them was overweight. The cunning sparkle in their eyes expressed their greedy desire for profit.

"Honored Grand Duke!" After this party of seven entered, they all suddenly became even more respectful than the last. After going through this bloody purge, they would be hard pressed to find another noble that would dare to revolt against Helen within Helon Duchy. Helen's viciousness was also extensively circulated amongst the nobles and merchants, making the merchants even more fearful and apprehensive in their hearts.

“Mm. Rise!” Helen commanded before introducing Fabian. “These are my Helon Duchy’s merchants. From now on, the business deals between you and my Helon Duchy will be completed through you guys alone. However, you can rest assured. In the future, when you are within Helon Duchy’s national borders, your safety will be completely assured by me.”

“Thank you, Sir Duke. This is a kind of business deal that is advantageous to the both of us and will definitely be to everyone’s satisfaction.” Fabian lightly smiled and said.

Helen nodded, “I just wanted to give both of your parties a proper introduction to each other today, make sure you are reassured about working together, and to let you know that the business transaction between you will be under my protection. Mm. Alright then, you guys should find somewhere to discuss amongst yourselves the specifics of the deal. I must also beseech you guys to not let anybody know about the business deals going on today. The more secretive you are, the better it will be.”

“Rest assured Grand Duke, we know what we ought to do!” Together, Fabian and the Helon Duchy’s merchants replied with great sincerity, before departing. As the merchants journeyed to their destination, they had already begun to discuss the details of their business.

Only until after Fabian and the rest left did Han Shuo walk out from within, saying to Helen, “I reckon that, with Lancelot Empire’s merchants, your goods won’t have to pass through Narsen Duchy anymore. The Brut Merchant Alliance is too distant from your Helon Duchy while you also have to deal with Benedict Sackville sticking his nose into your business in the midst of transportation. Your previous business deal with them is inferior to the partnership you will have with Fabian.”

“You brought these merchants over so ardently, but is it not because you have an eye on my Helon Duchy’s war horses!?” Helen shot a glance towards Han Shuo as he walked out of the bedroom, harrumphing with a pout.

Being told off like this, Han Shuo forced a laugh, “This has always been a

mutually beneficial deal. We will both be able to obtain benefits from each other.”

After pausing for a moment, Han Shuo said, “Alright, the seeds of internal strife in your Helen Duchy have been weeded out, so I believe that I should also leave the Helon Duchy for the time being.”

“Ah, you’re leaving already?” Helen involuntarily started to feel a sense of disappointment rising within her as she said to Han Shuo, “Helen Duchy actually has a lot of wonders that deserve touring. How about I personally bring you out to have some fun? In any case, I shouldn’t have too much official business to do in the near future.” When Helen heard that Han Shuo wanted to leave, she felt somewhat reluctant and unwilling. As she had wanted Han Shuo to stay in Helon Duchy for a little while longer, she couldn’t help but make this proposal.

Han Shuo laughed involuntarily, “Look at me, am I such a refined person?”

Helen’s expression darkened as she stayed silent for a moment before suddenly saying softly, “You’ve just arrived here and haven’t even been here for a whole day, but you want to leave just like that? You can’t even stay for a few days? Not even to accompany me?”

Helen’s slender, shapely eyebrows lightly creased as her eyes brimmed with disappointment and sadness. She knew in her heart that Han Shuo was not the type of person to tie himself down for a woman. However, for the couple of days after Han Shuo had left, she didn’t know why, but she couldn’t resist her longing for Han Shuo at all. Now that she had luckily encountered Han Shuo again, she naturally didn’t want him to leave so soon.

Han Shuo silently looked at Helen, the corner of his mouth starting to break into a smile. After hesitating for a moment, he said, “If I stay here for a few days, then I won’t be able to guarantee that you can continue to maintain your pure and holy image within the Helon Duchy.”

“Ahem ahem...” Firewind dryly coughed twice from afar. She waited until Han Shuo and the blushing Helen diverted their attention towards her

before opening her mouth to say, "I still have some things to attend to, so I'll be leaving first!"

Without waiting for either of the two to speak, Firewind suddenly stamped her feet before walking straight out the door. Within a blink of an eye, she had disappeared without a trace in a truly neat and tidy manner.

Helen hatefully glared at Han Shuo before rebuking, "This is all your fault! How could you say such things in front of Firewind?"

Shrugging his shoulders, Han Shuo suddenly said, "It's her that wasn't being tactful. While we were having some alone time together, she should've found an excuse to take her leave. Heh heh you will eventually become my woman, while as the Duke, this is also your mansion, so the things that I spoke to you about really can't be considered inappropriate."

"How will that do?! Sister Firewind is just like a blood sister to me, and she will definitely tease me for this." Helen resentfully faced Han Shuo as she shouted in disagreement. She seemed like a young girl who had just tasted love for the first time.

"Alright, alright. I won't mess with you anymore. I actually need to leave now." Han Shuo prepared to leave the Helen Duchy. He wanted to go on a trip to the other seven duchies and see if he could find an opportunity to attach his mystical demons to the minds of a couple of the grand dukes. Afterwards, he would take advantage of the situation to gain control of a few of the grand dukes and gradually nibble away at the seven grand duchy's power.

"Ar-Are you really going to just leave right now?" Helen nipped her lips, anxiously looking at Han Shuo. After hesitating for a moment, she lowered her head blushing and suggested, "If you're willing to stay and accompany me for a few days, I will agree to anything else as long as you don't truly take me."

After saying this, Helen's head was nearly buried within her own towering peak. She couldn't help but to secretly curse at herself for being such a despicable person, wondering how could she have taken the



initiative to yield to Han Shuo so quickly, but in the end, she had said these words aloud, and since she'd done so, it was yielding to Han Shuo in one way or another.

Han Shuo blanked as his eyes fervently looked at the bashful face of Helen, a goddess to the citizens of Helen Duchy. His heart had suddenly become incessantly hot with impatience. Standing before him, gorgeous beyond measure, was the cause of this heat, a bashful Helen. She possessed a charm that could seize control of any men's soul, causing Han Shuo to feel somewhat unable to control himself, nearly running amok.

"Alright then, I will stay and accompany you for a few days." Han Shuo agreed and suddenly held her by the waist to lift her up. Then, under Helen's bashful and soft cry, Han Shuo firmly face towards Helen's rosy and fragrant lip, plundering her mouth deeply. Before Helen secretly left her mansion, she had temporarily handed some official business to a trustworthy subordinate. Then, Han Shuo accompanied Helen and roamed throughout the Helen Duchy for the next two days.

Helen Duchy was equivalent to a province within the Lancelot Empire, and there were indeed some beautiful sceneries within the several cities. Helen had always been too busy up to now and could never find an occasion to go sightseeing within her own duchy by herself. This time, she was seriously exhilarated to travel with Han Shuo, taking advantage of his existence.

Han Shuo and Helen were both able to defy gravity and fly through the air. In addition to this, Han Shuo also had sufficient power to protect Helen, and thus, for the purpose of having some alone time together, they were naturally heartless and decided to exclude Firewind once again.

Several famous mountains, large rivers, and beautiful landscapes of ravines instigated both of them to make full use of the two days and visit everything.

Truthfully, Han Shuo had completely explored Helen's body to the greatest extent at his own convenience within these past two days. Besides the forbidden area of ecstasy, every other advantage on Helen's body had

been taken by Han Shuo. At the start, Helen would be reserved and resisted, but as Han Shuo slowly behaved more intimately with her, she gradually let go of herself. Two days later, there was no estrangement between the two any longer.

A downright torrential waterfall cascaded like a flood, torrenting downwards with a myriad of silver streaks. It fell into a deep, bottomless cold pond, causing droplets of water to splatter like sparkling and translucent crystals.

Within the surroundings of the deep and cold pond, much lush vegetation grew. A few flower buds released delicate fragrances, as various kinds of birds chirped happily, dancing through the air. The feeling of spring tinged the air as the area was embellished to the brim with a thriving depiction of life.

On the branches of an old, towering tree, that had leaves and branches that were verdantly big and lush, Han Shuo embraced Helen and gazed at the beautiful scenery with a smile. He listened as Helen murmured all the different interesting events that had happened during her time within Helon Duchy.

For the past two days, Helen had relinquished the arrogant and dignified aura that kingdom lords had. She was a dainty and delicate girl who'd fallen in love, accompanying Han Shuo as much as she liked, laughing and smiling with joy. The more she looked at the man in front of her, the more satisfied she became. Some kind of feeling that was called contentment slowly but leisurely bubbled up from the bottom of her heart.

Snuggling on Han Shuo's bosom and slightly adjusting her posture, she looked at the scene in front of Han Shuo as she said, "If you want to conquer the seven grand duchies, there is one person that you should always keep in your mind."

For a moment, Han Shuo stared blankly. Then, he yielded, puzzlingly asking, "Who?"

"Stratholme of Stranglethorn Vale!" Helen replied with a grave expression.

“Who is this person? How come I’ve never heard of him before?” Han Shuo became even more puzzled, as he confusingly inquired.

“The current seven grand duchies was once the imperial court of Verdun. When the imperial court of Verdun was in its golden age, it was not at all inferior to your Lancelot Empire. During the days of the imperial court of Verdun, the teacher of the state was the sacred swordmaster Stratholme. Although the imperial court of Verdun is no more and has since been divided into the seven grand duchies, the former teacher of the state, Stratholme, is still living in Stranglethorn Vale. This person should still be living healthily even now. If the seven grand dukes are invaded by foreign enemies, and on the verge of being destroyed, he will definitely leave Stranglethorn Vale to assist the seven grand dukedoms.” Helen gazed at Han Shuo as she explained.

Hearing such words from Helen, Han Shuo truly felt extremely astonished. He couldn’t help but to investigate the details, asking, “The imperial court of Verdun has disappeared for so long. Are you sure this guy is still alive?”

Nodding her head, Helen said, “So the legends say. Last time, when your Lancelot Empire invaded our seven grand dukedoms, Stratholme proved to have a crucial effect. On the surface, the seven grand dukes don’t have someone at the level of a sacred swordmaster nor a sacred magus. However, the Lancelot Empire received a warning from Stratholme. When they previously invaded our seven grand dukedoms, your Lancelot Empire did not dispatch their sacred swordmaster, nor their sacred magus to attack. When the imperial court of Verdun was still present, the Teacher of the State, Stratholme was precisely the sacred swordmaster well renowned throughout the continent. Even though the imperial court of Verdun has been the thing of the past for so long, Stratholme is still living healthily even to date. No one knows how powerful he truly is. However, legends say that, last time, after the teacher of the state Stratholme gave a warning to your Lancelot Empire’s powerhouses, they truly did not dare to use their sacred magus’ taboo magic to reverse your Lancelot Empire’s losing prospects.”

Han Shuo was aghast as he silently nodded his head. In his heart, he firmly remembered this name: Stratholme.

# Chapter 373: Backlash

Han Shuo didn't remain in Helon Duchy for long in the end. He stayed for exactly two days, just like he'd said. He rushed straight towards Narsen Duchy after separating from Helen and arrived at Duke Benedict Sackville's residence within the night.

The former teacher of the state, Stratholme of Verdun's Imperial Court, had left a deep and profound impression on Han Shuo. Thanks to Helen, Han Shuo realized that this teacher of the state was still alive. By normal standards, when an expert advanced to the level of a sacred magus or swordsman, their lifespan would extend accordingly. Stratholme had broken through to be a sacred level of existence a long time ago. Having been a sacred swordmaster for so long, the reclusive Stratholme was most likely still living healthily, according to logic.

This teacher of the state from the imperial court was also the seven grand duchy's sole sacred level existence. If Han Shuo wanted to seize the seven grand duchies for himself, then this Stratholme would indeed be a threat. Luckily, this person had already secluded himself long ago and Han Shuo only needed to make use of his mystical demons and attach them to the grand dukes before slowly turning them into his personal puppets one after another.

Han Shuo believed that this method would definitely be more dependable than the Lancelot Empire's previous large scale invasion. Stratholme wouldn't detect anything while staying secluded within Stranglethorn Vale. Han Shuo reckoned that by the time he had completely taken over the seven grand dukedoms in secret, his strength would most definitely have improved by another step. At that time, Han Shuo might even be able to do something about Stratholme even if the latter came.

During this night, a splendid sight could be seen within Benedict Sackville's mansion. Within the central courtyard, a banquet seemed to be underway as shadows flickered to and fro. Many knights completely clad in armor tightly defended the area. A crystal lantern hung from the ceiling

in the main hall, while below, each and every noble from the Narsen Duchy wore formal attire and exuded a graceful bearing. They held wine glasses and conversed cheerfully with each other.

Benedict Sackville was naturally the most dazzling figure amongst them. The Narsen Duchy nobles surrounded Benedict, while constantly trying to pry some information from his mouth in a roundabout and indirect way.

The seven grand duchies' previous meeting at Sakamimir Valley had ended on a sour note. When the war had entered its most chaotic state, several of the grand duchies had suffered under an assassination attempt. As a result, those dukedoms had some weakened their military strength. Narsen Duchy was also not an exception as many of their high ranking generals were assassinated during the battle. Now that Benedict Sackville had returned to the dukedom, the first thing he wanted to do was naturally fill the gaps that'd occurred due to the loss of their outstanding generals.

After hearing this news, all the Narsen Duchy nobles began recommending their own family's younger generation with utmost of efforts. They hoped their younger generation could fill the gap and become a character wielding true power within Narsen Duchy. Benedict Sackville also clearly understood the intentions of these nobles and also understood that it was the perfect moment to recruit. Thus, he was holding this banquet within his mansion intending to understand everyone's thoughts while also gaining some personal benefits.

After sending out his mystical demons, Han Shuo grasped a clear view of the situation within Benedict Sackville's mansion. He knew how many experts were concealed within the mansion, and that a magical enchantment had been set up in a particular corner. Nothing could escape his prying eyes.

While hiding outside the Duke's mansion, Han Shuo seemed like a hunter in the night, calmly staring at his prey and patiently seeking for the best opportunity-to send his mystical demons into Benedict Sackville's brain.

Although the mystical demons had magical ability, trying to insert the

demon into someone's brain was not that easy. Firstly, Han Shuo had to be standing right next to Benedict Sackville. When he began using his demons, he would have to promptly act in accordance to the secret demonic method without stopping. If he made even the slightest mistake, Benedict Sackville could immediately die a tragic death or even become an idiot, an outcome that would clash with Han Shuo's wishes.

During this intrusion, Benedict Sackville could not possess even a single ounce of resistance, while his mind had to maintain a state as innocent as a newborn child. Only like this would the mystical demon be prone to successfully invade one's brain.

Generally speaking, the most perfect timing was during a dream. Thus, Han Shuo would only descend next to Benedict Sackville's side when the latter entered deep into a nightmare. Then, taking advantage of his muddleheaded state, Han Shuo would successfully implant the mystical demon right into his brain.

Everyone dreamt. However, dreams were not a nightly occurrence and sometimes a person wouldn't dream for days on end. Han Shuo had to wait until Benedict Sackville finally dreamed. Thankfully, when a person dreamed, they would be sufficiently relaxed towards their surroundings which would allow Han Shuo to arrive soundlessly beside his target.

Han Shuo continued to linger in the vicinity of the duke's mansion over the next five days. His mystical demons would incessantly monitor Benedict Sackville, particularly at night. He remained clueless throughout of this tight surveillance.

Benedict Sackville was only been completely exhausted once over the next five days due to his official business on the third day. That day, he sank deep into his nightmare because he was excessively tired. However, Benedict Sackville had an incomparably tight protection around his mansion's room on that day. There were experts upon experts protecting the room outside, while all sorts of magical warning enchantments were present within his room.

That day, Han Shuo was only certain that he could forcefully charge in

and kill Benedict Sackville. He could not guarantee that his mystical demons could intrude into his brain without warning.

Han Shuo had even carefully considered his gains and losses. In the end, he felt that even if he killed Benedict Sackville, there would be another noble that would become the new duke of Narsen Duchy. Rather than wasting time like this, he might as well just take control of Benedict Sackville.

Precisely because of this, Han Shuo abandoned his thought of killing Benedict Sackville that night and continued to wait for the next opportunity.

On the six night. Han Shuo unexpectedly noticed through his mystical demons that Benedict Sackville had left his mansion for the first time. While surprised, Han Shuo used his mystical demons to attentively watch Benedict Sackville on one hand and silently caught up to him on the other. He intended to see just what Benedict Sackville was up to.

Things went contrary to Han Shuo's expectations. Instead of going somewhere for official business, Benedict Sackville was obviously headed somewhere else. After walking along the streets within Narsen Duchy's Northwest city, Benedict finally arrived at a serene and elegantly quiet manor from the back door.

Twelve mystical demons scattered within the manor. In only a few minutes, Han Shuo had already discovered the type of place this serene and elegant manor was like. It was like the Rose Garden that Lawrence had previously brought Han Shuo to in the northern part of Ossen City. This manor was a noble's special venue for licentious activities.

This manor was undoubtedly Narsen Duchy's most well renowned place and it was even a bit bigger than Ossen City's Rose Garden. Inside, all kinds of atrociously shady business occurred in innumerable fashion. After the twelve mystical demons circled the place, Han Shuo gained a much deeper familiarity to the licentious and rotten behavior of the nobles.

Benedict Sackville was this place's owner. Han Shuo was still able to



learn of this fact very quickly when he merely used two of his mystical demons to watch Benedict Sackville attentively. As Narsen Duchy's most influential men and as this place's owner, Benedict Sackville did not need to waste much of any of his energy while secretly controlling this place. Benedict Sackville first heard a report about current financial affairs in a heavily guarded room. Afterwards, he began walking towards a delicately serene and elegant small house with a chuckle.

A mother-daughter pair were waiting within this house. Han Shuo had already seen the the stunning mother-daughter pair when Benedict Sackville had held a personal banquet in his mansion last time. They were the wife and daughter of Count Delbert. Delbert's wife was past forty. However, because she had properly maintained her looks, she seemed to be barely thirty years old.

As Delbert's wife and her daughter Deyali stood there together, they seemed not like a mother and daughter. They seemed more like sisters as their faces glowed with smiles, welcoming the person in control of Narsen Duchy, Benedict Sackville.

Han Shuo was stunned through the eyes and ears of the mystical demons. Apparently, the mother-daughter pair had served Benedict Sackville before, and it was actually with Delbert's approval. It was precisely because of Delbert's encouragement that they were actually standing there. They jointly served Benedict Sackville in bed exchange for the only and youngest son of their family to become a captain knight under Benedict Sackville.

After discovering this situation from his mystical demons, Han Shuo's understanding of the secret and filthy actions of the nobles increased to an even deeper level. Who would've expected that Count Delbert would actually allow his own wife and daughter to serve Benedict Sackville just so his son could advance? While Han Shuo felt this was inconceivable, he also felt that this had truly opened his eyes as well.

This mother-daughter pair were indeed of the highest quality. The mother was seductively mature with ample, round curves while the daughter was full of youthful energy, possessing a whiff of a charmingly

beautiful charm. As the two stood together, it was truly a scene for the perverted. The more ethics and taboos were violated, the more vigorous a male would become. When a mother-daughter pair simultaneously resolved to serve the same person, this was increase the male's vigor by ten times over.

Even Han Shuo was feeling a restlessness, not to mention Benedict Sackville. Han Shuo could barely restrain his rod from firing up when imagining this kind of service from a mother-daughter pair. Seeing Delbert's wife continue to smile charmingly while saying some good words for her son, Han Shuo's eyes felt somewhat glued to her distinctive charm, her graceful and mature noblewoman look.

"My God! I can't just let that old thing Benedict Sackville enjoy these benefits!" Han Shuo secretly gulped a mouthful of saliva as he ruthlessly began thinking. His brain started considering different ideas at the speed of light.

Han Shuo felt as though he was gradually losing some control over himself as he kept seeing the splendid and heart throbbing scene. He didn't know if he was about to enter the carnal realm or not, but he had this kind of impulsive desire to ruthlessly ravage the women there at any cost. As the charming daughter-female pair continued standing there, Han Shuo began thinking of the pleasing, forbidden situation, becoming somewhat even more agitated.

When Han Shuo began thinking of such taboo things, the demonic infant within him suddenly began overflowing with a bizarre power. These strands of power that came from within the demonic infant began releasing at an increasingly faster pace. Han Shuo soon found it even harder to control himself as his skin became flushed with a deeper red.

Alarmed, Han Shuo suddenly reacted, coming to his senses. The strand of power that came from the demonic infant was circulating with a bizarre power that carried an excessively nefarious aura. This kind of aura was the energy that Han Shuo had previously absorbed from the dark elf matriarch Adele.

“What’s going on? I had clearly removed the energy residue last time and this aura of nefarious energy should’ve been already been expelled from my body. How come there’s actually strands of this energy still circulating within the demonic infant?! Hm? That’s not right! Why wasn’t there such a dramatic movement last time when I faced Helen.” No matter what kind of unusual change the demonic infant underwent, Han Shuo could still make everything crystal clear with his consciousness. However, when he noticed that the demonic infant was rotating rapidly and that the excessively nefarious energy was becoming faster and faster, Han Shuo felt somewhat puzzled.

He knew that he had not entered the carnal realm yet. According to logic, when he entered the carnal realm, he would perhaps become more lustful, but this wasn’t just affect his lust, but other aspects as well. Could the reason that this strand of excessively nefarious energy became so merry due to the absorption of Adele’s power?

Although Han Shuo felt somewhat bewildered, he did began to gradually notice that the intense lust within his body was slowly becoming harder to control as the nefarious energy circulated within the the demonic infant. Han Shuo had always done as he would in being a demonic cultivator. Plus, he would also never rejected this kind of lust causing him to gradually overflow with the desire to follow his desires.

“Can’t let Benedict Sackville get this benefit! I must think of a plan!” While Han Shuo ignored his spreading lust, his brain was rotating at high speeds.

Due to the fact that this current place was not Benedict Sackville’s mansion, the defenses were much more inferior. There were only some personal guards around the elegant and refined room he was in. There weren’t any complicated magical enchantments that had been set up inside either.

After hesitating for just a moment, Han Shuo suddenly released a dark and dense fog and took advantage of the situation to slowly float into the room in which Benedict Sackville and Delbert’s wife and daughter were in. The three of them were still drinking wine at this point. As Han Shuo

drifted over, he was somewhat unable to control the blue dots of light as they slowly flowed out of his body.

The spots of light were not so obvious as Han Shuo was shrouded in a dark, dense fog. Benedict Sackville and the mother-daughter pair slowly inhaled the blue light through their nose and mouth. All this while, not only was Han Shuo began gradually entering a bleary minded state and starting to breath in a coarser way, even the mother-daughter pair and Benedict Sackville were as well.

Including Han Shuo amongst them, the four individuals within the room were all shrouded by the bright blue spots of light that contained a nefarious energy, which slowly drifted through the air to cover the entire room. As Han Shuo accidentally allowed the release of such energy, he even became somewhat sober, gaining some reason. However, the other three individuals had become completely dull.

The two mother-daughter pair that had been sitting together at this moment was first to give in to their heart's desire due to their weak wills. The two began embracing each other and revealing their breasts, moaning together. Just as Benedict Sackville suddenly roared in a low voice and attempted to pounce on them with his red eyes, the relatively sober Han Shuo knocked him out with a stamp of his leg. Then, Han Shuo pounced onto the completely delirious mother-daughter pair like a beast.

A hard to supress sound suddenly sounded from the room as these two mother-daughter pair writhed together with Han Shuo. There was no sense of shame as the two served Han Shuo together. On the contrary, they served Han Shuo with utmost enthused fervor under Han Shuo's nefarious power.

....outside the elegant and refined room, the experts that Benedict Sackville had brought with him all began display an expression of envy as they listened to the beautiful, high-pitched, and suave moaning. They softly and secretly discussed with each other, a bit clueless to the fact that their grand duke had already been knocked out.

After a long time, the moaning within the room gradually calmed down

as the window suddenly opened without wind. A lump of light smoke floated past as Han Shuo's entire body disappeared from here like a ghost. The black smoke swiftly floated away under the night. It disappeared without a trace in the blink of an eye.

After Han Shuo left, he flew at high altitudes towards the wilderness while enduring the monstrous changes occurring to his body. He summoned the elite earth zombie to open up some space within the underground abyss. As Han Shuo screamed with agonized howls, he took out a transportation array and arrived at the Cemetery of Death.

After coupling with Adele and absorbing her energy, Han Shuo had suddenly received some backlash from the excessively nefarious energy. It only held a small bit of power originally, but now it seemed more like boiling water as it flared up within his demonic infant. When the demonic infant, the foundation of Han Shuo's demonic cultivation, was suddenly rinsed with such a baleful and chaotic aura, he actually became uncontrollably violent and ferocious.

Deep within Han Shuo, there seemed to be an additional strand of energy that came from a boundless, distant place that was penetrating into him. That strand of energy spurred on the energy that Han Shuo absorbed from Adele, who'd received it from the spider goddess Rose, causing Han Shuo to feel an enormous amount of pain.

Within the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo emitted heart wrenching screams as his durable body actually split open. Han Shuo felt that the foreign energy within him was becoming harder and harder to control. In the end, Han Shuo mobilized the Demonslayer Edge' enormous and boundless amount of wrathful power to fight against the power surging within him.

Within Han Shuo's whole body, an enormous amount of pure demonic yuan energy plus the Demonslayer Edge, that had absorbed tens of thousands of creatures and various kinds of negative energy, combined to form a powerful strike erupted like that of a torrential mountain flood. Following this, his inner body became a cruel battlefield as his demonic infant's power and the strength in his Demonslayer Edge's souls fought to

the death against Adele's leftover power, as well as the sudden energy that had intruded into his body.

Without knowing how much time had passed, Han Shuo's magical cultivation and Demonslayer Edge's power gradually started gaining the advantage. Only after wasting such an endless amount of time did Han Shuo finally extinguish without a trace the detrimental energy within him.

"Pft!" Within the distant underground world, a dark elf was making offerings to the spider goddess Rose within a temple. A spider shaped, black temple held a young lady at its center, who had suddenly spat out a mouthful of blood. The young lady was facing the spider goddess Rose's statue in front of her as she muttered, "Wielding such inexhaustible divine dark power. Why couldn't I even imprison and reduce him to become my captive even with your divine powers?"

"Pft!" Another mouthful of blood was spat out as the young lady's face trembled in fear. She frighteningly faced the spider goddess Rose's statue and kowtowed while promptly saying, "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have questioned your might. Because you had to suffer the powerful laws of restriction, you indeed couldn't transmit even one in one thousandth of your true power. Your most pious believer wishes to accept punishment from you..."

As the young lady muttered to herself in a prayer, her beautiful skin suddenly split open as blood flew everywhere. It seemed like an invisible whip had whipped her. Yet, the young lady did not dare utter a sound as she continued to sincerely pray in the language of the dark elves.

# Chapter 374: A Philosophy of Blasphemy

This chapter is unedited. etvolare is halting translations at chapter 380. Please check this post for further details.

Within the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo collapsed in the center of the large-scale transportation array, his clothing long since ripped to pieces. His curled up, naked body constantly bled through his cuts and broken flesh. The wounds throughout his body were so deep that even his bones were visible.

Han Shuo's magical yuan circulated silently within his unconscious body. They were like many tiny streams trickling towards his withered meridians, moistening them. One after the other, they swam towards every nook and cranny within his body, bringing a cool and refreshing feeling.

While unconscious, Han Shuo's tattered and wounded body gradually healed at an astonishing rate. Shortly, his body had completely recovered to how he was before; with not even a trace of a scar. After his body recovered from this incredible torment, it actually seemed even firmer and stronger than before.

Because there was no sun nor moon at the Cemetery of Death, how much time had elapsed was also a mystery. As Han Shuo leisurely woke up, he noticed immediately that he was not suffering from painful cuts all over his body. Instead, the cells within his body seemed to be brimming with a surging power.

Then, moving from his curled posture and standing up with a stretch, all of the bones within his body cracked explosively nonstop. After probing his body with his consciousness, Han Shuo noticed that the vital organs within his body were still not completely healed. With a thought, he manipulated his magical yuan to wrap around them.

Waves of bizarre power came pouring into Han Shuo's vital organs. Under the nourishment of his yuan power, Han Shuo's vital organs began recovering faster by a hundredfold. With just a moment's effort, the weird feeling within his body disappeared.

After a light exhale, Han Shuo left the Cemetery of Death and arrived near a torrential waterfall. Under this cascading waterfall, Han Shuo sat cross-legged on top of the rock experiencing the most turbulent waters. Despite the incomparably violent current that heavily battered Han Shuo, he stayed completely motionless, sitting erect on top of the rock.

After another few days, Han Shuo finally walked off the rock and looked towards the entrance of the underworld. After hesitating a moment, he finally started heading towards the Cemetery of Death.

Then, a mark suddenly attracted Han Shuo's attention. He approached it and took a quick look before clearing the rocks away and extracting a letter from deep within the underground abyss. Han Shuo reassembled the message according to a special code before reading the contents of the letter.

This letter was most likely sent here through Emily's people after she'd personally written it, describing some crucial matters. The current power struggle between the princes had reached a climax within Ossen City due to the deteriorating health of the king. This also caused Lawrence's identity to be revealed, putting him at a severe disadvantage.

Because King Uhtred Lancelot and the chancellor of finance's wife had had an illicit affair, resulting in Lawrence, the nobles rejected Lawrence. Furthermore, even the somewhat less traditional nobles also clearly expressed their opposition against Lawrence's succession to the throne due to his identity.

The king was still alive and functioning well at the moment. He was forcefully suppressing the dissension and legitimizing Lawrence. However, the situation was still developing unfavorably. As of now, Lawrence's status within Ossen City was somewhat awkward as his faction was the weakest among the princes.

Seeing His Majesty's health continue to worsen, Lawrence felt anxious. He knew that the moment Uhtred passed away, the situation within Ossen City would be even harder to control. At that time, not only would a bastard of the king not obtain the throne, but perhaps even his life would



be hard to preserve.

Yet while Lawrence was apprehensive, experiencing these incomparably troublesome and apprehensive days, Brettel City was outshining the other cities. Favorable news kept arriving one after another, describing how this waste of a city had suddenly began erupting with a new vibrant energy. Although Han Shuo was far from the empire's capital, his name continued to resound, making him more and more famous.

Precisely because of this, Lawrence suddenly thought of Han Shuo, hoping he would return to Ossen City and help him. During such a crucial moment, Lawrence hoped that while Uhtred had yet to die he could borrow Han Shuo's support to improve the situation. At the very least, Lawrence could still make the other princes somewhat more apprehensive with Han Shuo in Ossen City.

Han Shuo had already made his decision after he finished reading the contents.

The moment he entered the Cemetery of Death, a dragon's melodious howl resonated throughout the entire cemetery. Fortunately there was an enchantment enveloping the entire cemetery that never dispersed, or the sound would've travelled for hundreds of miles.

"Honorable Master, you have finally returned." Gilbert was in his dragon form hovering in the skies, but after seeing him, he swept directly towards Han Shuo.

Gilbert's body seemed to have enlarged somewhat while the scales covering his body had become pitch black. He exuded a sinister, ancient, and desolate feeling. Han Shuo knew that this sinister aura came naturally from Gilbert, while that ancient and desolate feeling was due to absorbing the green dragon beast's crystal core.

After the uproar, his enormous body gradually shrank and transformed into a person with coarse black skin. His dark black eyes had an additional hint of otherworldliness to them. However, because his body's sinister aura was too heavy, that hint of otherworldliness was completely hidden.

Han Shuo only shot a glance at Gilbert before immediately sensing a

stronger power from Gilbert's body. He asked with a smile, "How was it?"

"Great! Fantastic! That green dragon beast's crystal core had an extraordinarily powerful energy which allowed me to advance to the second level of a super rank magical beast. Additionally, I feel that even though I am just at the middle of the second level, my current strength is still extraordinarily powerful. Muahaha! Thank you very much for your grace Master." Gilbert laughed loudly and heartily, his voice brimming with satisfaction.

"I have received news from the underground world and I believe it will spark your interest a little." Han Shuo waited until Gilbert's exuberant laugh subsided before saying in a measured tone.

"What news? Hehe, I have finally recognized that my decision to follow you, Master, was a correct one. If I didn't follow you Master, how would I be able to advance to the second level so quickly?" Gilbert clearly understood that all of this was due to Han Shuo's favors. Thus, he couldn't help but to start bootlicking.

"Gilbert, who would've thought that you would actually be the grandson of the underground world's dark dragon patriarch. You brat, your background is not humble." Han Shuo was all smiles as he looked at Gilbert. Gilbert felt taken aback, Han Shuo continued, "That patriarch grandpa of yours seems to be extremely worried about you. He even got the dark elves to scout for word of you. It seems like you, runaway-brat, is actually quite the favorite."

"Great Master, how could you know about these things? Could it be that you've actually entered the underground world's dark dragon city? The astonished Gilbert looked at Han Shuo as he puzzledly pushed for answers.

Gilbert had never told anyone about his identity. Thus, he believed that there shouldn't be anyone who could know this. He truly felt confused now that he had heard such a statement indicating a clear understanding of his origins from Han Shuo.

"Your dark dragon city has some prisoners. Among them is a group of

powerful dark elves from the previous generation. One of them was called Adele. Do you recognize this name?

“Adele. I seem to have heard of this name, however I have never seen her before. Within our dark dragon City, there are indeed some fellows imprisoned within that have grossly offended us. However, I just don’t have any interest in such things. Master, why do you ask?”

“It’s precisely because this Adele had made a promise to your grandpa that she would help to find your whereabouts. However, I’ve already killed her. Not long ago, I absorbed the energy on her body. As a result, I nearly brought trouble to myself and received a backlash. So, I want to ask about things pertaining to Adele.”

After hearing this from Han Shuo, Gilbert was extremely surprised. Then, he stared into space before saying, “I heard that this Adele seems to be the former matriarch of the dark elf clan. She can use the faith of the dark elves to connect to the evil goddess Rose. As a result, she possesses some extraordinarily frightening powers in bed.”

“Adele has been imprisoned within dark dragon city for many years now and it is said that she is extraordinarily beautiful. Considering the fact that our race has such a lustful temperament, we would’ve already jumped on top of her long ago. However, precisely because she can use the power of Rose, not a single dark dragon dares to forcefully take her to bed. They fear that she will suddenly use some treacherous methods while under pleasure.”

“Master, it is also said that Adele herself is also extraordinarily powerful. I’m afraid that even our clan’s second and third ranked dark dragons are not a match for her. It is said that due to her devout faith in Rose, Adele can communicate with Rose and acquire her divine energy. Our dark dragon race is deeply afraid that killing her will provoke the anger of that evil goddess. Thus, we have continued to only keep her imprisoned within. Don’t tell me that you’ve truly killed her?”

“I f\*cked her to death!” Han Shuo calmly replied.

“Wahaha....” The little lascivious Gilbert became excited as he looked at

Han Shuo with worship, “Master, what happened? Do tell! Hurry and tell your faithful servant the specifics of the situation.”

Seeing Gilbert suddenly becoming excited right after hearing this, Han Shuo walloped him angrily. Only then did he describe the things that he had experienced. Finally, after describing the previous incident where there was a hard to suppress lust, he calmly continued, “I can guarantee that when I went crazy with lust not long ago, besides the energy that I had absorbed from Adele, there was also an even more tremendous and sinister power within my body. That strand of energy brought with it a bit of aura that shouldn’t exist within this plane. If things are as I predict, it probably came from the Spider Goddess Rose. I really don’t know how this could’ve happened. Don’t tell me that the fact that I killed Adele was actually discovered! Could there actually be the existence of deities within this world?”

Listening to Han Shuo’s description of his experiences, Gilbert’s previous excitement transformed into rare seriousness. After thinking for a moment, he said to Han Shuo, “Master, I’ve heard from Grandpa\* that this world is not as simple as we think. Even with our dark dragon powers, we can only live in the underground world as if we are suffering from some kind of restriction. Even though my grandpa’s power is frightening, he still can’t avoid such restrictions. I can’t think of anything else that can actually constrain our race within the underground world besides the universal concept of gods.”

Knitting his eyebrows tightly, Han Shuo couldn’t help but to raise his head towards the gloomy and deathly still sky of the Cemetery of Death, sunless and moonless all year round. He began thinking of the Church of Light’s Deity of Light, the Temple Knights, the holy aura on Kosse’s body, and the feeling that Han Shuo felt from the Revelation artifact.

Then he thought of the existence of the Calamity Church and the skeletal staff within his own hands. When he’d first held this skeletal staff, he entered an absentminded state and saw the shadow of a ten thousand meter giant in his mind. Now that Han Shuo had gained a faint layer of understanding, gradually believing in that kind of imaginary existence of

gods.

“Master, perhaps you were really attacked by that spider goddess last time. However, it is said that deities cannot truly intervene with the mortal plane. Else, they would suffer restrictions from the laws of this spatial world. Look, even that excessively evil spider goddess cannot do anything to you. This is sufficient proof that even she cannot violate this all-powerful law. There is no need for us to fear her.” The dark dragon Gilbert casually consoled Han Shuo.

Silently nodding his head, Han Shuo finally recognized how insignificant he was. Thinking of the giant’s presence that emitted an aura from millions and millions of years ago, Han Shuo couldn’t help but to feel some reverence within his heart as he said to Gilbert, “Indeed, we cannot surmise the existence of deities, however these deities must be subjected to this spatial world’s restrictive powers. Otherwise, the moment they descend onto this plane, this plane would possibly be turned into ruins.”

“Mmn, the deities must also be antagonistic towards each other, otherwise the Church of Light and the Calamity Church would not wage war for so many years.” Gilbert was also agnostic and didn’t have any feelings towards them at all. Regardless of whether they were evil or righteous gods, he remained as carefree as always, seemingly without a care for the world.

Han Shuo did not think much more about it as he nodded his head, “Alright, since you’ve already evolved to the second level, then you should proceed to the Valley of Sunshine and help Trunks. I believe that the Valley of Sunshine will have a large disturbance soon. If you are within the Valley of Sunshine then the Soul Destroyer Mercenary will be somewhat more secure. Ah, right, you need to pay attention to the matters pertaining to dark dragon city. Your grandpa has been constantly looking for you. I think that even if you don’t return, you should still let someone deliver some news to your grandpa so he won’t need to worry.

“I understand Master, I think that if my grandpa knew I’ve already entered the second level, he will definitely be extremely happy. When I was in dark dragon city, that old guy would constantly pressure me to

cultivate for the entire day. I've already cultivated for all these years yet I was still at the first level. Now look at me, it's been barely any time since I've left, yet I've already succeeded in my advancement. This clearly indicates that his methods are useless!" Gilbert indifferently replied to Han Shuo, seeming wholly unconcerned with his master's words.

"Alright, I need to return to Ossen City and deal with some matters. However, I will constantly pay attention to the matters within the Valley of Sunshine." Han Shuo informed him. Then, after Gilbert left, he too took a step into the transportation array.

# Chapter 375: The Sculpture

This chapter is unedited. etvolare will be halting translation of GDK this weekend. Please go [here](#) for future news of the series.

Lancelot Empire's Ossen City. Boozt Merchant Guild Headquarters.

Phoebe and Lawrence sat upright sipping tea within an elegant secondary courtyard. Lawrence wore a clouded expression. Although his identity as a prince was already recognized by the king, he was still living miserably.

In contrast, Phoebe, who sat opposite from him, had a charming appearance that was becoming increasingly natural and elegant. But because she also held that divine weapon, "Starry Sky", she even had a somewhat icily arrogant charm. As Phoebe fondled with the "Starry Sky" within her hands, unwilling to part with it, her thought began uncontrollably floating towards the distant Brettel City.

"Junior sister, your current Boozt Merchant Guild is becoming more and more influential thanks to your work. Bryan is also like a fish in water in Brettel City. However, my days just aren't so well. I will probably be immediately killed by Charles right after royal father passes away. Did you truly help me deliver my letter to Bryan or not?" Lawrence looked at the Phoebe in front of him and asked somewhat helplessly.

"Senior Brother, it's not like Brettel City doesn't have any of your people. You should be even clearer than me whether Bryan is within Brettel City or not. But what you're saying is also true. It's already been so many months. Just why isn't there even the slightest trace of him. Could it be that he's gone to do another evil deed again?" Phoebe's long eyelashes fluttered as her pupils sparkled with doubt.

Lawrence had dispatched some people to Brettel City before, Faulke being one of them. Afterwards, Lawrence had also arranged some talented politicians to enter Brettel City one after the other. Although these people were currently holding suitable positions within Brettel City, they would continue to relay information to Lawrence just like before. From the

information they had sent, it seemed that Han Shuo was really not within Brettel City.

Lawrence sighed before suddenly saying to Phoebe, "I also have the Dark Mantle agents helping me inquire for any information of him. But, even until now, there has not been even the slightest hint of him at all. What do you think? Could something have happened to him?"

Phoebe laughed proudly while promptly taking out the divine weapon "Starry Sky", which emitted a bright and sparkling starlight. She shot a disdainful glance at Lawrence and said, "He could even kill Celt, the number one Redbud Knight commander out of the Continent's ten great knight troops. Furthermore, Celt was also a very powerful dragon rider. Just what kind of mishaps do you think he will face?"

That fellow is extremely crafty and sinister while his sensitivity is frighteningly sharp. Even if he encounters a dangerous situation, he would still be able to escape in advance. He definitely won't have any mishaps. Instead, he is definitely doing some evil deeds in secret once again. These words were naturally not spoken to Lawrence, but secretly mused within her own heart instead.

Lawrence carefully reconsidered and found it reasonable. It wasn't his first day knowing Han Shuo, so he naturally understood that with Han Shuo's personality and strength, he would absolutely not indulge in foolish and reckless actions of courage. The moment he noticed that he was in a helpless situation, he would always leave immediately in a sorry manner. According to reason, no accidents should've occurred to him indeed.

As his hands massaged his temples, Lawrence said somewhat exhausted, "Junior sister, I must have been too anxious lately, causing my thoughts to gradually become somewhat chaotic recently."

"Don't worry. With your relationship with Bryan, as long as he knows about the current circumstances within Ossen City, he should come back and help you. Mm, I have heard that not long ago, the seven grand duchies tried to unite and defeat Brettel City. I think Bryan has possibly gone to the seven grand duchies to do some secretive things. You needn't worry



about it. He will definitely come to find you after he has finished dealing with his matters.” Phoebe said, comforting Lawrence. She knew that Lawrence had really been forced to the edge by the princes and she naturally understood Lawrence’s current feelings.

“Hopefully he will rush back before my royal father passes away. Besides, we also have no clue what’s going on with our master. The situation has already reached such a state, but he has yet to take a declarative stand. Even I have no idea if he will support me in the end or not.” Lawrence complained with a headache. Then, he turned to Phoebe, “Junior sister, you’re our master’s most loved disciple. Do you have a clue as to what our master will plan in the end?”

Phoebe thought for a moment before replying, “Master has always been solely responsible for teaching us various kinds of knowledge. I feel like he wants you to become king relying on your own strength. You should also know, our master has always made us work hard for our own goals. He has never once relied on his identity to help us before.”

“Sigh. If I really just rely on my own strength, it’s basically impossible for me to become king based on the current circumstances.” Lawrence seemingly knew about a bit of his master’s personality, as he couldn’t help but to sigh.

“Although Master won’t justly and openly help you, however, he also wouldn’t let others bully you. If not for Master letting Grandpa Bollands secretly protect you, I’m afraid you would have already been secretly killed by others. This proves that Master also cares very much for you.” Phoebe continued to console Lawrence.

Hearing this, Lawrence nodded his head and agreed, “This is also true. Fortunately Bollands was there to help me several times, otherwise I would have really have been killed long ago.”

Phoebe did not continue to speak as she continued to focus on polishing the “Starry Sky” that was already clearly shining like a reflective mirror. She treated it as though this sword was Han Shuo.

“When I came over, Master wanted me to tell you that you shouldn’t

depend too heavily on the weapons in your hands. Weapons will forever be dead objects. They might be able to make you a little bit stronger but they won't increase your personal strength." Lawrence stood up and said to Phoebe.

"Don't worry, I have an even higher comprehension towards Master's martial skills than you. You had better put more effort into thinking how you can get some additional advantages from your royal father instead." Phoebe said indifferently before continuing to wipe the divine weapon within her hand. When she thought of the fact that this damned guy had still yet to see her after so long, she realized that, in the end, this long-distance relationship was definitely not going to work!

As Phoebe reminisced and mentally nagged Han Shuo, he had already arrived at Ossen City. Only after arriving at Ossen City did Han Shuo notice that three months had already passed while he was unconscious and resisting spider goddess Rose's power within the Cemetery of Death. During these three months, the seven grand duchies continued to unceasingly go on campaigns against each other while Brettel City and the Helon Duchy had already conducted numerous secret business deals in secret.

Han Shuo did not make another move towards Narsen Duchy's Benedict Sackville at all. On one hand, the opportunity was hard to seek while on the other, there were still other more important matters waiting to be done. After returning to Brettel City from Narsen Duchy, Han Shuo took the necessary materials to refine an elite metal zombie from Jack, entered Mount Silk, and planted the future elite metal zombie within. Then, after handing over some tasks to Jack and the others, Han Shuo left Brettel City, passed through Seamist City's transporting array, and arrived at Ossen City.

Because Faulke and the other former subordinates of Lawrence had already told Han Shuo that he wanted to urgently see him, Han Shuo immediately left for Ossen City. Knowing Han Shuo's destination, Faulke and the rest didn't report to Lawrence about Han Shuo's appearance because they knew that Han Shuo would arrive there first.

After entering Ossen City, Han Shuo hurried towards Fanny's laboratory place first because the teleportation array was near Babylon Academy. Han Shuo had not seen Fanny for ages and was truly longing for the bright and beautifully moving teacher at the moment.

Han Shuo headed for Babylon Academy under the cover of the dusky night. On the road, Han Shuo avoided some relatively crowded areas and headed towards the necromancy major.

The moment Han Shuo arrived at the long hallway with the sculptures that Jack and him frequently cleaned off, he suddenly noticed an extremely familiar-looking new sculpture. The finished sculpture was made of pure white, white jade and was meticulously carved. This imposingly tall sculpture faced the sky while holding a magical staff, and was posturing as if it was chanting a magical chant.

Under this new sculpture, a glamorous engraving of small characters stated: Bryan, a graduate of Babylon Academy's Institute of Necromancy. Graduated in two years and three months-the fastest graduation speed in history. He is currently an archmage necromancer and has formerly defeated Great Swordmaster Leah Cain....

As Han Shuo looked at his own sculpture, he suddenly assailed with indescribable emotions. When he and Jack had been both wiping these sculptures, they had once been filled with ambition and desire to stand amongst these sculptures. But, after reminiscing through these times, he truly felt a spontaneous pride and satisfaction of attaining his achievements when he truly saw his own sculpture.

"I... never expected – I really never expected that one day my own sculpture would be able to stand here and become a motivational model for future generations." Han Shuo muttered to himself as he looked at his own sculpture in front of him.

"It's because of you that new student enrollment in the necromancy major has increased by many folds. Hehe, Fanny has become even more and more busy now!" A kind voice sounded from behind Han Shuo. Babylon Academy's Dean Emma gradually walked in front of Han Shuo.

As a space grand magus, Emma possessed a peculiar ability of walking through space. Within this region, as long as Emma wanted to find someone, she could immediately appear in front of that person's face.

After the space fluctuated, Han Shuo immediately knew that Emma had noticed his arrival. When Emma's voice sounded, Han Shuo was not even a little surprised as he smilingly looked at the all too familiar Dean Emma, saying, "I truly never expected that my sculpture would be able to stand here."

"Hehe, you already had the qualifications to stand here when you advanced from a magical apprentice to an archmage in three years. Even more so, after you graduated from this Academy, your every action maintained this stunning incredulity. The necromancy major is this Academy's weakest major, but such a character like you could still emerge from it! It's only natural for your sculpture to be erected." Amy kindly smiled as she walked in front of Han Shuo's sculpture and lightly pressed her thumb on the annotation below the sculpture. She had just added another character, transforming the symbols of archmage into grand magus. Emma seemed to have already ascertained that Han Shuo was a grand magus necromancer.

# Chapter 376: Pointers

“But I still haven’t gone to the Magic Association to verify my strength yet, Dean Emma.” Looking at Emma’s movements, Han Shuo couldn’t help but laugh lightly.

Emma winked as she responded, beaming merrily, “So, you’re admitting that you possess the strength of a grand magus?”

Han Shuo had no idea how Emma could see through to his true strength from just one look, but he also didn’t feel the need to conceal such facts. It would be fine as long as his demonic magic was kept a secret. He didn’t need to conceal his achievements as a mage. After hearing what was said, he nodded his head, “That’s right!”

Han Shuo only considered his demonic magic as his most important secret, while he considered his strength as a mage as leverage for gaining additional benefits. Thus, he was actually preparing to go to the Magic Association to verify his qualifications as a grand magus. Regardless of nation, all grand magus ranked mages could obtain extremely high statuses. If Han Shuo went to the Magic Association to verify his qualifications, his future career would be impacted positively.

“As I thought. I could sense a bit of an aura on your body, but the most significant reason is because you killed Celt. To be able to kill a sky rider with a green dragon as a pet, your strength naturally has to be at the grand magus level.” Emma replied matter of factly.

“Dean Emma, why have you come to see me?” Han Shuo knew that Emma was extremely busy and there were a lot of a lot of small and big matters within Babylon Academy that she had to deal with. She definitely came to see Han Shuo for some particular matters this time.

Emma nodded as expected before looking at Han Shuo with a smile, “Necromancers are sparse within the Empire. There are even pitifully fewer grand magus ranked necromancers. The ones I know only know to practice magic and there are very few that appear in public. Hehe, you were also part of the Babylon Academy. Even more importantly, you’ve

also promised Fanny that you would give some pointers in your free time to the students of your major. However, I hope that wasn't an empty promise, but that you actually try to seriously guide them when you have the time."

"Hehe, Dean Emma, don't worry, I will definitely give them some pointers if I'm free." Han Shuo did not readily make a conclusive promise. Han Shuo currently had way too many matters on hands, and he couldn't remain at Babylon Academy to guide the students. However, if he really had some time, even if it was just for the sake of Fanny's reputation, Han Shuo would still be willing to lecture them for one or two classes.

"That would be great, hehe." Emma was wreathed with smiles as she nodded her head. After pausing for a moment, she continued, "I know you came to find Fanny. She has been somewhat busy recently. However, she is nevertheless blossoming and becoming increasingly beautiful. Oh, that's right, I almost forgot. Fanny has also advanced to archmage. You best treat her well, for she is also very amazing."

Han Shuo's longing for Fanny became even more impossible to be restrained when he listened to Emma. He laughed, "I'm actually looking for Fanny for some important matters. Then, I'll be on my way."

"Mnn, go ahead." Emma didn't obstruct Han Shuo.

The sky darkened after Emma and Han Shuo finished conversing. However, Han Shuo was incomparably familiar with the necromancy major and easily detoured around the students, traversing straight towards Fanny's laboratory.

Han Shuo yet to enter Fanny's laboratory when he suddenly heard an oppressive stamping of footsteps from within. Feeling startled, he continued listening. He couldn't help but to show another stunned expression. He could hear an incredibly bulky creature via the heavy footsteps within the room. Han Shuo did not knock and walked in directly.

An evil knight was holding an enormous spur and making stabbing movements within Fanny's laboratory, on top of an open area. A magical array was present five meters from the creature. Fanny was panting inside

while controlling the evil knight, seemingly as though a large amount of her mental strength had been consumed.

After summoning an evil knight, the necromancer did not need too much mental strength to control it because it was a kind of advanced undead creature. Just a command to attack would suffice. An evil knight resembled neither a zombie nor a skeletal warrior, and it naturally didn't require a summoner to dictate how to attack. It's wisdom was completely enough for it to display its powers freely and effectively..

Naturally, if the necromancer wished, he could still use his mental strength to control the evil knight. However, this would not only consume his mental strength at a faster pace, it would also not help the evil knight display its true powers.

In short, right after summoning the evil knight, this kind of advanced undead only needed the necromancer to transmit an attack command and it would suffice. Unlike skeletal warriors and zombies, It simply didn't need the use of mental strength to control it. Instead, this would hinder the evil knight's natural attacking ability.

Fanny was naturally caught up in a misconception that she believed this kind of advanced undead creature needed to be manipulated like a skeletal warrior or a zombie. Looking at her huffing, seemingly seriously practicing and using her mental strength in an attempt to facilitate the advanced evil knight's attacking abilities, Han Shuo felt that it was somewhat laughable.

Fanny was indeed as Dean Emma had described. She had become increasingly beautiful after these several months. This was naturally due to the credit of the Rebirth Pill. Her skin was as white as jade, and the substantial improvement to her inner body was also the reason why she had advanced to the level of archmage so quickly.

Han Shuo entered soundlessly. Fanny had just started to struggle with the evil knight and did not sense Han Shuo's existence whatsoever. Only when she manipulated the evil knight to turn around and stab forward did she suddenly notice Han Shuo standing by the door, grinning. Fanny pupil's blossomed with incredible happiness and surprise. But suddenly,

she started grinding her teeth and stabbing her jade-like fingers hatefully at Han Shuo.

Under Fanny's manipulation, the evil knight's enormous spur suddenly rose, piercing towards Han Shuo who stood there, smiling.

Han Shuo was taking in all of Fanny's expressions. How would he not know exactly why Fanny was attacking like a spoiled child? He knew that she was angered because he hadn't come to see her for a very long time. Han Shuo was still smiling and gazing at her with deep emotions as the imminent spur pierced towards him.

When the enormous spur pierced near the top of Han Shuo's head, Fanny's lovely face suddenly changed colors. She hastily used her mental strength to control and stop the spur from continuing in case the spur truly harmed Han Shuo.

However, the spur was truly as quick as a gale while Fanny was obviously still not familiar enough to properly control the evil knight. Thus, Fanny's mental strength was mostly useless as the spur continued to pierce towards Han Shuo's head. It only slowed somewhat while emitting an ear-piercing, shrieking sound like the braking of a car.

Fanny became incomparably frightened. At the moment, she was unable to open her mouth to urge Han Shuo to jump out of the way. She could only look at Han Shuo, terrified while exerting all of her mental strength to try and stop the spur.

Ding!

In the end, the spur still landed on Han Shuo's head. However, an unexpected metallic sound of collision rang out after a black cloud of light briefly took form on top of Han Shuo's head, before disappearing strangely afterwards.

Han Shuo continued to smile, standing there without even the slightest movement. The spur's pierce did not even touch one hair on Han Shuo's head. In the end, the evil knight also ceased to a stop under Fanny's command.



In the next moment, Fanny suddenly threw herself into Han Shuo's chest and recklessly started beating Han Shuo's sturdy chest. A faint sobbing sound could be heard as she said, "Idiot, you can even kill Celt, so why didn't you dodge? Are you trying to die?"

Han Shuo hugged Fanny tightly, saying softly, "How could you actually hurt me?" before suddenly kissing Fanny firmly in the lips. The two people were vigorously tangling together like snakes, even their souls seemed to be blending together.

This kiss persisted for ages. Only when Han Shuo's hands start unconsciously climbing over Fanny's body parts did Fanny suddenly awaken, abruptly pushing Han Shuo away. She glared at Han Shuo with a reddened face, saying cutely, "I am your teacher! This is also a school. Behave!"

The moment Han Shuo saw Fanny's lovely and charming appearance and heard her words, he felt even more excited. He couldn't help but chuckle evilly when he thought back to when he'd been an ordinary student who greatly revered her. "It's precisely because you are my teacher that when I kissed you, I became even more excited. You can't escape from the palm of my hands."

Right after these words sounded, Han Shuo captured Fanny once again and advanced towards Fanny's face, giving her another deep kiss. Then, he used his two hands to feel her soft and smooth back before gradually shifting his big hands lower. Before Fanny had time to react, Han Shuo suddenly palmed Fanny's outstandingly smooth and round butt and squeezed without restraint.

Fanny struggled and whimpered while pushing Han Shuo away again with a red face. She once again glared hatefully at Han Shuo before taking a few steps back saying, "You little pervert. You haven't even seen my father yet. Behave yourself!"

Han Shuo paused. Then, looking at the evil knight next to him, he explained to Fanny with an unchanging expression, "An evil knight is not controlled like a zombie nor a skeletal warrior. Instead, since an evil

knight possess it's own intelligence, it's only able to completely bring out its true fighting strength when it's not being controlled by mental strength.

Fanny listened and looked at Han Shuo astonished, before saying in doubt, "It can bring out it's most powerful fighting strength just by relying on itself?"

Han Shuo replied while nodding his head, "Of course, an evil knight is an advanced undead creature. Not only do they possess intelligence, they also possess their own dignity. If you don't let it display its own strength as it likes, but use your own mental strength to force it to submission, it will instinctively try to resist. There are no advantages to this at all..."

Han Shuo and Fanny's position had unknowingly reversed. Originally, it was always Han Shuo who would inquire about some difficult magic problems. But the Han Shuo of today could actually discover Fanny's misconceptions from just a glimpse at her actions and even help her correct it.

# Chapter 377: Rapid Progress

All chapters post 373 were not edited. etvolare is stopping translation at chapter 380, please refer to this link for more information about the future of the series.

Fanny had no choice but to admit that her former student, Han Shuo, had already exceeded her knowledge in the essence of necromancy.

Looking at Han Shuo's waxing eloquence, Fanny's train of thought floated to the past, thinking of when Han Shuo was still a magic apprentice. The willful, diligent quest for knowledge while cultivating, enduring a life of silence and solitude. At this moment, Fanny seemed to have comprehended a little of something.

This male standing in front of her had lost any traces of his former self. Previously, he'd been a cowardly youngster with a delicate body, not even a hundred seventy centimeters tall. He had been a youngster that silently disposed of trash all day long, and was completely powerless in the face of others bullying him. Was he truly this outstanding, formidable male that was currently in front of her?

Fanny's mind was somewhat temporarily distracted as she dazedly looked at Han Shuo, spellbound. She'd already forgotten the magic explanation that Han Shuo had just given to her. Only after a long time when Han Shuo suddenly emitted a loud noise did Fanny finally awaken. Her bright, clear eyes looked towards Han Shuo with an apologetic smile. She explained, "I don't know why, but I've noticed that the current you seems to have no features that overlap with the previous you. Seemingly, within just a split second, you changed into a completely different person. Even now, you are constantly changing. It makes me feel as if I'm in a dream."

Within a few short years, Han Shuo had already matured to a point where others could only hope to reach. Now, even his teacher Fanny needed to admire him. Although Lancelot Empire had no lack of geniuses, Han Shuo's talent and development speed was unique to him alone.

Han Shuo flashed a dashing smile and said, "I have changed far too much from my past self, so this kind of feeling you have is extremely normal. Hehe, everyone can change. This is how humans evolve. Only when someone experiences something that no one else can imagine does he grow and mature quickly."

Only Han Shuo knew in his heart that he was from a completely different world from Bryan. They had always been completely different individuals with completely different temperaments and experiences. Thus, for Fanny to notice these inconsistencies was a completely normal phenomenon. As a result, Han Shuo found an excuse to remove the suspicions within Fanny's heart.

"Bryan, I've always been within the Academy for the few years you've been gone, but you've rarely come to train. I've constantly wanted to know what you've been doing all these years. Why is that every time you return here, you always startle people? According to what you've said, you must've experienced something I am completely unable to imagine, else your transformation wouldn't be so quick. Can you tell me?" Fanny looked at Han Shuo in a daze as she inquired what happened in those days.

After Fanny's sudden question, Han Shuo thought for a moment before saying, "The experiences I had are too numerous, and it's too inappropriate for me to narrate them one after the other. However, it's precisely as you guessed. My experiences have indeed been extremely rich these few years. Hehe. Simply put, at every moment, I was always in the midst of passing through a life-threatening situation. It is precisely because of these situations that my potential was stimulated, and thus, my improvements unceasing.

"Bryan. Your life has truly been tough on you these past couple of years. I never asked but that didn't mean I wasn't concerned about you. It's just I had no idea how I should help you...." Fanny looked up at Han Shuo while gently and softly chatting. Her hands touched Han Shuo's face, lightly caressing his unswerving, determined expression, seemingly trying to smoothen away those few years of hardships.

Han Shuo closed his eyes, feeling at ease as he allowed Fanny to caress

his face. Unexpectedly, there were no traces of sexual desire within his heart. Instead, every experience he had since he'd been born into the world slowly and vividly replayed in his mind. Han Shuo even started to think of his parents from the other world.

Han Shuo did not violate Fanny that night. This was mainly because when she encountered some problems in her magic knowledge, Han Shuo helped her by meticulously explaining it in fine detail. From being engrossed with Han Shuo's explanations, Fanny gradually drifted to sleep. A sweet smile hung on the corner of her mouth as she emitted a soft laugh. She gradually fell asleep in Han Shuo's chest.

Seeing Fanny falling asleep, Han Shuo maintained a constant, unmoving posture, allowing Fanny to sleep in comfort. He took out a necromancy tome from his space ring and began to diligently delve into it once more.

When Han Shuo advanced to his current magical cultivation realm, the need for sleep gradually disappeared from his life. Even if his body and mind were completely exhausted, he only needed a brief moment to circulate his magical yuan to completely recover. He never needed to sleep again to recover his body and mind. Precisely because of this, Han Shuo had even more time and energy to improve himself. In addition, Han Shuo's brain had developed substantially. Thus, the throbbing and wondrous characters within the cryptic magic tome were slowly unraveled under his meditation and studying.

Books were the most valuable of legacies left behind by his predecessor. This author was also a person with extraordinary ability and wisdom, particularly in the discipline of magic. It wasn't an easy matter for successors to want to use this book to find a proper cultivation path.

The existence of the Babylon Academy of Martial Arts would be meaningless if anyone could improve just through books. However, it wasn't easy to find a teacher that could give proper guidance to someone at Han Shuo's realm. Only a book filled with experiences left behind by a predecessor could provide such guidance. Only such a method could allow someone to breakthrough their constraints in the fastest way.

However, magical tomes were cryptic and difficult to understand.. The more advanced the tome, the more complex it was. Taking this necromancy book in Han Shuo's hand, for example. If an untalented individual were to take a look at the symbols and incantations within, they would immediately become bewildered, let alone grasp the true meaning within each symbol.

After Han Shuo's brain region had been excavated due to a breakthrough in his magical cultivation, his perception, memory, and comprehension became even more superior compared to ordinary people. When he delved into books in meditation, his comprehension speed was many times faster than his peers. It was precisely because Han Shuo could replace his sleep with cultivation, and the fact that his brain was too powerful, that he could grasp the old fey corpse summoning technique so quickly.

Han Shuo didn't wait for Fanny to wake up in the morning before soundlessly leaving the laboratory. He headed straight for the Magic Association.

Han Shuo met the same young lady as before after entering the Magic Association. The young lady immediately became excited after seeing Han Shuo enter. She blurted, "You're Count Bryan right? I recognize you from before. How come you've returned to Ossen City? Hehe. I've heard that you've wiped out a lot of bandits while you were at Brettel City. You're so amazing!"

Previously, when Han Shuo advanced to an archmage necromancer, it was also this young lady who'd received him. She seemed to have a very deep impression of Han Shuo. She immediately started blurting with excitement the moment she saw Han Shuo entering.

The young lady's sudden acclamation attracted a lot of attention. There were powerful swordsmen as well as mages dressed in a variety of different colored mage gowns within the lounge. Some of them were the Magic Association's people while some were probably here to verify their rank.

Now, after hearing this young ladies excited shout, they all suddenly moved their eyes onto Han Shuo's body. Their eyes brimmed with surprise.

Han Shuo swept a glance at these people. Then, he spoke demurely to the young lady, smiling faintly. He opened his mouth to say, "I've come to the Magic Association to confirm my rank. Oh, that's right. Is Mister Ares currently here?"

"Please wait a moment. Mister Ares is currently helping Carlos verify his rank, but he will be available shortly." The young lady smiled and answered. Then, realizing something, she suddenly asked, startled,, "Are you here to verify your magic rank as a grand magus necromancer?"

Han Shuo had already previously advanced to the archmage rank. Now, in less than two years time, Han Shuo came again to verify his new rank as a grand magus necromancer. The young lady was clearly shocked.

Not only this young lady, but even the surrounding mages were all shocked, looking at Han Shuo. They seemed to be looking at a true monster, their eyeballs nearly falling out in shock.

Although an archmage and grand magus was only a one character difference apart in Mandarin, they were actually worlds apart. Any mage capable of becoming an archmage will always be acknowledged for their wisdom and ability in the hearts of all mages. They would absolutely be incapable of advancing to an archmage without such traits.

However, even if such an individual wanted to advance from an archmage to an grand magus in two years, it was normally impossible.

Different people had different aptitudes towards magic and naturally comprehended at different speeds. However, the process of advancing to a grand magus from an archmage normally required ten years minimum. Yet, Han Shuo had done it in only two short years. This kind of extreme speed was simply terrifying. As a result, the look that the other mages within the room gave to Han Shuo was understandable.

If the sum of Han Shuo's magic career was totalled up, then the time he used would only amount to roughly four years. The speed at which he'd

changed from an individual with no knowledge of magic, to suddenly becoming a grand magus who could shake any nation seemed impossible.

Right as the young lady blurted such words, Ares Hosein, the Magic Association's supervisor, entered the room from above. Accompanying him was a person with elegant, long hair. He was a youth, appearing under thirty years old. He was clothed in a grey, white magic robe as he soundlessly walked with a carefree smile on his face.

After a simple glance at the symbol on his magic robe, Han Shuo immediately realized that he was probably the Carlos who wanted to verify his rank with Ares. He obviously just became a wind grand magus as he came down in an incomparably joyful mood. Currently, he was walking with Ares, smiling and merrily chatting with him.

Ares mindlessly shot a glance downstairs and saw Han Shuo standing there like an immovable pole, a crane among chickens. Ares immediately exclaimed, "Hey! Young lad, you must be Bryan. I remember you. Hehe, why have you come to the Magic Association?"

Smiling, Han Shuo nodded his head and calmly said, "Mister Ares, I want to reconfirm my magic rank. Hehe. I think I should have the qualifications to wear a grand magus medallion."

Ares became incomparably astonished and carefully sized up Han Shuo with a few looks just like the others. Then, he rubbed his chin, doubtfully saying, "If I recall correctly, the last time you came here to verify your rank should be only two years ago. Don't tell me you're already ready to verify your new rank as a grand magus necromancer?"

Han Shuo reaffirmed with a nod of his head, saying, "Correct!"

"Inconceivable, truly inconceivable. Today is truly a bright day for my Association. Hehe. The Lancelot Empire is not lacking in talented individuals indeed. Carlos is not even thirty years old but he already advanced to become a wind grand magus. Who would've thought, another would come right afterwards, although I don't know if you can actually bring about this miracle. I believe you're definitely not even thirty years old, right?" Ares kept shaking his head in praise and surprise as he looked



at Han Shuo, sighing emotionally.

When Han Shuo entered Bryan's body, Bryan had only been sixteen years old. Since then, only four years had passed. Han Shuo's true age should only be twenty years old in this world. However, due to the excess of life and death situations Han Shuo experienced, plus Han Shuo's former age of 29 before entering Bryan's body, he appeared somewhat more mature on the exterior.

"That's not important. Hehe. The important point is whether or not I can be verified as a grand magus necromancer or not." Han Shuo didn't care about this sort of fame and laughingly responded to Ares.

"Oh, you're that Brettel City's Lord, Bryan. Hehe. I've been truly wanting to meet you and it's my pleasure to be able to see you here today. I'm Carlos." At this time, Carlos, the wind grand magus who walked down with Ares, suddenly laughed and greeted Han Shuo.

Han Shuo replied courteously with a smile and said, "Correct, I'm Bryan. My pleasure to make your acquaintance, Carlos."

With regards to this Carlos, Han Shuo seemed to recall someone discussing him when Han Shuo last set foot in the Dark Mantle Headquarters. Han Shuo hadn't paid attention last time however. Since this person could become a wind grand magus before turning thirty years old, Han Shuo dared to postulate that this person was extremely well known in the Lancelot Empire. He made a mental note to himself to find some time to look up this person when he returned to the Dark Mantle headquarters. There would definitely be some information about this guy.

"Young master, we must go!" Within the lounge, an elderly person who seemed like a butler said to Carlos.

"No rush. Hehe. I want to wait until Bryan verifies his rank before leaving." Carlos replied to the butler with a smile. Then, he smiled towards Han Shuo saying, "If you don't mind, can I observe?"

Han Shuo noticed that besides the Magic Association's people within the lounge, everyone else appeared to be Carlos' servant. He wondered how powerful this person's identity must be. Therefore, he wrinkled his brows

before saying with a carefree smile, “Hehe, No problem!”

# Chapter 378: A Summit of Dignitaries

This test was no different from the previous one, with mental strength being tested first. Since Han Shuo had indeed reached the grand magus level, he effortlessly passed the mental strength test.

The next necromancer test was just as simple as well. Since an even more powerful summoning technique was the most effective representation of reaching the grand magus necromancer level, Han Shuo did just that. After Han Shuo's chant, an old fey corpse descended from another world. The appearance of this old fey corpse proved everything.

Without a doubt, the appearance of the undead creature proved Han Shuo's strength. Ares gazed deeply at the old fey corpse and sensed a thick sense of death emitting from its body. He nodded his head in astonishment before saying to Han Shuo, "It's true. You've actually become a grand magus necromancer! Inconceivable!"

Carlos' eyes radiated with an astonished sparkle as he looked probingly at Han Shuo. After a good while, he sighed with emotions saying, "Your reputation is truly justified. It seems like the accomplishments you've obtained thus far have truly not just been a fluke. Congratulations Bryan!"

Han Shuo politely nodded his head towards Carlos, before laughing, "Many thanks."

"Alright, there's no problems. Just wait a moment, I'll immediately handle the proper formalities." Ares headed straight up after saying this to Han Shuo. He was most likely going to deal with Han Shuo's matters and record his current rank within the Magic Association.

After Ares left, Carlos looked at Han Shuo. Although hesitant, he opened his mouth in the end and said, "Bryan, your relationship with Prince Lawrence is extremely close right?"

Han Shuo was surprised, unable to determine the purpose of Carlo's words. But he still nodded his head and looked at Carlos, surprised, "Yep, what's the matter?"

“I have some words but I don’t know if they are appropriate.” Carlos appeared reluctant and faltered.

“Hehe, it won’t hurt. Go ahead and just say it.” Han Shuo laughed while becoming increasingly perplexed.

Carlos’s complexion suddenly became stern as he deeply looked at Han Shuo, “Then, I’ll be frank. Among the four princes, Prince Lawrence is the most hopeless and will probably fail to inherit the title of king. Additionally because of Lawrence’s peculiar identity, I’m afraid the moment when His Majesty passes away, Lawrence will also be the first to suffer. Forgive my words but it’s best if you don’t become too close with Prince Lawrence. Only by keeping clear will you be able to provide the most help to Brettel City.”

Han Shuo had already known of Lawrence’s predicament thanks to Emily’s letter. Furthermore, when Han Shuo had first met Lawrence and found out that he was of illegitimate birth and status, he already knew that there would be such a day sooner or later. Candide had warned him once as well. Thus, Han Shuo naturally already knew that with Lawrence’s identity, it would definitely be very challenging for Lawrence to inherit the title of king against the other princes.

However, Lawrence had treated Han Shuo with sincerity and Han Shuo had once promised that he would try his hardest to help him. Even when Han Shuo took control of Brettel City, Lawrence still continued to help him as best as he could. Now that Lawrence has truly sunk into a predicament, Han Shuo couldn’t just sit there and ignore him no matter what.

“Thanks for your warning, however I am someone who returns favor with favor and repays my gratitude. Since Prince Lawrence has once helped me, now that he has encountered some dangerous times, I will still help him no matter how dangerous and how detrimental it is to me. This is my immutable, societal code of conduct. Hehe, still though, thank you.” Han Shuo smiled at Carlos, clearly expressing his stance.

After hearing this, Carlos sighed disappointedly while nodding his head,

“Bryan, I very much admire your methods, but you should still reconsider this prudently. This matter will not only implicate you alone. Once Lawrence fails to wield power, you, your Brettel City, and all of your friends will also be implicated because of this matter. Sometimes, even if it isn’t for your own good, you should still think about it for others.”

This statement was reasonable. However, Han Shuo wouldn’t change his decision just for these couple of words. At the moment, Brettel City was incomparably stable. Plus, Han Shuo could also rely on the Cemetery of Death. Even if Carlo’s words became a reality, Han Shuo could still guarantee that he could bring everyone around him to safety.

“I am extremely grateful for your good intentions. Hehe. However, when I make a decision, I normally don’t regret them. Even if my decision is wrong, I will still carry it out to the end!” Han Shuo’s expression remained the same as he calmly replied. Obviously, he wasn’t tempted due to Carlos’s words.

After Han Shuo had said such words, Carlos knew that it would be useless to try to continue to persuade him. Carlos sighed helplessly before saying, “I really didn’t wish to be your enemy. However, if things develop normally, I’m afraid some things will truly be unavoidable. Sigh!”

“What are you guys saying, you two fellows are Lancelot Empire’s rare and talented characters. Hehe. It seems like every nation has their own talented mage. Bryan, you’re only twenty years old and you could actually become a grand magus necromancer. Truly an abnormal freak.” Right at this moment, Ares came from upstairs and chuckled at the two of them.

“It’s nothing. Mister Ares and Bryan, I still have some things to do. Goodbye.” Carlos politely said his farewells to Ares and Bryan before immediately heading downstairs and leaving.

Han Shuo looked at Carlos’s departing figure. He knew that this person was definitely supporting one of the other three princes. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have said those words. Perhaps because Carlos was wary of Han Shuo’s power or perhaps because he didn’t want to face such a strong adversary, he tried so hard to persuade Han Shuo.

But to Han Shuo, after his magical cultivation had entered the carnal realm, he wouldn't necessarily lose even if he faced a sacred swordmaster. Carlos would absolutely not be Han Shuo's match since he was someone who had only just recently advanced to become a wind grand magus. Thus, Han Shuo did not place Carlos on too high a pedestal in his heart.

"Bryan, your data has already been rewritten. From this point on, you're a grand magus necromancer. As promised, this is your new medallion and certificate. You can now order your own magical robe and embroider a symbol representing your strength as a grand magus necromancer." Ares chuckled at Han Shuo before placing the certificate proving his new rank into his hand.

"Thank you Mister Ares!" Han Shuo expressed his thanks and then opened his mouth to continue, "Alright, then I'll also take my leave."

"Wait a moment!" Ares smilingly shouted loudly before opening his mouth, continuing, "I'm good friends with your Academy's Dean, Emma. She has erected a statue of you within the Academy and has once came here to verify your rank. If you don't mind, I will hand her the newest information about you. Hehe. This will greatly improve your status within Babylon Academy."

Han Shuo was startled. Then he smiled and nodded his hand, "As you wish. Hehe. I won't mind. However, Dean Emma already knows of my new strength. I think whether you inform her or not will not actually matter."

"Oh, is that so. Hehe, then I'll just forget about it." Ares laughed and then continued, "Alright, go ahead and do whatever you need to do. I hope the next time we meet I can verify your new rank as a sacred magus. It would be my greatest honor if I could still be alive to verify your rank for you."

Han Shuo laughed cheerfully and chuckled, "I hope so. But you must live a few days longer Mister Ares!"

After finishing these words, Han Shuo did not continue to remain within the Magic Association. He headed downstairs and walked out.

Carlos had already left a moment ago with his crowd of servants. Thus,

when Han Shuo started coming downstairs, that young lady obviously already knew that Han Shuo had successfully confirmed his new rank. She excitedly looked at Han Shuo with worship, “You are truly very amazing. I have worked here for several years but I have yet to see such a young grand magus before!”

Han Shuo only nodded his head at her reservedly and didn't say anything. After a laugh, he walked out the door and headed for the Dark Mantle Headquarters.

Mt. Ordas. Dark Mantle Headquarters.

This time, Han Shuo was immediately received with great fanfare after flashing his identity medallion. One of the agents brought Han Shuo towards a building.

“Sir. Please wait a moment. I will go inside to send them a message first.” That Dark Mantle agent brought Han Shuo to a wide doorway made of rock before respectfully informing Han Shuo

Although separated by the thick and wide doorway, Han Shuo could still sense a couple of powerful auras from within. Han Shuo always kept an impression of any new acquaintances he made. Furthermore, even if he was separated a large distance, he could still distinguish between them through their auras. After his magical cultivation advanced to the new rank and his consciousness improved greatly, Han Shuo could even more easily differentiate between everyone's differing auras. Thus, this stone door that was shrouded by some complicated and complex magic enchantments was completely incapable of blocking Han Shuo's mental probing.

“Mm, go ahead.” Han Shuo nodded his head and said to the agent guide.

Han Shuo's current status was already different from his former days; as a Dark Sun Envoy, he was definitely at the top of the social ladder. Last time when Han Shuo ruined Celt's operation in the underground world, he had already advanced to a Second Dark Sun Envoy. Within the entire Dark Mantle Organization, there were not many that was a Second Dark Sun Envoy like Han Shuo. Thus, this agent naturally treated Han Shuo with

great caution and respect.

From this agent, Han Shuo discovered that Dark Mantle's three heavyweights had all congregated here today. Furthermore, even some senior figures that had gone into seclusion were included in this meeting. They seemed to be negotiating about some big matters. Within the entire Dark Mantle's enormous organization, only those that were above Third Dark Sun Envoys could participate in this discussion. However, these agent knew that Han Shuo's identity was unique and immediately went inside to inform the dignitaries.

Han Shuo could sense Candide and Amyes' aura inside, as well as the not-so-friendly Cecilia. Besides them, there was also another completely unfamiliar aura. Since all of these people had gathered, there were definitely important matters needing to be discussed. Of this that was certain.

The Dark Mantle headquarters had a tight defense in the perimeter. There were even more complicated and strange magical enchantments assembled within. Thus, Han Shuo didn't release his mystical demons to eavesdrop and only stood outside, waiting.

After a while, that agent came out with another person. This person was extremely robust and also at the prime of his life. His coarse palms indicated that he was most likely a user of heavy weaponry. His sideburns were preserved in lushful display. After arriving he nodded his head to Han Shuo and said, "Bryan, right? Follow me."

After saying these words, he said to the agent who guided Han Shuo, "Alright, there are no more matters here for you."

While heading inside, this robust man opened his mouth to introduce himself, "I'm the same as you. I'm also a Second Dark Sun envoy. Hehe. The upper guys have given verbal orders to bring you to them."

This was an extremely spacious passageway. There were powerful crossbow mechanisms on the walls, as well as various magic cannons and hidden magical enchantments. Han Shuo dared guarantee that if one didn't have the qualifications to enter but still barged in, what welcomed



him would be a road to death.

After passing through the spacious passageway, they arrived at another gate that was protected by another two agents. The robust agent that guided Han Shuo signaled to open the gate and said to Han Shuo, "Go ahead, enter."

Han Shuo was startled, took a look at this guy and said, "You're not going in with me?"

He smiled ruefully and shook his head before helplessly replying, "I don't have the qualifications to enter. Although we're both Second Dark Sun envoys, I only have the qualifications to stay here on guard. Hehe. They let you have a good guide, but here is where I stop."

Hearing this, Han Shuo unconsciously fell silent before laughing apologetically at him. Then, he walked through the door without saying anything else.

The moment after Han Shuo's steps landed inside, a formation suddenly mobilized into action. Han Shuo then noticed that he had already appeared within a secretive and sealed, wide stone room

The stone room was roughly the size of a basketball court. There were white marble tables and chairs individually placed in the surroundings. The tables were filled with various refreshments and fruits. Encompassing one of the large rhombus table were thirteen chairs. Every chair carried a person. At this moment, these thirteen individuals unanimously gazed towards Han Shuo.

At one corner of the rhombus table sat the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle. They were obviously Candide, Amyes, and Cecilia. Emily sat upright at a different side while only shooting Han Shuo a glance with her eyes. She purposely didn't over do it, probably to avoid arousing suspicion and letting others discover something.

These thirteen individuals were the Dark Mantles' truest senior levels. Among them, even the lowest ranked Emily had advanced to the Third Dark Sun while the highest ones were like Candide and Cecilia were Fifth Dark Star.

However, after Han Shuo shot a glance around, he suddenly noticed that the three heavyweights were actually not sitting at the main seat. Instead, at the most honorable seat sat two unimpressively looking old man. Han Shuo had seen one of them once. He was precisely the elder that laughed all day while looking after a shop at the Valley of Sunshine's Dark Mantle stronghold.

# Chapter 379: Elder

Usual reminder that this chapter is not edited, etvolare is stopping at chapter 380, blah blah.

The Dark Mantle stronghold in the Valley of Sunshine wasn't very large, and it lacked both personnel and resources compared to ones in other cities, but the oldest member here was actually the one sitting in the most esteemed position!

Even Han Shuo had ignored the existence of this person in the Valley of Sunshine the entire time. All Han Shuo knew about him was that he smiled all day as he guarded the shop in order to conceal the existence of the Dark Mantle base within. He never imagined that the man was a founding member of the Dark Mantle.

The old man looked at Han Shuo with shining eyes. Laughing, he nodded his head at Han Shuo, saying "What, do you not recognize me?"

"No, it's just that I didn't expect to see you here. I'm just surprised." Han Shuo earnestly said.

"Brian, this is Teacher Sabakas. He is the previous Fifth Dark Sun. The Valley of Sunshine is the place where Teacher Sabakas has retired to, so that identity was naturally false." Candice retained his sinister look. However, he stood up when he was introducing Sabakas to Han Shuo, as a sign of respect for the former.

Han Shuo was actually unable to feel any hint of the elements from Sabakas, causing him to be shocked. He immediately understood that Sabakas was either a normal person who didn't know any spells or fighting techniques, or was a powerful person that even Han Shuo couldn't tell the strength of. The fact that he could sit in such a spot naturally meant that he wasn't a normal person that didn't know anything, thus, Han Shuo could already imagine just how powerful Sabakas was.

"Greetings, old sir!" Han Shuo bowed respectfully and greeted him with a smile.

Sabakas nodded and waved his left hand. The space around Emily twisted for a moment, before an alabaster chair identical to theirs landed beside Emily. Sabakas smiled towards Han Shuo, "Go ahead and take a seat."

Han Shuo thanked the elder, he walked over to the chair to sit down, leaning against Emily. After Han Shuo sat down, Emily leaned close to Han Shuo and whispered, "Sabakas is Cecilia's grandfather, the space sacred magus of the Lancelot Empire. The dean of your Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, Emma, was taught by him as well. The large scale magic teleportation formations as well as all of the teleportation formations here were set up by him."

Han Shuo was shocked and couldn't help but look at Sabakas once again, remembering what Emily had said to him in the underground the previous time. Emily had said that Cecilia's grandfather was a really amazing person, and Han Shuo had seen him before. Han Shuo was unable to think of who it was for a long time, and now he finally understood.

An old woman with loose skin that creased into ravines on her face sat with Sabakas. Her two hands continuously turned and toyed with a crystal ball, while her grey eyes were full of loneliness, causing her to seem different from the other people there.

When Han Shuo entered, the old woman who looked like a witch didn't pay any attention to him at all. She merely sat there silently as if she was asleep. However, the crystal ball in her hands continued to rotate, as if reminding everyone else that she was still listening to their conversation.

"That is the mysterious seer, Grace. I only just found out about her existence from my older brother, but I don't know what she does exactly. However, the mysterious existence of a seer was apparently able to see the future. I don't know whether it was true or not either." Emily explained for Han Shuo once again when she saw him look towards that old witch.

Han Shuo sat properly without saying anything, and merely nodded slightly in order to show that he'd heard Emily's introduction. He swept

his glance over Sabakas and the witch-like old seer, Grace. His heart was filled with shock. One of them was a space sacred magus, the other was a seer who was beyond mysterious.

These two people should be people on the level of an elder in the Dark Mantle. Adding onto the fact that the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle were present, Han Shuo truly felt a bit of anticipation for the upcoming meeting. He sat there without moving an inch, and prepared himself to listen to what they were going to talk about.

“Bryan, I know all about what you did within the Valley of Sunshine. Hehe, you’re not bad hmm? We can all have our own opinions when we discuss here. Since you sit here, then you can speak out your opinion for things we discuss here as well.” Sabakas chuckled as he looked towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo thanked him before continuing to sitting with a proper posture and saying too much. Han Shuo took a look at the thirteen people present, and understood that the ones that could sit here must be the true senior executives within the Dark Mantle organization. His heart was filled with curiosity, because he didn’t know what sort of thing could actually make these people gather together.

After a while, Han Shuo gradually understood why these people gathered. It was also because of the battle of power between the princes.

When a new king needed to be chosen in a country, the country would face another gory bloodbath. Regardless of what power a person belonged to, it was improbable to remove themselves entirely. Even normally neutral organizations such as the Dark Mantle needed to make this headache-inducing choice as well.

This Dark Mantle organization that directly served the king would also become the hand of shadows for the new king. After the new king is selected, he would definitely choose the person he trust most to manage this huge powerful organization. If the Dark Mantle chose the wrong side right now, the Dark Mantle management would be washed clean in the future.

After listening to it for a while, Han Shuo noticed that they seemed to want to remain neutral, but several princes had already sent a clear invitation to them. All three of the Dark Mantle heavyweights had been invited by the princes, but all three of them had declined the invitations and displayed a neutral standing. However, they understood that if they truly remained neutral, then any of the princes would exclude them out of their trusted followers.

The Dark Mantle organization has always been the most trusted existence of the king, if they were unable to gain the trust of the new king, then the management within would be refreshed. When that happens, it would be unknown whether the three heavyweights would continue to be the current three.

Out of these thirteen people, some of them did lean towards the first prince, Charles, who was the most powerful right now. They felt that Charles had the most right to the throne. Of course, one or two did choose the other two princes for their own reasons. However, nobody thought well of Lawrence, the bastard son, so nobody mentioned him.

“Bryan, I heard that you’re close with Lawrence, what do you think about this?” Cecilia suddenly glanced at Han Shuo. While the Third and Fourth Dark Suns had already expressed their opinions, the two elders and the three heavyweights hadn’t yet.

Han Shuo had remained silent and merely listened to everyone’s discussion, so he was a bit shocked as he did not expect Cecilia to suddenly ask him a question.

All of a sudden, the gazes of all thirteen people within the room fell onto Han Shuo. Han Shuo, recently become extremely influential in both the Dark Mantle and the imperial structure, was in a slightly different position towards them. As a city in the east, Brettel City was beyond vibrant. As the city lord, Han Shuo had enough chips to side with anyone.

Han Shuo drew a blank for a moment, then thought about it without smiling, “I will help Lawrence with my identity as the city lord of Brettel City. Repaying favors is my policy, no matter how bad you think his

chances are, I will support him.”

“Lawrence, that bastard son Lawrence?” Cecilia said in disdain and shook her head. “Anyone has a chance except him.”

Han Shuo smiled without speaking and understood that the people there all wouldn't think that Lawrence had good chances. Some of the other envoys also carried disdain on their faces as they ignored Han Shuo's attitude. Then, they looked away from Han Shuo and towards Cecilia and the other higher-ups.

At this moment, the crystal ball in Grace the old seer's hand suddenly emitted a soft light. At the same time, Grace's eyes slowly cleared as she moved her heavy eyelids to stare at shimmering light within the pale-green fog of the crystal ball in her hands.

The smiling expression of space sacred magus, Sabakas, suddenly tensed as he looked solemnly at the old seer. Candide and the rest of the three heavyweights were also very shocked as they looked at the old seer, Grace, who'd seemed to be asleep ever since Han Shuo had entered the room.

As the light in the crystal ball she held suddenly faded, the deep wrinkles on Grace's face suddenly trembled slightly. Then she started to cough intensely, seeming like her life would end at any time, like a candle extinguished in the wind. Her coughs seemed like they would tear herself apart, and in the end, she even coughed up a mouthful of blood onto the crystal ball.

The crystal ball she held suddenly shattered, while Grace's body shook and she nearly fell down from her sitting position. After a while, her intense coughing gradually stopped as her eyes were filled with an unfocused white once again, as if her old eyes were unable to see the surrounding clearly.

The Third and Fourth Dark Suns only found it strange, but Sabakas and the three heavyweights looked at Grace with shining eyes, as if they didn't dare to breath, just like they were waiting for something.

Grace, who hadn't uttered a single word since the start of the meeting, suddenly looked towards Sabakas and the three heavyweights with her

blurred and lifeless grey eyes. In the end, she finally set her gaze upon Han Shuo, who was sitting in the corner. Sabakas and the three heavyweights were suddenly shocked as well as they set their gazes upon Han Shuo.

“What path should we take for the future?” Sabakas looked at Han Shuo in shock, then looked towards the old seer and asked a bit cautiously.

“Sabakas, I’m a bit tired.” The old seer replied with a tremble. She’d already retracted her gaze from Han Shuo as if it was just a casual glance.

Sabakas nodded, then looked towards Candide and the rest of the three heavyweights, “I’ll take her back to rest first. You guys continue to chat, but don’t make your decision yet.”

All three heavyweights stood up together and saluted both Sabakas and Grace, before respectfully sending Sabakas, the Dark Mantle elder out.

Sabakas smiled as a cloud of light wrapped around him and Grace. The two of them disappeared with the fading of the light. Even Han Shuo was unable to feel even a hint of their aura, so they seemed to have already left the place.

After Sabakas and Grace left, the three heavyweights no longer said anything about the future path that the Dark Mantle should take, seeming to await the guidance of Sabakas and Grace. During the remaining time, all they discussed about were the great events happening with the Dark Mantle recently. The Third and Fourth Dark Suns all reported the issues they had, then spoke about all the strange situations and situations that threatened the safety of the Empire which occurred within their region.

“Bryan, how is the situation with Brettel City and the seven grand duchies?” Candide took a look at Han Shuo after everyone else finished reporting and directed a question to Han Shuo.

Although Han Shuo was the city lord of Brettel City, he was merely a Rank Two Dark Sun envoy, making his position the lowest there. Hearing Candide’s question, Han Shuo stood up from his seat and said with ease, “The Dark Mantle stronghold within Brettel City is developing well. Currently, its points had already spread out to every single major city within the seven grand duchies with Brettel City as the center. They would



use letters to report all major events that were occurring locally to the Brettel City through letters.”

“Very good. The seven grand duchies should indeed be properly watched, they have always been discontent with their place,” Candide replied.

“My lord, do you know about Stratholme of Stranglethorn Valley within the seven duchies?” Han Shuo thought about it, then suddenly asked Candide before sitting down.

The moment he said that, the eleven people remaining after Sabakas and Grace had left all wore ugly expressions. Candide even shook his head helplessly with a sullen expression and then looked at Han Shuo in shock, “You met that old monster?”

Han Shuo shook his head, “No, but I did hear that he was the previous imperial adviser of the Vanerdun Dynasty. He originally had the strength of a sacred swordmaster the last time the Empire entered the seven grand duchies. Apparently he issued a warning to the experts on our side. I wonder if this really occurred?”

Candide shook his head helplessly, “This is the shame of the empire, if it wasn’t for the existence of this old monster, the seven grand duchies would have already been conquered. How could the seven grand duchies stand up against us without a single sacred magus?. The only reason we haven’t attacked with sacred magi is because of the existence of this old monster.”

Han Shuo was rather shocked when he heard Candide admit it. He fixed Stratholme more firmly in his heart, and thought about whether he should be more vigilant against the seven duchies.

# Chapter 380: Han Shuo's headache of a matter

Note, this is unedited, the usual, blahblah. Remember to check the teaser for more info!

After the two senior figures left, the discussion that followed didn't include anything important. Everyone was mostly just concerned about Dark Mantle's future movements, so when this issue was dismissed, the meeting quickly concluded.

Everyone dispersed after the meeting. With Candide's indication, Han Shuo followed Candide to his private room. He helped confirm Han Shuo's identity as a Second Dark Sun envoy before finally asking, "Your development recently in Brettel City is going pretty well. Since I have already discussed this with His Majesty, your arrival this time is perfect. I believe His Majesty will confer upon you the rank of a Marquis."

"If that's true, It would be fantastic. Currently, Brettel City has a thousand things to be taken care of. I need to report to His Majesty and see if I can set up a large-scale transporting formation array within Brettel City. With it, Brettel City can develop even faster." Han Shuo realized that communicating with other cities was inevitably linked to becoming a major city. As of now, it was very inconvenient for Brettel City to communicate with the outside world. But, if he could have his own large-scale transporting formation array, Brettel City's development could speed up.

After hearing this from Han Shuo, Candide's head started to hurt slightly. He thought about it for a moment said, "I can't guarantee if His Majesty will agree. Even though Brettel City has defeated some bandit groups now, they are just some bandits in the end. As long as Brettel City cannot reveal a power capable of withstanding the seven grand dukedoms, I believe His Majesty will not feel at ease setting up a large-scale transportation formation array within Brettel City."

"If the seven grand dukedoms breached a Brettel City that just so

happened to have a transportation formation, the seven grand dukedoms could easily expend some magic crystals to send armed forces into the cities of the Lancelot Empire. This would cause a catastrophe. Thus, His Majesty will definitely treat this cautiously.”

Han Shuo also understood Candide’s meaning. After listening, Han Shuo nodded his head and said, “It seems like His Majesty will not truly be at ease before Brettel City can defeat the seven grand dukedoms.”

“Ai, His Majesty’s health is worsening and I don’t think he will be able to last much longer. Why did you come here from Brettel City this time, is it for Lawrence?” Candide sighed before specifically inquiring from Han Shuo.

By no means did Han Shuo try to conceal the truth. He nodded his head and replied, “Yes, Lawrence and I have a pretty good relationship. My principle is to repay favor with favor. Sir Candide, you don’t need to try to convince me otherwise.”

“I’m not trying to convince you. It’s just that I feel like you should carefully consider it again. Your influence in Lancelot Empire isn’t small anymore. As long as you can make Brettel City somewhat more stable, your future prospects will be boundless and immeasurable. But, if you fight for Lawrence’s power, I worry not only for you, but also your current foundation. You ought to carefully consider this once more.”

Candide also didn’t know if he should persuade Han Shuo or not. Originally, when he brought Han Shuo into Dark Mantle, he never anticipated that Han Shuo would have such accomplishments as he did today. Furthermore, based on the current situation, as long as Han Shuo continued to develop smoothly, it was entirely possible that he could become one of the overlords in the Lancelot Empire.

On one side, he’d been the one to bring Han Shuo in and on the other, Han Shuo was his wife Emma’s student. Regardless of which point he considered it from, Candide would never wish for Han Shuo to make a wrong choice and mistakenly continue down the wrong path. Thus, Candide tried to advise Han Shuo time and time again. But because he had

worked for Dark Mantle for so long and had received so much information through his many channels, he knew Han Shuo was the type to stick to his decisions and not the type to be swayed. Thus, Candide was really clueless on what the proper action was.

“Sigh. Alright, I won’t interfere in your matters anymore. Before Madams Grace clearly chooses the direction that our Dark Mantle will take, no one will know what kind of road the Dark Mantle will take in the future.” Candide sighed and said to Han Shuo.

Hearing Candide’s words, Han Shuo could help but feel dumbfounded. After a moment of hesitation, he inquired, “Sir, is Madame Grace truly capable of looking clearly into the future?”

Han Shuo had understood long ago that the most mysterious profession in this world was a seer. He also knew all the different miraculous descriptions about divining. However, he wasn’t the type of person to believe in that kind of abstruse prophecy at all. Thus, he was still half doubting even now.

Candide’s face turned solemn as he firmly said to Han Shuo, “Although the Lancelot Empire has faced many important events throughout the years, Grace has chosen the correct path every time. Furthermore, the Dark Mantle’s ability to become such a powerful weapon of darkness within the Lancelot Empire is also directly related to Madame Grace’s guidance.”

“In addition, His Majesty cares about Madame Grace the most. Her prophecies can even alter His Majesty’s decisions. Even now, His Majesty can’t decide on which prince will be the next king. One of the reasons is precisely because Madame Grace has yet to tell His Majesty which prince is the true wise king.”

“Mm. Also, Lawrence’s master, also Karel Ascot, is in fact also waiting for Madame Grace to point the way. Whether or not the Dark Mantle can avert disaster this time is also dependant on Madam’s proper instructions. Thus, none of us have made any decisions even now.”

Han Shuo was truly startled listening to Candide. Who would’ve thought

that the old woman, who seemed as if she would die at any moment, was actually playing a critical role? She had the power to affect the decisions of sacred swordmaster Karel and the king! Han Shuo's heart was filled with amazement.

Afterwards, Han Shuo suddenly remembered the crystal ball that had shattered in the old seer's hand. When she'd gazed deeply at him previously, Han Shuo had originally believed that perhaps she was only shooting him a random glance. But, listening to Candide today, Han Shuo couldn't help but to start imagining some wild thoughts. Could her gaze have a special hidden meaning?

"Based on what you're saying, as long as Madame Grace acknowledges a prince, that prince will definitely gain great advantages?" Han Shuo inquired of Candide after thinking for a moment.

Candide nodded his head affirmatively before giving an example to emphasize the importance of the old seer, Grace. "Even if it's Lawrence, as long as Madame Grace says he can bring prosperity, power, and riches to the Lancelot Empire, then even he will have great hopes to succeed as the new king."

"Hopefully the old seer will actually support Lawrence, hehe. Who knows, I feel like Lawrence has quite the monarch's vibe." Han Shuo self deprecated before asking, "That Stratholme, what actually happened with him?"

As these words fell, Candide's darkened complexion become even more sinister and hazy. He hesitated a moment before saying to Han Shuo, "Last time, when the Empire invaded the seven grand dukedoms, besides sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot, there was also the earth sacred magus, Dempsey Gayer, who accompanied them."

"Everyone originally believed that the fragmented seven grand dukedoms would definitely be defeated. The rumors reflected the real situation. Because of the sudden alliance between the seven grand duchies, the Imperial Army began facing obstructions everywhere. However, because the Empire secretly believed the seven grand dukedoms

didn't have the existence of a sacred magus, they wanted to violate a continental pact and use taboo magic to reverse the situation. In the end, before the earth sacred magus, Dempsey Gayer, could even make a move, the old monster Stratholme sought him out."

"The old monster Stratholme openly challenged sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot, the pride of our nation. This fight was witnessed by no one except the earth sacred magus Dempsey Gayer. However, although no one knows the specifics, both the sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot and the earth sacred magus Dempsey Gayer did not make any more moves during the war."

"During the many years of the existence of the Verdun Dynasty, Stratholme was the teacher of the state and had been as strong as a sacred swordmaster long ago. Along with the fact that he had yet to die after all these years, the moment he moved, sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot and earth sacred magus Dempsey Gayer of the Lancelot Empire became apprehensive in their hearts. This already clearly explains his strength.

"Ah, at that time, a soldier saw that old monster and said Stratholme did not look as old as what people imagined. On the contrary, he had an elegant, youthful look. Precisely because of this, from that point on, we have always called Stratholme, the former teacher of the state of Verdun's Imperial Court, an old monster." Candide continued to explain.

Han Shuo taciturnly knitted his brows and thought for a moment before opening his mouth to say, "I see. Alright, I will leave this place first. If you need me for anything, you can just find me within Ossen City. I will be staying here for a while."

"Mm, you need to be careful. Ossen City is not too peaceful right now." Candide nodded and said. Seeing Han Shuo leaving, Candide hesitated for a moment before abruptly opening his mouth and saying, "Wait a moment!"

Pausing for a moment, Han Shuo turned his head towards Candide and said, "Is there anything else?"

"Also, you should pay more attention to your relationship with Emily.

Aymes is not an easy person to get along with. Additionally, the Hahn's family is one of the most influential families in the empire. For both your own sakes, you should be a little careful." Candide sighed before continuing, "Ai, everything's good about you, but that you are simply a bit too much of a player. Also, you need to be even more careful with Fanny. I just learned this from your own dean a while ago that her father is Commander Firenze of the Howling Legion. He's a notorious butcher who's even more difficult to deal with than Aymes. And also Phoebe, she is sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot's most doted upon disciple. The at the kind of women you've set your sights on! I really don't know how to help you."

After hearing Candide's words, Han Shuo's face changed. Although, he already knew clearly about Emily and Phoebe's identity and was only clueless about Fanny's identity, he'd never would've thought that Fanny's background would actually be even bigger than theirs. Her father was actually the Howling Legion's commander!

As a Second Dark Sun, he naturally knew of such a renowned person in the Lancelot Empire. Firenze's Howling Legion was without a doubt the Empire's most powerful legion in the army. As a regiment's commander that behaved ruthlessly, sinisterly, and fiercely, he was a notorious, fierce lunatic in the Lancelot Empire.

After all these years, Firenze's Howling Legion has continued to defend and resist the barbaric orcs in the Southern Border, causing tens of thousands of orcs to die to his men. Thus, within the Orc Empire, the name Firenze was synonymous to demons and nightmares. It could even be said that everyone feared and also cursed him.

Firenze was the same even in the Empire, known and distinguished for his fierceness. He completely lacked the proper etiquette and the grace as befitting a noble. When'd once attended a private banquet hosted by His Majesty, Firenze had even dared to crudely come to blows with any noble that he'd found unpleasing to the eyes.

But His Majesty the king, Uhtred Lancelot, found these people very important. It is precisely because of Firenze's existence that the barbaric

orcs could forever be isolated to the south. Firenze was regarded so highly that even though he has offended a lot of nobles and has even cursed grand duke Ashburn as hypocritical and despicable, he was still living as nicely as before after all these years.

Because he'd once beaten up Grand Duke Ashburn during a banquet, the king really couldn't put up with him any longer and thrown him into the dungeons. However, the moment this news spread out of the Lancelot Empire, the barbaric orcs immediately started cheering and celebrating. Afterwards, their army forces started invading various cities along the southern border.

His Majesty the King had sent several generals forward in defense. But, ultimately, there were no one capable of preserving the situation. Seeing one city after another on the verge of being conquered, even the king had no choice but to beg Firenze to come out and face the enemy. However, Firenze had actually refused. In the end, only after two cities of the empire's southern border was breached did Grand Duke Ashburn personally go to prison and bow his head before Firenze. That was when he emerged from prison and drove the orc army out of the southern territory.

Within the southern border region, this Firenze was as if a living god. In the entire Lancelot Empire, besides His Majesty the King, Ashburn was most apprehensive and most afraid of Firenze.

Han Shuo had already looked through this information a long time ago thanks to the Dark Mantle's intelligence. Now, hearing that Fanny's old man was actually confirmed to be Firenze, he was struck dumb. He couldn't help but ask Candide again with a somewhat dry mouth, "You're certain that Fanny's father is him?"

"It's him, this information is from your Dean, Emma. Even I only found out just recently. Ai, You should pray for your own good fortune. I had already warned you to not be too unfaithful, now let's see just how you'll end up." Candide smiled ruefully as he helplessly said to Han Shuo.

"Eh, It seems like this really is a somewhat difficult problem to deal with.



Ai, Teacher Fanny is such a gentle, soft, and virtuous woman, how could she have such a messed up old man. This world is truly miraculous!" Han Shuo lamented with a headache.

"Firenze is extremely doting towards Fanny because her mother had an untimely death. I think you should still take the next step with Fanny. If you can make Fanny docile and obedient, who knows, maybe you can escape this calamity." Candide came up with this idea.

Han Shuo sighed miserably. But after inspiration suddenly struck, he abruptly asked Candide, "If I settle things with Emily, Phoebe, and Fanny, then there would be the Hahn Family and Amyes behind Emily. On top of that, there would be the sacred swordmaster, Karel Ascot, and that madman, Firenze. If I also include the entire Dark Mantle, what do you think, could I help Lawrence? Would he have hope in succeeding as the king?"

Candide's body shook right after these words were spoken. Afterwards, he stared at Han Shuo's increasingly brightening gaze. After some time, he finally opened his mouth to say, "If you really do so, then Lawrence would have great hope to win. But, if even Madame Grace helps him, then this is practically in the bag. Oh, right, do you think Lawrence knows about your relationship with the three woman?"

Han Shuo started. After carefully thinking for a moment, he nodded his head and said, "I believe Lawrence should know about the relationship between the three women and me. However, he has never talked about it much before."

Candide was suddenly frightened. After a sudden sigh, he said, "It seems like among the few princes, Lawrence should be the most difficult to deal with. I can clearly tell you that Lawrence also knew about Fanny's identity. It's no wonder that Lawrence spared no effort to help you, he wanted to to rope you in. If Lawrence had already calculated to such a day long ago, then this Lawrence is truly too frightening of a youngster."

Listening to Candide's words, Han Shuo also felt somewhat apprehensive. He carefully recalled the events of meeting Lawrence. Han

Shuo couldn't help but to feel amazed as he discovered that Candide's statement was very likely to be true.

However, in any case, Lawrence has constantly helped Han Shuo, and it was also because of his existence that Han Shuo could climb up to his position so quickly. After staying silent for a moment, Han Shuo spilled out a laugh, "It seems Lawrence is actually the most capable. I think my choice just might be correct because only a person that has planned so far can distinguish himself among the various factions."

"Maybe your choice might actually be the correct one. Forget it, I should just wait until Madame Grace decides." Candide sighed and said to Han Shuo with a slight headache.

To Candide, the most proper judgements can only be made by people who could clearly see the future like Madame Grace. Any other decisions were not guaranteed. If Han Shuo could grab ahold of all three powers, perhaps there would truly be some vague hope in helping Lawrence seize power. However, this is still only hope and nothing more.

"Oh, that's right, His Majesty's health is becoming increasingly feeble, and he probably can't last much longer. When I went to see His Majesty last time, His Majesty was constantly thinking about the miracles of your body and trying to understand your mystical martial arts skills, hoping to be able to use it within the army. What do you think about this?" Candide thought for a moment before asking Han Shuo.

"I will consider this carefully. I will give you my answer after some time." Han Shuo predicted.

And here is where the translation ends, thanks to all the pirate sites and readers who think pirates are the translators despite being told otherwise. I've actually seen people justify their decision to pirate to the end of the world, so here's my response when four hours of work are stolen in four seconds. Enjoy the end of etvolare's translations, and please support the real deal next time.

# Chapter 381: Luring into demonhood

Once Han Shuo returned to his official residence, Kallas immediately reported to Han Shuo that third prince Lawrence had been waiting for him all along.

Lancelot Empire's King Uhtred originally had three princes, eldest prince Charles, second prince Cyril and youngest prince Beverly. Of the three princes, eldest prince Charles was intrepid and fond of battle, second prince Cyril was the standard for a cultured noble, while the youngest prince was only fifteen, still yet to be considered an adult.

(TL note: I know Beverly is more commonly known as a feminine name, but, 1. That's what is written in the raws. 2. Beverly was traditionally a commonly given masculine name.)

When Lawrence's identity was revealed, he became the third prince. However, the title of third prince was only what the public addressed him as on the surface. The way they silently criticized him was hidden within their hearts.

Han Shuo had just returned to his residence when he found out from Kallas that Lawrence was waiting for him, causing him to exclaim internally at Lawrence's information network. After entering Ossen City from Brettel City, Han Shuo had never showed his face to anyone, only visiting the Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, as well as the Dark Mantle Headquarters. News from Brettel City should not have arrived that quickly. It was evident from Lawrence's arrival that he had other quick information channels.

Compared to his former cheerfulness, Lawrence's expression had an added gloominess. It was unclear if it was because things recently had not gone according to his wishes, Lawrence's temperament had become colder. However when he saw Han Shuo enter, he still embraced Han Shuo while laughing heartily.

After an intimate discussion with Candide, Han Shuo had a new level of understanding toward Lawrence's plans and thoughts. Seeing Lawrence

initiating a hug, Han Shuo also had a happy expression hugging Lawrence tightly out of a sudden. He then enquired on Lawrence's health, still laughing loudly.

After exchanging pleasantries, Han Shuo waved his hand to instruct the servant that had sent light refreshments to withdraw. He lightly sipped on his cup of tea that originated from the south of Oden Empire, before looking toward Lawrence and said, "It hasn't been long since we met, I didn't expect that the situation has already reached such an extent."

"Bryan, there's finally news of you. This period of time, my days in the capital have been unbearable. Charles has been undermining me and currently within the capital. Apart from my foster father and Uncle Boris, none of the nobles support me. Ai, this is because my identity is relatively awkward. I know those nobles despise me. However, this situation isn't something I can avoid. Otherwise, Charles and the rest definitely wouldn't let me off." Lawrence didn't hypocritically say anything else, getting right to the point and venting out his current predicament.

Of the other three princes, eldest prince Charles had Grand Duke Ashburn's support. On top of that, his mother was also the current queen. Hence he was the most likely to succeed the throne. Second prince Cyril was usually in the capital and had friendly relations with every powerful noble, conducting himself as someone who was good natured and understood the will of the people. Hence, there was also a group of nobles that supported him.

Although the youngest prince Beverly was not yet considered an adult, his mother was the woman the king currently loved the most dearly. With her constantly whispering sweet nothings to the king, Uhtred appeared to extremely love Beverly. Furthermore, Beverly's grandfather was Northern Bimson City's Marquis and his clan's strength was not to be belittled.

Actually, if not for his overly awkward identity, with his father and uncle's support, in addition to his master being sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot, Lawrence who had joined in belatedly still had some capital. Unfortunately, due to his identity as an illegitimate child, these were not considered as a massive capital, simply unable to provide him with any

assurance.

Han Shuo knew from Candide's words that old astrologer Madame Grace had the power to sway the decision with her words. Lawrence's master Karel had not declared his support seemingly also waiting for Madame Grace's opinion. Lawrence did not seem to have an understanding in this field, sighing in despair as he narrated to Han Shuo.

After a while, Han Shuo finally replied, "I've just returned from Dark Mantle and had obtained a piece of extremely important information. Within Dark Mantle, there is a senior astrologer Madame Grace. One word from her is capable to bring about immense benefits for you. The reason why your master has delayed declaring his position is perhaps also due to his consideration of the bigger picture for Lancelot Empire..."

After Han Shuo had described all the information gathered by Dark Mantle to Lawrence once, Lawrence knitted his brows and pondered for a while. He then gazed deeply at Han Shuo, replying, "Bryan, thank you. This information is extremely important. Madame Grace is my father's personal astrologer, and I've heard a few rumors about her. However, astrology is too vague. In any case, I need to make early preparations."

Han Shuo nodded his head, understanding that to a few people that were fond of power, the mysterious astrology wasn't something that would be overly bothered about. Just take the incident this time round. Even though the venerable astrologer Grace said Lawrence would bring prosperity to Lancelot Empire, the other three princes would surely not surrender and willingly yield the throne to Lawrence.

The mysterious astrology was only one aspect. Those that strived for strength and power would definitely not willingly resign to their fates. Lawrence was such a person. When Han Shuo heard Lawrence's narration, he couldn't help thinking of Lawrence's plans and nodding inwardly. Han Shuo knew Lawrence was definitely not easy to deal with.

However, Han Shuo's choice was Lawrence. The tougher Lawrence was to deal with, the more relieved Han Shuo was. He smiled and nodded after hearing what was said, replying, "Be at ease, whatever the final conclusion

of the astrology is, myself and Brettel City would stand behind you. Who cares about what divine prophecy, we would still stake it all. Hehe, of course, if the situation is beneficial to us, that would naturally be even better.”

“Bryan, thank you. If I am able to succeed the throne, Dark Mantle will only have you as the head in the future.” Lawrence solemnly promised Han Shuo.

“I’m not taking into account your promises for the future. I’m only basing on your previous assistance and our friendship, that I spare no effort in aiding you.” Han Shuo smiled as he explained to Lawrence. Things in the future were forever hard to predict, nothing was absolute. Promises of the future were just like astrology, both matters only vague and illusory.

“I understand. It looks like I should make a move through Madame Grace. Although I know such an action might be fruitless, i still need to try.” Lawrence understood that to characters such as Madame Grace and Karel Ascot, they viewed the future of Lancelot Empire with utmost importance, rather than who obtains power.

After Lawrence received Han Shuo’s guarantee, he felt as though a weight has been lifted from his shoulders. He then discussed further with Han Shuo on a few details, before departing Han Shuo’s residence.

A while after Lawrence had left, Han Shuo couldn’t help knitting his brows as he exited the hall and look toward the adjacent roof. As though he was muttering to himself, he said, “He has already left, why have you still remained here?”

After he said that sentence, a shadow descended from the opposing roof. Bollands, who Han Shuo had previously seen in the Rose Garden, suddenly appeared in front of Han Shuo. A killing intent reeking of blood slowly drifted out, flooding Han Shuo from all directions.

The old assassin Bollands face was covered with scars, appearing terrifyingly malevolent. He had been hiding there ever since Lawrence entered entered Han Shuo’s residence. When Han Shuo arrived, he could

already sense the strong smell of blood on Bolland's body. He knew that Bolland's objective was to protect Lawrence, hence he didn't bother about his existence.

However, after Lawrence and Han Shuo had finished speaking, Bolland theoretically should have left. Yet, Han Shuo saw that he did not depart together with Lawrence. Hence, he puzzledly stepped out, appearing to be talking to himself as he questioned Bolland.

"How were you able to pinpoint my location?" Bolland somewhat suspiciously inquired, his gaze focused on Han Shuo while killing intent pervaded his whole body.

Han Shuo knew that owing to his hands have been dyed in blood and that he deliberately trained in this aspect, Bolland was able to cause a killing intent to pervade naturally. It wasn't that his heart was filled with killing intent. Han Shuo smiled faintly before saying, "The killing intent on your body is too strong. Also, you don't know how to completely conceal your aura. Naturally I would be able to sense it. Hehe, I suppose that ever since you trained your killing intent, you should have stopped being an assassin?"

The top assassins could completely conceal the killing intent from their bodies. Only in that way would they be able to kill the target in one strike before the target can even react. Bolland was formerly one of the finest assassins. However, he clearly focused on researching the users of the killing intent. Gradually, he was unable to contain the strong killing intent and the scent of blood on his body also becoming thicker. To a top assassin, these were unacceptable flaws.

Bolland was stunned from what he heard. After a while, he replied, "That's right, when the killing intent from my body was unable to be concealed anymore, I stopped being an assassin. However, when in actual combat, my killing intent is able to destroy the enemy's willpower. When fighting head on against someone of the same strength, I am able to hold absolute advantage, even two opponents attacking together might not be my opponent."

This person was actually a good sapling. With such a body condition, training in the demonic arts would result in twice the result for half the effort. With Han Shuo's meticulous guidance and by only specializing in a demonic god slaying martial technique, he definitely could become an outstanding character and his strength would also advance rapidly.

“Actually, I have a method to conceal the killing intent on your body and also a way to better control and utilize the killing intent. Heh Heh, your self-created path has similarities with the martial technique I train in. If you train in accordance with my method, you would definitely be able to substantially raise your strength in a short time. Furthermore, there's still unlimited potential to improve.” Han Shuo suddenly recalled that King Uhtred previously had the desire to let him inherit the Martial Skills Hall. This Bolland was a suitable candidate, however, the only apprehension Han Shuo had was the relationship between Bolland and sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot.

As long as Bolland cultivated the technique Han Shuo imparted, Han Shuo had complete confidence in controlling Bolland and making him a loyal henchman in the future. Hence, Han Shuo began testing him.

Hey all... do let me know where I can improve! Also, some people have already asked if I have a Patreon, do check it out here! It's still a work in progress!



# Chapter 382: Snatching one's Subordinate

When Bolland heard Han Shuo's statement. The earthworm-like scars on his face seemed to be alive due to his excitement, causing those who see him to be frightened as though they've seen a ghost during the day.

Even Bolland's current master sacred swordmaster Karel did not have a way to control the killing intent on his body. All along, Bolland had been experimenting by himself. As the exploration into the unknown was filled with uncertainty and danger, even sacred swordmaster Karel was unable to provide him with any form of assistance.

To sacred swordmaster Karel Ascot, Bolland's meticulous studying of killing intent was completely unorthodox. He didn't believe in wasting time on such things and had previously persuaded Bolland to go back to training in the orthodox field of training dou qi. Unfortunately, Bolland had already delved deeper and deeper, gradually becoming obsessed in the experimenting and it was hard for him to extricate himself. Karel was unable to persuade Bolland and with his heart feeling disdain, he naturally would not be able to assist Bolland in this "unorthodox" path.

At present, he heard Han Shuo mention that Han Shuo possessed a technique that could conceal and control his killing intent. To Bolland who had always been alone in this unfamiliar field, Han Shuo's statement was like words from heaven, as though ripping open Bolland's many years of lonesomeness. Bolland immediately couldn't maintain self-control.

"A-Are you for real?" Due to Bolland's excited mood, his face trembled violently and his tone was filled with disbelief.

Previously, Bolland had seen Han Shuo's battle against Brut Merchant's Leah Cain, as well as the miracles Han Shuo displayed the first time Bolland saw him. These gave Bolland the surprised feeling of meeting someone similar to him. Otherwise, he wouldn't have stayed behind today after Lawrence had left and attempt to chat in detail with Han Shuo. He wanted to see if he could obtain any long-awaited gains from Han Shuo.

Affirmatively nodding his head, Han Shuo confidently replied, "Not only

to wield the killing intent on your body, I also have a way to absorb the aura of death in a battlefield. Heh heh, I believe that in the entire Profound Continent, I am the only one who is proficient in such a technique.”

With that sentence, Han Shuo’s demonic aura ferociously flowed out, clouds of blood red fog suddenly emerged from Han Shuo’s body. Contained within the blood red fog clouds was a ruthless killing intent filled with despair and endless resentment, causing one’s spirit to tremble. Under Han Shuo’s mental manipulation, the clouds of killing intent transformed into blades that similar to needles, forming a seemingly corporeal petal of a blooming blood red sinister devilish flower.

Bollands’ eyes popped out, his gaze fixed on Han Shuo. The numerous, crisscrossed scars on his face appeared to be wriggling about, resembling earthworms. The heavy scent of blood on Bollands’ body couldn’t be contained as it spread out. However, he was unable to emulate Han Shuo’s proficient manipulation of this bizarre energy.

Bollands could sense the power contained within as well as superficially urge a person’s fighting spirit through that power. However, he had never imagined manipulating that power to the subtlety that Han Shuo displayed. It was also from Han Shuo’s display that Bollands finally understood that by continuing to practice in this field, he would be able to display a brilliance and destruction that is more formidable than dou qi.

“C-Count Bryan, is it possible for you to teach me this martial technique?” Normally with Bollands’ status and seniority, he wouldn’t be acting so mannerlessly. However, he had already endured the feeling of helplessness and loss from years of fumbling in desolation for too long. Now that he saw a resplendent path appearing before his eyes, this old man who had solitarily explored the unknown all along was unable to contain himself any longer.

Han Shuo laughed involuntarily, apologetically shaking his head as he replied, “Hehe, Old Mister Bollands, you must be kidding. Not mentioning this mysterious technique, even the extensive dou qi in the Profound Continent, it wasn’t that easy for someone who wants to practice another

person's dou qi technique.”

Bollands' eyes contained a hard-to-contain dimness. Sighing, Bollands sounded bitter as he replied, “I'm sorry, I was too rude. However, I truly wish to be able to practice such a martial technique, no matter the price I need to pay! In this world, perhaps you are the only one who is capable of giving me guidance in this lonely path. I've already experienced too much of the danger and suffering of helplessly fumbling alone.”

Han Shuo, who was staring fixedly on the old man's eyes, clearly saw every trace of emotion that was reflected in his eyes. When Bollands' internal regret was exposed, Han Shuo knitted his eyebrows, thinking hard for a while. He then hesitated for another moment, his brows still tightly knitted as he muttered to himself, “Actually when my teacher left behind this martial technique, he indeed did not state that it couldn't be divulged to an outsider.” Bollands who had just reached his lowest point had a delighted expression when he heard what Han Shuo said, emotionally looking toward Han Shuo as he probed, “B-Bryan, y-you...”

Flustered, Bollands spoke incoherently. Nevertheless, Han Shuo knew what Bollands wanted to convey. Appearing to earnestly consider for a while, only then did Han Shuo suddenly say, “It's not out of the question that you wish to practice this martial technique. However, you must become a part of our sect. This can be considered me substituting my deceased teacher in accepting a disciple. However, you are always following Mister Karel and even consider yourself his servant. I think this might not be very appropriate. It looks as if this would be impossible.”

“No, it's possible, it's possible!” Bollands hastily cried out in alarm. Under Han Shuo's astonished gaze, Bollands immediately explained, “There is a designated time of five years for me to follow Master. In order to repay Master's kindness, I've already followed him for seven years. Although I'm still willing to stay by my master's side now, I've already regained my freedom. As long as I let my master know, it shouldn't be a problem. If you don't mind, I wish to enter your sect and receive your teachings in the mysterious technique.”

He didn't expect that Bollands had obviously already regained freedom,

yet still willingly stayed by the side of sacred swordmaster Karel. It seems like this person is actually extremely suitable to be his henchman. In principle, this matter shouldn't have any problems. Nevertheless, Han Shuo was still a little worried about sacred swordsman Karel, somewhat uneasy that he would become enemies with Karel due to this matter.

However, Han Shuo believed that with his current strength, he need not be afraid of sacred swordsman Karel. Furthermore, Bolland was a candidate extremely suited for demonhood. After hesitating for a while, Han Shuo explained to Bolland, "It's best if you think it over again. You must know, once you start training with me, you would be under my restrictions.

Furthermore, our sect has many rules. As your senior, I have the right to order you to do things you may be unwilling to do. If you refuse, it would be violating the master's teachings. I have the right to revoke the martial techniques you have learned. In addition, you should first let Mister Karel know and then carefully consider for a few days. Once you have carefully deliberated and have a genuine decision, you can always look for me once more to have a chat."

When Han Shuo said this, Bolland's eyes gradually regained its brightness. Having lived for many years, Bolland naturally wasn't an ignorant person that couldn't view a situation clearly. Although his mind was slightly flustered due to Han Shuo's martial technique, when Han Shuo mentioned the rules and restrictions, Bolland immediately understood the meaning Han Shuo wanted to convey – You have to listen to me completely, regardless of right or wrong!

This was actually the same as when he attended to his current master Karel, taking of all his master's affairs with the status of a servant, be it murder, arson or robbery. So long as Master passed down the orders, he had to do his utmost in executing it. What Han Shuo wanted to express was actually the same idea.

After Bolland's eyes cleared, he then truly started considering his options. From Han Shuo's body, he could see Han Shuo's ambition. Moreover, an intense viciousness could be felt from Han Shuo and he was

definitely not a kindly, amiable person like Karel no matter how you looked. Once he followed Han Shuo, it looks like he would definitely resume his old trade and be involved in some shady business.

However, Karel was unable to provide what he wanted. But Han Shuo could. Furthermore, comparing the benevolent good-natured sacred swordmaster Karel and the vicious youngster, Han Shuo seemed more to his liking instead.

Bollands whose hands have been covered in blood recalled fondly the wonderful feeling of slaughter. Stemming from his unrestrained delving into killing intent, he had become addicted to slaughter, unable to extricate himself. Even after staying by Karel's side for many years, Bollands still could not forget that feeling. Han Shuo's appearance presented him with an alternative path – a path that he had been longing for!

Hesitating between rationality and enticement, Bollands was unable to immediately make a decision. In the end, he said to Han Shuo, "I will carefully consider your proposal, I will look for you when I've made a decision."

"No matter what you decide, I will respect your decision." Han Shuo smiled as he replied.

Before Bollands left, he suddenly thought of something. He turned his head toward Han Shuo, asking, "What is the name of this branch of martial skills that you practice?"

"Sky Demon Gate!"

"Sky Demon Gate... Sky Demon Gate, I'll remember it!" Bollands muttered to himself, turning and leaping onto the roof before vanishing in the blink of an eye.

"Heh heh, once you enter the path of demons, you never be able to leave from my control. Karel, Karel, it's not that I intentionally want to snatch your subordinate. In reality, you are simply unable to properly instruct such a talent." After Bollands left, Han Shuo muttered to himself, feeling immensely pleased.

Within the Duke's mansion.

Today, Duke Ashburn secretly met with a few special guests, a group of clerics belonging to the Church of Light.

The Church of Light's Red Archbishop Kosse, who was based in the Lancelot Kingdom, as well as a few Temple Knights and White Priests were chatting happily with Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles within Duke Ashburn's mansion.

The Church of Light was viewed as the religious organization with the largest influence in the whole continent. In the Profound Continent, many countries had various kinds of military organizations. Any country with a Temple of Light would have the protection of Temple Knights. The number of Temple Knights varied depending on the size of the temple.

Within the Oden Kingdom where the Church of Light was headquartered at, the Temple of Light possessed a regiment of ten thousand Temple Knights. All these years, there always existed ten large knight regiments with the continent. The Church of Light's Temple Knights have always had an impressive reputation. It is even rumored in the outside world that the Temple Knight regiment was the strongest knight regiment in the whole continent.

Furthermore, numerous figures in the Church of Light similarly had astonishing strength. For example, a character like Red Archbishop Kosse, who possessed a divine artifact, was a nightmare to anyone, especially darkness magicians and necromancers. Once they met the divine artifact-wielding Red Archbishop Kosse, it would basically allow Kosse to proclaim the might of the God of Light, proving their lowliness. The Church's strength in the Profound Continent was unfathomably large. Faith was the vaguest and the hardest thing to comprehend. Often, it could cause an ordinary person to become fanatic and prejudiced and then doing unreasonable things. The Church of Light was an expert in exploiting the strength of faith, causing both the ignorant masses and nobility to become prejudiced, not necessarily in a proper orientation.

Within the Lancelot Kingdom, the strength of the Church of Light

similarly not be underestimated. Every city in the Lancelot Kingdom had a temple of the Church of Light. Places with a Temple of Light would naturally have the armed forces from the Church of Light. The private forces that completely worshiped the God of Light was, in fact, a factor of instability to any kingdom.

However, perhaps it's due to the Church of Light's influence being too large, in any country, the private forces of the Church of Light was actually a lawful existence. This stemmed from the thoughts and demands in worshipping the God of Light. Even Lancelot Kingdom's King Uhtred accepted this tacitly.

Fortunately, the Church of Light wasn't the principal church in the Lancelot Kingdom. The people also worshiped the Goddess of Nature, the Goddess of Ice and Snow as well as other deities. These numerous churches were distributed across every city in the Lancelot Kingdom, but were unable to shake the foundation of the kingdom.

Now that the Lancelot Kingdom is caught up in the struggle for power by the various princes, it is inevitable that religions choose a candidate to support. The correct choice would bring immediate benefits to their church. For the possibility to be the only religion within the Lancelot Kingdom, Kosse had precisely eyed eldest prince Charles. That was why he would appear within Duke Ashburn's residence.

The support of the enormous Church of Light was naturally a joyous affair for Duke Ashburn. Eldest prince Charles was similarly overjoyed. As an orthodox knight, he already had a favorable impression of the Church of Light. When the Church of Light planned to support him, this favorable impression naturally increased many times over.

Both sides were perfectly contented regarding the discussion of the pledges of power and the provision of assistance, satisfied with the collaboration. As Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles showed their hospitality to the clerics, Kosse suddenly sighed before saying, "How does Lord Duke view Brettel City's Count Bryan?"

"He is just a lucky guy who curries favor as he schemes for profits. In

addition, this fellow has no foresight. I believe his happy days will soon be over.” Duke Ashburn’s face darkened as he lightly smiled, giving his judgment of Han Shuo.

“Lord Duke is mistaken. That person is definitely not easy to deal with. That person has the backing of the Calamity Church. Being our old adversaries that have hiddenly fought against our Church of Light for hundreds of years, we are fully aware of the fearsomeness of the Calamity Church. To be honest with you, I’ve previously acted personally, bringing a few Temple Knights to seize said person. Yet, I returned in failure twice and was even injured.” At this point, Kosse sighed again, before continuing, “The pontiff has instructed that our members within the Lancelot Kingdom should disregard all costs in eliminating this person. I hope Lord Duke will be able to help us.”

When Kosse mentioned the Calamity Church, both Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles’s expression suddenly became a little unsightly. A high-ranked noble like Duke Ashburn naturally knew of the existence of the Calamity Church. They were a demonic lair that gathered true fiends. Duke Ashburn could never have thought that Han Shuo actually had such an origin. This made Duke Ashburn a little apprehensive.

However, Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles had made a move previously. Both of them believed that Han Shuo was already aware of that. Regardless if it’s Han Shuo himself or the Calamity Church, both parties were ruthless and would settle their grievances. Hence, both of them understood that they had already become mortal enemies with Han Shuo.

Although the Calamity Church was infamous, the Church of Light was capable of suppressing the Calamity Church in their few hundred years of battle. That was sufficient in proving that the Church of Light was similarly a powerful religious organization. When he heard Kosse mentioning his intention to eliminate Han Shuo, Ashburn immediately replied frankly, “We have tried previously, however it ended in failure. This person supports that illegitimate child, I believe sooner or later he would be at death’s door. Mister Kosse’s opinion is to eliminate him



earlier?”

Nodding his head, Red Archbishop Kosse sighed as he said, “This person is the cause of the Profound Continent’s instability. His existence would bring about disaster to the Profound Continent. The Church of Light’s goal all along is precisely to eliminate all existences within the continent that defied the will of God. He is precisely the target that we need to immediately get rid off.” “In that case, Lord Bishop, what is your plan?” Duke Ashburn seized the moment when Kosse ended his emotional statement to question closely.

“I have a plan. However, I need both of you to assist me...” , Red Archbishop Kosse nodded as he started describing his intention to the two of them.

# Chapter 383: The other world

Ossen City. Han Shuo's official residence.

Within a secret room, Han Shuo grasped the skeletal staff, chanting the incantation for necromancy. After a long and tedious section of incantation, a mummy lord stood before Han Shuo. The mummy lord was stupefied as it inspected Han Shuo, the entire secret room suddenly filled with the deathly scent emitted from its body.

Of the three summoning spells at grand magus level, Han Shuo has already mastered two of them. He is able to proficiently summon old fey demons and mummy lords, only left with the spell for bone demons. As he still didn't really understand the characteristics of the bone demon's body composition, Han Shuo temporarily still could succeed in summoning a bone demon into this world.

With an order, the mummy lord unwillingly wielded the ancient strips of cloth that twisted around its body, moving its body in accordance to Han Shuo's directions.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo knew that he thoroughly grasped the summoning of the mummy lord. Han Shuo then chanted another spell and with a wave of the white bone staff, the mummy lord returned back to the netherworld.

Keeping the white bone staff, Han Shuo then took out the skeletal staff obtained from the Cemetery of Death. Fiddling with the skeletal staff in his hand, Han Shuo hesitated for a while, intending to use the skeletal staff to summon the old fey demon and mummy lord.

This skeletal staff was different from the white bone staff. Chanting necromancy while holding the skeletal staff would often result in the might of the summoning spell to be doubled. When Han Shuo used the white bone staff, he could save a little mental strength but he would be unable to summon two old fey demons to the Profound Continent.

However, if it was channeling the necromancy spell through the skeletal staff, he should be able to momentarily search for two old fey demons.

Han Shuo had the experience of using the skeletal staff when summoning evil knights. He believed that old fey demons were perhaps the same as the evil knights and he could similarly summon two old fey demons.

Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, before starting to chant the necromancy spell to summon old fey demons. When Han Shuo's spell connected with the netherworld and the chanting reached the section to search for old fey demons, Han Shuo's mental space suddenly felt the two targets that were separated by a long distance.

These two targets were old fey demons. However, there was a incomparable distance between the two old fey demons. In the same moment, both old fey demons felt Han Shuo's presence. When the feeling of their freedom being threatened entered their souls, the two old fey demons instinctively struggled.

Han Shuo was startled, fixing his mental strength on suppressing one old fey demon as they were too far apart. Han Shuo's mental strength couldn't handle both old fey demons at once, their frantic resistance causing him to get a little dizzy. This was the reason why Han Shuo's suppression became quite strenuous.

At this moment, Han Shuo understood that he had neglected an important issue. The personality of old fey demons were vastly different from that of evil knights. Although evil knights were similarly high ranked undead creatures, there were numerous undead creatures in the netherworld. In addition, evil knights were considered to still prefer living in a group. When Han Shuo used the skeletal staff to summon evil knights, they would often be from the same location, locating two or three evil knights and then summoning them to the Profound Continent.

However, old fey demons were an even higher ranked existence and their numbers in the netherworld were much lesser than evil knights. Furthermore, as high ranked existences, old fey demons dwelled in separate locations, becoming the master of that location. Basically, it highly unlikely for two old fey demons to live together in the same area.

Han Shuo had precisely overlooked this point. When the spell channeled

through the skeletal staff, it immediately sensed two old fey demons were five thousand kilometers apart. As the two old fey demons were too far apart, Han Shuo couldn't handle both of them at the same time. Old fey demons were also undead creatures with a formidable soul. When Han Shuo focused on one old fey demon, the other old fey demon suddenly revolted, causing Han Shuo to be somewhat unable to suppress it with his mental strength.

This situation happened too quickly. A necromancy summoning didn't take long. Because Han Shuo didn't anticipate such a situation at the beginning, he simply didn't have the means to handle it at short notice. When the two old fey demons sensed that Han Shuo's mental strength was in slight disorder, they frantically resisted further.

There was a sudden sharp pain in his mind. Distracted, Han Shuo's consciousness was a little routed and he felt himself actually becoming a strand of peculiar existence. Under the pull from the souls of the two old fey demons, he traversed the spacetime tunnel, arriving at the unknown netherworld.

Han Shuo had had the same experience once. Now that it happened a second time, Han Shuo immediately reacted, his mental strength tenaciously wrapped around that strand of consciousness to prevent harmful substances within the spacetime tunnel from intruding as he involuntarily descended to the world filled with deathly stillness and mystery.

Within the world which seemed forever monochrome, a thick stationary layer of grey clouds obstructed the horizon. This place was filled with swamps everywhere, as well as deathly still forests that were formed from large withered trees. These withered trees seemed to have gone through thousands of years of decay and had long since been void of any moisture or nutrients. There were even ash grey colored spider webs suspended from the tree trunks, with many bizarre tiny undead creatures wiggling on the spiderweb.

Within the swamps which were all over, the aura of death pervade everywhere. The swamps gave off weird bubbles and from time to time,

one or two zombies will rigidly climb out of the swamps and then proceed to aimlessly roam the vast silent netherworld.

The netherworld was the final destination of departed spirits. Over the millions of years, the perpetual deathly qi continuously produced various kinds of undead creatures. When an undead creature disappears, the death qi from its body would return to this world, go through many years of bizarre evolution before once again forming another undead creature.

Han Shuo's consciousness was gradually restored. Han Shuo slowly observed the deathly still area that was covered with swamps. During his observation, Han Shuo tried to absorb the deathly qi from the Cemetery of Death and condense a body that is visible yet lacking in form for himself. However, Han Shuo's whole body was drifting in the air.

Suddenly, Han Shuo felt the existence of the little skeleton and the zombies. They were in a region far away, but Han Shuo was able to distinctly sense their existence. As for the three evil knights that were refined later, he could only sense a faint dot.

Howl... "Petty existence, you have intruded into my world without permission, I want you to suffer the burn of my fury." a shrill voice filled with incomparable anger suddenly rang in Han Shuo's ears. This voice was filled with the roar of ire, scaring Han Shuo greatly.

With a sudden reaction to his consciousness, Han Shuo felt a shadow rapidly approaching from his left. Han Shuo watched attentively as one of the old fey demons that he had just attempted to summon unexpectedly appeared. The surroundings of the old fey demon were filled with hundreds of low ranking undead creatures. Among them were ghouls, skeleton knights, zombies and three hate warriors.

It looks like this old fey demon should be the overlord of this area. He still remembered the aura on Han Shuo's body and when he suddenly realised Han Shuo's soul appearing within his territory, the old fey demon was incessantly furious, immediately following Han Shuo's aura that he just sensed and angrily rushed toward Han Shuo.

In the netherworld, the old fey demon could display its strength as much

as it wanted. The rich omnipresent death qi could supply him with sufficient energy. However, for Han Shuo whose consciousness has entered this world, he could not utilise his demonic arts without a physical body and could only utilise his consciousness and necromancy magic to attack.

Seeing the old fey demon ferociously charging over while brandishing its sharp claws that could rip through iron and stone, Han Shuo's consciousness suddenly locked onto the old fey demon's body, unleashing a Soul Tremor.

Bang!

The old fey demon's soul that was midair seemed to be heavily hammered on, the sharp pain momentarily spreading to the deepest parts of his soul. Without waiting for the old fey demon to react, many bone spears attacked through the sky, causing the old fey demon to stumble as he dodged. Another Soul Tremor followed immediately, the old fey demon was momentarily dazed.

However in this other world, the old fey demon had sufficient death qi to utilise, and its soul was extremely formidable. Although Han Shuo's Soul Tremor attack was able to cause enormous harm to the old fey demon, it was unable to truly kill it. Furthermore, the bone spears were only able to leave shallow white scars on the old fey demon's body, unable to pierce this high ranking undead creature.

In such a place, Han Shuo's mental strength was exhaustible. Prolonging such as situation, Han Shuo's mental strength will definitely be used up. At that moment, he would not be able to contain the old fey demon. This high ranking old fey demon would definitely be able to destroy Han Shuo's soul that had descended to such a place.

After the row of bone spears and Soul Tremor, a bone prison formed suddenly, temporarily imprisoning the old fey demon within. Han Shuo saw that the old fey demon did not have any reaction to the Soul Tremor magic and didn't continue staying in this area, his visible yet immaterial body quickly floated into the distance, resembling an ordinary wraith in

the netherworld.

Within the netherworld's overcast sky, there would often be wraiths floating about. These wraiths only had the simplest of consciousness and usually became food for higher ranked undead creatures. They were also the nutrient that Han Shuo used in refining some of his demonic creatures. Han Shuo never thought that one day he would enter the netherworld and actually be besieged by wraiths.

Five white misty wraiths suddenly surrounded Han Shuo. These five wraiths sensed that Han Shuo had a different aura from them and attempted to attack Han Shuo as though he was a mutated being.

When Han Shuo who was visible but had not material body saw the five wraiths approaching, he could sense their ill intentions revealed by their simple consciousness. Han Shuo gathered a small amount of mental strength, unleashing the Soul Tremor magic. With a poof, the five wraiths were turned into grey smoke, becoming death qi and returning to the earth.

The rows of wraiths that were further away felt the momentarily explosion of power from Han Shuo, immediately classifying Han Shuo as a high ranked undead creature and kept far away from Han Shuo. None of the wraiths dared to approach Han Shuo any more.

At a towering barren mountain peak an unknown distance away from Han Shuo, there was a majestic undead palace. Within a lofty palace where there were strict rankings, on the highest respected platform, the little skeleton sat upright on an enormous throne filled with sharp spikes (TL note: Game of thrones reference?) By his side were the earth zombie, fire zombie, wood zombie and the seemingly timid water zombie.

Beneath the little skeleton were six evil knights and two bone demons as well as the previously subdued mummy lord. They all knelt on one knee with their heads lowered towards the little skeleton.

On the palace's cold ceiling hung the bone demon that was remodelled by little skeleton with the ability to fly as well as numerous gargoyles that curled their bodies and stood in place silently.

Behind the few evil knights were a few stupid hate warriors and zombie warriors. They resembled conscientious bodyguards, devotedly standing upright, as though willing to risk their lives for the little skeleton at any moment.

“My lord, why do you need to depart?” The previously subdued mummy lord humbly inquired with his head lowered.

“All of you, help me properly look after this place. I’ll be back very soon.” The little skeleton had yet to answer, only giving orders as a superior. “The powerful existence from the eastern dead sea might come in the near future. All of you guard this place, do not attack others while I’m not around.”

“Understood, my lord!” The high ranked undead creatures all replied deferentially. Facing the fiercer little skeleton, they who were previously lords of an area couldn’t help but lower their proud heads.

“You can withdraw. Properly guard your respective territories!” The little skeleton imposingly conveyed his intention. Apart from the three evil knights that had been refined by Han Shuo’s demonic magic, the other evil knights and mummy lords all withdrew after receiving the orders.

“Father has come here. This world isn’t the same as the material world. Without a corporeal body, Father would possibly run into danger, I must go and protect him!” The little skeleton said to the earth zombie and the others after the subordinates have withdrawn.

“We’ll go too!” The earth zombie touched its head, simple-mindedly saying, “We want to see Father in this world too.”

“That’s out of the question. You need to stay here and look after our home. With their strength, those subordinates would find it hard to ensure the safety of this place. I only trust you guys. This is because we have inherited the same bloodline!” The little skeleton instructed, before saying, “Be at ease. When i find Father, I’ll bring him over.”

With that sentence, the flying bone demon that was hanging upside down at the top of the hall suddenly spread its wings and soared in front of the little skeleton. The seven bone spurs on the little skeleton’s back



trembled, shooting into the body of the already remodeled bone demon. The huge wings of the bone demon made of meshed rotting flesh flapped once, bringing the little skeleton away from the summit of the towering death mountain.

# Chapter 384: Comprehending the netherworld

The vast netherworld, eternally a monotonous grey, various sorts and varieties of undead creatures engaged in never-ending combat, void of any signs of life.

In this place, there was no alternating day and night, no sense of time passing, only deathly stillness and bleak coldness. On the desolate earth under the grey sky, the undead creatures complied with ancient teachings, unceasingly scrambling for a more extensive territory. However, they were unaware of the reason for all of this.

Han Shuo followed the connection he had with the little skeleton, drifting like a spirit in the little skeleton's direction. As there wasn't a concept of time, Han Shuo didn't know how long he had been in this world. As he headed toward the little skeleton, Han Shuo came across many different kinds of undead creatures.

Many of the undead creatures had extended their sharp claws toward Han Shuo, attempting to swallow Han Shuo who appeared weak. Facing Han Shuo's Soul Tremor magic, the low ranked undead creatures were usually destroyed by the magic that directly attacked the soul.

As for higher ranked undead creatures, Han Shuo's consciousness was able to sense the existence. By means of his sensing ability, Han Shuo was able to determine the strength of those undead creatures and actively avoid the ancient undead creatures, detouring around their territories as he continued in the direction of the little skeleton.

After what seemed to be quite some time, Han Shuo felt the distance between the little skeleton and him becoming closer and closer. Furthermore, with the connection between the two of them, he became aware that the little skeleton was currently rushing toward him. This made Han Shuo feel touched, moved that even without any orders, due to its worry for him, the little skeleton had travelled from far away just to find him.

In the netherworld where the death qi was incomparably rich, Han Shuo who was in the form of a ghost was constantly tempering his mental strength, attempting to manipulate this world's death qi through his demonic powers. Gradually, Han Shuo even discovered some insights.

Demonic magic was famous for being able to live forever as long as their consciousness wasn't completely destroyed. In the separate demon realm, cultivator's souls would become consciousnesses, possessing many extraordinary uses. Even if a demonic practitioner's corporeal body is destroyed, as long as the consciousness is strong enough to attach onto another physical body, the practitioner can use this new body to practice demonic magic once again. They would only require to spend a hundred years to regain their previous strength.

Being transported into this bizarre world, Han Shuo searched for a way to return to the Profound Continent, as well as using this strand of consciousness to seek a way to increase his own strength. Before he could find the method in returning to the Profound Continent, Han Shuo first needed to ensure he could survive in this foreign world.

Slowly, Han Shuo's existing consciousness had a strange reaction to the death qi. As Han Shuo continued experimenting, he was now totally able to absorb and manipulate the omnipresent death qi in this world, so much so that he could even form weapons from the death qi to attack the undead creatures that had ill intentions.

At the start, Han Shuo could only condense the death qi into the form of arrows and control the arrows with his consciousness. This was only threatening toward the low ranked skeleton warriors and zombie warriors and wasn't even comparable to the simple bone spear spell. As Han Shuo's consciousness gradually understood the uses of the death qi, he could now completely utilise his consciousness to condense formidable attacks as long as he is given time. The strength of these attacks could even surpass Han Shuo's Soul Tremor.

As a few days passed, Han Shuo's consciousness could gradually condense the death qi to give rise to more clever uses. Han Shuo even experimented with a skeleton remains of excellent quality, condensing the

death qi within the bones and forging a skeletal body for himself.

Contained within the pure white skeleton was the death qi condensed by Han Shuo's consciousness. Under the reckless suppression of Han Shuo's consciousness, the death qi became crystal-like spots hidden within the bones. However, the quality of the remains of an ordinary skeleton warrior wasn't much. When Han Shuo tried to condense even more death qi within the bones, they weren't able to withstand the death qi and thus exploded.

Utilizing this sparkling jade like skeletal remains, Han Shuo was able to intimidate many undead creatures that attempted to attack him. Even a few high ranked evil knights who saw Han Shuo's huge skeleton that glittered with white light withdrew with dread.

The evil knights clearly took Han Shuo's jade-like skeleton as a skeleton king which was at the peak of undead creatures. Skeleton kings as well as bone dragons were peak existences among undead creatures. A skeleton king's body contained incomparably rich death qi and posses terrifying strength. Weak undead creatures were simply not its match.

However, Han Shuo knew that purely using death qi to condense a skeletal body would definitely pale in contrast to a skeleton king's body and would even be much weaker than the bones on a bone demon. Yet, Han Shuo wasn't discouraged, continuing to silently delve into the uses of his consciousness in this world as he searched for a way to return to the Profound Continent. He also felt that the distance between the little skeleton and himself was getting closer and closer.

As Han Shuo passed through an overgrown valley shrouded in rich death qi, his consciousness suddenly detected a few formidable auras. These auras were abnormally chaotic and unstable, as though currently engaged in a huge battle. In the surrounds were many low ranked undead creatures fighting against one another, clearly originating from different factions.

Looking at the overgrown valley from afar, Han Shuo noticed clouds of dense blue qi within the rich death qi. These blue qi rose in spirals, slowly diffusing from within the valley. Some of the low ranked undead creatures

who were battling extended their necks to absorb the blue clouds of gas as though they were an exquisite feast.

In this desolate netherworld, there rarely appeared colors that weren't monochrome. In the period of time that Han Shuo has been in this world, this was the first time he saw a blue color existing. This made Han Shuo feel astonished, as he look toward the magnificent battle. As he sensed the combat between the few auras inside the valley, Han Shuo had some suspicions of the scene within.

While Han Shuo was being puzzled, the dense blue qi had slowly spread to the area where Han Shuo was in. The wisps of blue qi entered Han Shuo's consciousness, the mental energy that had been consumed seemed to be replenished, recovering little by little.

Han Shuo was incessantly surprised. Originally, he only allowed the dense blue qi that touched him to seep into his body. However, when Han Shuo felt the benefits the blue qi gave to the mental strength of his consciousness, he immediately started operating his consciousness, analyzing the blue qi within the valley and using the strength of his consciousness to slowly draw the blue qi towards himself.

This period of time, Han Shuo spent everyday researching how to utilise the strength of his consciousness to manipulate the rich death qi that was everywhere in this world. Toward this blue qi which was of a completely different nature, but yet had the same characteristics as the qi in the netherworld, Han Shuo very quickly found the trick in sucking in the blue qi.

When Han Shuo went all out in operating his consciousness, a large portion of death qi that diffused out from the heart of the valley was subjected to the pull from Han Shuo's consciousness, slowly entering him. Han Shuo's originally exhausted mental strength gradually recovered following the absorption of the blue qi.

The numerous undead creatures in the surroundings of the valley were still engaged in intense battle. The grey earth was covered in broken bones and rotting flesh. Under the orders of their respective masters, these low

ranked undead creatures recklessly fought with each other, yet didn't forget to avariciously absorb the strands of drifting dense blue qi.

With a moment of effort, Han Shuo utilised his consciousness to absorb large amounts of blue qi, recovering 80% of his mental strength. There was no longer any more blue qi spreading out from the heart of the valley and the blue qi that was further away were either absorbed by the numerous undead creatures or had vanished.

In the form of a pure white skeleton, Han Shuo stood in an area extremely far from the valley. After hesitating for a moment, he suddenly headed for the heart of the valley. At the same time, Han Shuo could sense that the little skeleton was getting nearer and nearer.

Han Shuo felt from the cloud of dense blue qi that permeated out that there must be a mysterious item in the heart of the valley. An item that could grow one's mental strength was rarely heard of in the Profound Continent. Han Shuo never would have thought that in this foreign eternally desolate other world would actually have such an extraordinary item.

What made Han Shuo more apprehensive was that when Han Shuo absorbed the dense blue qi, there was actually an indistinct familiar feeling. At the start, Han Shuo didn't react, only reacting he stopped absorbing after the dense blue qi no longer spread from within the valley.

Apparently when he was previously beneath the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo had absorbed some kind of special energy which made his mental strength grow substantially. The feeling he had when he absorbed that energy was similar to when he was absorbing the dense blue qi. However, previous that energy was boundless, directly allowing Han Shuo to possess the mental strength of a grand magus. When he had just absorbed the dense blue qi, it fell way short of that energy but it definitely had a similar aura.

"Who knows what item is within the valley that is actually able to give off such a mysterious blue qi!"

It was precisely this suspicion that led Han Shuo to still decide to go into

the valley and investigate, even though he sensed a few undead creatures that could threaten his existence.

The jade-like white skeletal body was larger than ordinary skeleton warriors. At approximately 1.8m tall, it currently headed toward the source of the battle. Along the way, many low ranked skeleton and zombie warriors immediately divided a portion of their forces to attack Han Shuo's condensed body when they noticed another enemy faction approaching.

En route, Han Shuo's consciousness started manipulating death qi. When the skeleton warriors and zombie warriors have crowded around, a crescent shaped greyish-white light beam condensed purely from death qi suddenly shot out from the front of his large skeletal body.

The more than ten skeleton warriors and zombie warriors that were the first to crowd around were struck by the condensed light beam, their frail souls were unable to bear the power, collapsing in succession and dissipating. With a wave of cracking sounds, the bones of the skeleton warriors fell apart, the zombie warriors had also become heaps of rotting flesh and falling over.

A light beam condensed from death qi flashed past, more than ten skeleton warriors and zombie warriors collapsed. Another group of skeleton warriors and zombie warriors which had intended to come over paused for a moment. Under the powerful strength that Han Shuo deliberately released, they realised this skeleton warrior was much larger, its bones were more sparkly and translucent different from their own bodies.

Of these low ranked undead creatures, many of them had never seen a skeleton king. However, from the moment they were born, there was an imprint of this high ranked undead creature on their soul. When they examined the body Han Shuo condensed carefully, they mistook Han Shuo as the skeleton king at the peak of all undead creatures.

A path suddenly appeared voluntarily. These undead creatures still fought with each other, but not one undead creature dared to intercept

Han Shuo anymore, as though ignoring Han Shuo's existence.

However, Han Shuo knew this was their instinctive reaction toward high ranked undead creatures. The voluntarily formed path directly lead to the depths of the valley. These low ranked undead creatures knew Han Shuo's objective was the depths of the valley. They expectedly provided a clear passage.

"Clang... Clang..."

Han Shuo's consciousness controlled this condensed skeletal body, heading toward the valley a step at a time. The surrounding undead creatures still fought furiously, but not one undead creature got in Han Shuo's way.

At the center of the valley, the few formidable undead creatures still fought against each other. Han Shuo was able to sense their vast strength. As he entered deep into the valley, Han Shuo gradually slowed his steps, starting to cautiously size up the situation all around, preparing to immediately depart in an unfavourable situation.

The surroundings were filled with even more undead creatures that incessantly fought. As there were many hate warriors and a few evil knights mixed within the undead creatures here, Han Shuo knew that he was already approaching his target. Han Shuo deliberately released an unyielding posture as he passed through these higher ranked undead creatures, finally entering the heart of the valley. A clear, pitch-black spring immediately entered Han Shuo's sight, a sinister looking plant floating on the spring. It had many branches that were spread out, appearing menacing yet devilishly beautiful like a man-eating flower. Its branches and leaves appeared like countless withered hands, propping a cloud of blue smoke. Within the blue smoke, there was an eyeball sized teardrop similar to a sapphire, shooting out resplendent, bizarre light.



# Chapter 385: Evolution of undead creatures

In this monochromatic world, Han Shuo was truly stunned when he first glanced at that vibrant color.

In the middle of the pitch-black spring, that sinister-looking plant's lush network of withered branches propped up a hazy cloud of blue gas. Within the cloud, a drop of sapphire-shaped resplendent teardrop gave off an even more magnificent radiance.

Han Shuo was sure that the blue gas that had previously spread out from within the valley should have originated from the plant in the middle of the spring. From Han Shuo's perspective, he could clearly see that the blue gas had originated from the revolving teardrop in the middle of the blue cloud.

The pitch-black spring was brimming with desolation and deathly stillness. Organisms being nurtured from this sort of weird spring would definitely be fierce undead creatures or plants and there certainly would not be any amicable existences.

Han Shuo carefully examined the black spring, realising that there were many seaweed-like black plants floating within the spring. These plants had blended into the spring, the tentacle like streamers spreading in the constant sway of the spring water, appearing like they want to capture something and pull it into the depths of the spring.

Once he had finished observing the layout of the center of the valley, Han Shuo's line of sight started looking indiscriminately around the spring. Only now did he notice several undead creatures battling in the vicinity of the black spring.

A mummy lord, a floating apparition and a five to six meter tall knight that rode a large flaming horse and brandishing a broadsword. These three high ranked undead creatures surrounded the spring in the middle as they engaged one another in intense combat.

Han Shuo had only swept his eyes over, his attention concentrated on that huge knight that rode the large flaming horse. The huge knight held a gigantic broadsword which was full of rusted spots. The broadsword was over two meters in length and was brimming with a rotting aura. The huge knight's appearance resembled that of an evil knight. However, there were barbs that grew from around its arms, knees and shoulders. Its build was also much taller than an evil knight's.

Han Shuo had some impression of this huge knight. A long time ago when the little skeleton was still quite weak, Han Shuo had once received the little skeleton's distress message. At that time, Han Shuo immediately summoned the little skeleton to the Profound Continent out of worry. However, through the strength of their contract, Han Shuo still faintly saw the formidable undead creature that was chasing the little skeleton. That formidable undead creature was precisely this huge knight.

For this peculiar knight to be able to force the little skeleton to flee the netherworld, its strength was naturally extremely valiant. Han Shuo would never have imagined that he would meet this formidable undead creature in the netherworld. The mummy lord and the floating apparition had joined hands in facing this huge knight. Han Shuo was incomparably familiar with a mummy lord. However, the floating apparition was rather unfamiliar to him.

What made Han Shuo extremely astonished was that this mummy lord carried a greyish white sarcophagus which was large enough to fit his entire body. This mummy lord clearly wielded that sarcophagus as a weapon, proficiently manipulating the sarcophagus to face the enemy. The majority of the strikes from the terrifying knight's two meter long broadsword were blocked by the sarcophagus.

As for that floating apparition, Han Shuo did not know at all what undead creature it was. However, Han Shuo could sense from its body the aura of the most common undead creature in the netherworld, the wraith. Merely, the aura on the apparition was exponentially stronger than that of a wraith.

The floating apparition constantly hid behind the mummy lord,

behaving like a magician in the Profound Continent, utilising profound magic to attack that huge knight. Ripples of grey magic shot out in waves from the apparition's direction, attacking the huge knight's body.

Under Han Shuo's attentive gaze, the knight's two meter long rusted broadsword suddenly thrust. The carrion belt in the mummy lord's hands moved, the sarcophagus floating above his head striking towards that broadsword. At this moment, there was a terrifying boom when the knight's broadsword struck the sarcophagus and the sarcophagus suddenly flew up into the air.

The knight took the opportunity to urge the flaming horse toward the mummy lord. The flaming horse suddenly breathed out a spout of flames that rolled toward the mummy lord. The mummy lord was obviously a little frantic as the sarcophagus flying above his head couldn't be moved so quickly.

At this moment, the floating apparition behind him suddenly transmitted a bizarre soul undulation. Countless wraiths suddenly swam out from within the apparition's body, forming a tidy formation and blocking the flame breath. It simply utilised many wraiths to drown out the flames from the flaming horse.

The apparition had obstructed the flaming horse's flame breath and the sarcophagus that flew into the sky had also been caught by the mummy lord, just in time to block the evil knight's next attack. The three undead creatures continued fighting once again, being tangled in a stalemate.

The low ranked undead creatures were still fighting ferociously in Han Shuo's surroundings. These undead creatures clearly felt the formidable aura from Han Shuo's body, but all of them ignored Han Shuo's existence. This allowed Han Shuo to peacefully watch the battle, taking in the whole scene of the battle between the three unusual undead creatures

Han Shuo stared at that floating apparition for a long time before he suddenly understood. To be able to control that many wraiths and also carry the aura of wraiths on its body, the apparition was surely a high ranked undead creature that had evolved from wraiths. That particularly

queer huge knight was most likely an evolution from an evil knight.

In the netherworld where ranks were rigid, most higher ranked creatures possessed extremely large fighting strengths. However, this was not absolute. Lower ranked undead creatures had the possibility of undergoing evolution and become high ranked undead creatures as well. For example, the majority of skeleton kings that could be as strong as a bone dragon had fortuitous occurrences and were naturally produced. However, there were also skeleton kings which could have been the lowliest skeleton that underwent countless evolutions.

Although the probability was extremely small, it existed. Spirits in the netherworld could swallow each other. If low ranked undead creatures were able to swallow the spirit of a formidable bone dragon, they could substantially improve a few stages. Merely, this probability was extremely low. Typically, weaker undead creatures would only instinctively escape when facing someone higher ranked than them. They would never dare to attack unless they had a master and only under their master's orders would they disregard their lives and attack.

However, even if they attacked, when facing a higher ranked undead creature, there would never be any flukes and would definitely be massacred, let alone being able to swallow the spiritual strength of a higher ranked undead creature. Most of the low ranked undead creatures that were able to evolve had coincidentally come across high ranked undead creatures that were almost killed by even stronger undead creatures. While the even stronger undead creature had not arrived, they were then able to conveniently swallow the spirit of the higher ranked undead creature.

Taking the formidable bone dragon as an example, it could kill or seriously injure a group of hate warriors with one breath. The spirits of these lower ranked undead creatures were of no interest to the bone dragon. If there just happened to be a skeleton or zombie warrior in the vicinity after the bone dragon left, they would be able to conveniently devour a higher ranked hate warrior's spirit.

When such a low probability matter repeatedly happens on a low ranked

undead creature, the low ranked undead creature that had swallowed the spirits of many high ranked undead creatures would be able to gradually evolve and become a high ranked undead creature that surpassed its birth restrictions. This apparition was perhaps an example of such an existence that had extremely astonishing luck.

Han Shuo looked at the alliance of the apparition and the mummy lord withstanding the knight's assault and then looked at the sapphire-like teardrop which contained bizarre energy that was being propped in the middle of the spring by sinister-looking plants network of branches. His thoughts were filled with indecision, not knowing if he should take advantage of the situation to obtain the teardrop.

The three formidable undead creatures appeared to also be fighting over that drop of liquid in the middle of the spring. The huge knight's strength was incredibly astonishing with Han Shuo's condensed body of the skeleton king probably unable to withstand a strike of that knight's broadsword. Furthermore, that apparition and mummy lord were also enemies. Han Shuo wasn't confident in handling them without having his true body.

However, Han Shuo knew that the sapphire-like liquid in the middle of the spring was able to improve his mental strength. Such miraculous items were unheard of in the Profound Continent. To have reached this place after much difficulty, the greed in his heart simply couldn't be contained. While Han Shuo was hesitating again and again, he sensed that little skeleton was closing in on his location.

Suddenly, the knight that was in the midst of chasing the mummy lord and the apparition appeared extremely irritated. After continuously attacking frantically to no avail, the knight suddenly gave up and urged the flaming horse toward the plant in the middle of the spring. The mummy lord and the apparition paused for a moment before hastily attacking the knight. The mummy lord's sarcophagus descended toward the knight with a loud rumble, while the apparition produced numerous wraiths that charged towards the huge knight.

The huge knight did a sweep with his rusted broadsword. An earth-

shattering rotting aura rippled out, abruptly annihilating the numerous wraiths while the sarcophagus was struck into the air with his fist. After that, an imposing consciousness spread out from the huge knight, “You two cowardly and despicable existences, that fellow from the Thousand Meter Dead Mountain Palace is coming over. If you cooperate with me in getting rid of him, the luster gem within the dead water is yours. I only want that fellow’s spiritual energy. What do you think?”

When the mummy lord and the apparition saw the evil knight give up and transmit such an intention, they were obviously slightly unsettled. The two of them discussed for a while, before the apparition transmitted a faint message, “Alright, the three of us shall make a vow to abide by this promise.”

Han Shuo looked at the interaction between the three formidable undead creatures from afar. From their conversations, Han Shuo understood that the large knight sensed the little skeleton’s existence and their tone indicated their fear of the little skeleton. Han Shuo couldn’t have imagined that in this netherworld, the little skeleton of the Thousand Meter Dead Mountain Palace was actually such a huge power.

The huge knight, the mummy lord and the apparition intended to ally due to their apprehension toward the little skeleton’s existence. As these three fellows dared to stay behind and face the little skeleton, that showed that they should have some confidence. Han Shuo who had already been watching for a while from afar thought for a moment before walking out from within the crowd of low ranked undead creatures.

“Count me in as well.” Han Shuo sent a message through his consciousness, expressing his opinion to the three undead creatures.

At the start, Han Shuo had only stood among the crowd of low ranked undead creatures in the surroundings of the valley. Having deliberately hidden as he watched, the three undead creatures that were constantly battling did not notice Han Shuo. When Han Shuo slowly walked out from the distance, he immediately caused the three undead creatures to panic.

At first, the three undead creatures clearly lost their heads out of fear,

being intimidated by Han Shuo's appearance as a skeleton king. However, these three formidable undead creatures were different from the low ranked undead creatures that gave way to Han Shuo. They could sense from the aura on Han Shuo's body that it wasn't identical to a skeleton king's aura as well as the aura on Han Shuo's body wasn't as frightening as that of a skeleton king's.

After being startled, the huge knight reacted, sending Han Shuo a message, "Cowardly voyeur, what can you contribute and what do you wish to obtain?"

"I want a third of the serene luster gem. I can aid you in dealing with that fellow." Han Shuo replied through his consciousness.

"That would depend on your ability!" The knight sent an irascible message, driving the flaming horse toward Han Shuo. The earth-shattering rotting aura spread out from his body, converging on the broadsword as it stabbed toward Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was stunned, frantically chanting spells, on one hand sending a spray of bone spears to attack the huge knight, on the other hand, using his consciousness to condense the rich death qi, forming a gigantic saber to smash toward the charging knight. When the spray of bone spears landed on the huge knight's body, it only resulted in clanking sounds, unable to harm the formidable knight. Only when that saber condensed from rich death qi smashed on the knight's broadsword did he obstruct his attack.

Just as the knight avoided the spray of bone spears and had almost arrived in front of Han Shuo, he suddenly reined his horse, turning his head to look at the apparition and the mummy lord, transmitting, "He has the qualifications to share a third of the luster gem, do the two of you have any opinion? The fellow from the Thousand Meter Death Mountain Palace is extremely frightening, there is more hope with an additional helper."

The two other undead creatures hesitated for a moment. But when considering the little skeleton's frightening deterrence and their interest of the serene luster gem, they ultimately agreed completely with the huge

knight's proposal, considering Han Shuo as an ally.



# Chapter 386: A stronger hidden expert

Once the three undead creatures agreed on Han Shuo's participation, Han Shuo immediately started communicating with the little skeleton. As the distance between them was becoming shorter, Han Shuo could easily convey his thoughts to the little skeleton. The clever little skeleton who was currently flying over at high speed on a bone demon completely understood Han Shuo's intention.

When the three undead creatures saw that Han Shuo had agreed, they did not try to retrieve the serene luster gem in the middle of the black spring. Instead, they spread out in front of the spring, ordering the surrounding low ranked undead creatures to stop fighting and to slowly encircle this location.

There were two evil knights in the surroundings who slowly headed towards the huge knight that brandished the two meter broadsword, while a few hate warriors stood separately in front of the apparition and the mummy lord. They thoroughly guarded this area, intending to make this place the resting grounds of the approaching little skeleton.

A shrill whistle could be heard gradually coming closer. Under the dusky sky, a huge shadow slowly approached. The wings connected to the variant bone demon's rotting corpse were five to six meters in length when fully extended. In addition, its whole body was covered with fearsome bone spears. This caused the bone demon that could fly to have ample deterring strength.

More than ten sparkling white bones formed a cushion on the back of the flying bone demon. Seated on it was the little skeleton who held a long, sharp bone spear. Its Purple Demon Eye was filled with a glistening radiance while its small body gave off an imposing presence.

The huge knight waved his rusted two meter long sword at the little skeleton who was flying over on the bone demon, spreading out his indignant consciousness, "This time, you wouldn't be able to escape!"

"You are currently no longer a match for me. If you submit to me, I will

spare your life!” When the little skeleton had arrived, he unyieldingly stayed in the air, looking down as he rode the bone demon, his dignified consciousness transmitted over.

“You can forget about that happening. I would rather let my soul be obliterated than to be your slave!” the knight roared. He then gave a command to his subordinates, “Kill this wretched skeleton!”

As the knight shouted out his orders, the mummy lord and the apparition also ordered their subordinates to attack. Hundreds upon hundreds of undead creatures were like a locust swarm as they charged toward the little skeleton and his bone demon mount. Among them were gargoyles that could fly, which formed groups and attacked in waves and were the first to charge towards the little skeleton with no fear of death.

Looking down on the various low ranked undead creatures approaching, the little skeleton’s Purple Demon Eye suddenly emitted purple light halos. They spread out like waves of running water from his Purple Demon Eye, gradually covering the surrounding area around the little skeleton. The whole area was filled with a vicious, imposing aura.

When the charging low ranked undead creatures were hit by the waves of mysterious aura, they were all suddenly stunned, seemingly forgetting that they had to attack the little skeleton. Even the gargoyles that didn’t fear death had bypassed the little skeleton and headed into the distance.

“ You lowly, weak existences, step down!” a harsh dignified consciousness was suddenly transmitted from the little skeleton, extending out in all directions.

All the low ranked undead creatures that were enveloped by the purple light from the Purple Demon Eye were caught in a daze. They hesitated for a moment, as though fearing the little skeleton’s might and actually disobeyed the suicidal orders from the knight and the mummy lord, all of them voluntarily opening up a path.

Only the two evil knights appeared to have barely resisted the corrosion of the Purple Demon Eye’s bright light on their consciousness. After being dazed for a long while, they actually charged toward the little skeleton

again. Along the way, the two evil knights conveniently grabbed a few skeleton warriors by their sides, dismantling the skeleton warrior's bones and shot them toward the little skeleton in the sky.

“Bang, bang, bang...”

Without even waiting for the bone spears to close in, the little skeleton swept with the long bone spear in his hand. An earth-shattering death qi emerged violently, causing all the bone spears shooting toward him to explode.

The little skeleton did not seem to put the two evil knights in his eyes, still looking into the distance at the three undead creatures as well as Han Shuo. He transmitted another message through his consciousness, “Since you don’t acknowledge your allegiance, the only alternative is death!”

The bone demon beneath him suddenly flew forward, heading for the five meter tall knight. The little skeleton tightly grasped his three meter long bone spear, an enormous amount of death qi that carried dense killing intent assaulted the four undead creatures below. The mummy lord was the first to act, throwing out his sarcophagus toward the bone demon below the little skeleton. Numerous wraiths flew out of the apparition once again, heading toward the little skeleton in an orderly formation.

The huge knight guided his flaming horse, looking up at the incoming little skeleton while charging toward him. Under the momentum of his charge, he threw out the two meter long broadsword, slashing toward the little skeleton. His throw possessed an impressive force, appearing extremely powerful.

The little skeleton drew the spear before suddenly thrusting it forward. The long spear was like a sponge, absorbing the rich death qi in the surroundings before flying out like lightning toward the incoming broadsword. With a “clang”, the knight’s broadsword descended toward the ground. At the same time, the bone demon flapped its wings, pushing the mummy lord’s sarcophagus aside.

As for the wraiths sent by the apparition to attack, they were obstructed by the Purple Demon Eye’s purple rays of light even before they could get

close to the little skeleton. The purple rays of light seemed to have suddenly formed an invisible barrier and the hundreds of wraiths were simply unable to charge through the barrier.

Han Shuo coordinated with the other undead creatures and shot out two rows of bone spears. However, the bone spears were similarly repelled by the invisible barrier created from the light of the Purple Demon Eye, descending from high above. This made Han Shuo even more amazed. How did the little skeleton control the Demon Eye of Datara that they obtained from the forest trolls to achieve such a miraculous effect?

Bone spears conjured with Han Shuo's grand magus leveled mental strength had strong penetrative strength. Although they were unable to pierce through those incomparably firm physical defenses, the barrier should theoretically be able to obstruct the formless wraiths, but shouldn't be able to block the powerful bone spears. However, the truth was actually so inconceivable. Han Shuo gradually felt that the little skeleton was becoming more and more mysterious.

After the little skeleton blocked all their attacks, he guided the bone demon to circle around toward the mummy lord and the apparition. The knight who had just caught his descending broadsword was a distance away from the mummy lord and the apparition and didn't have enough time to assist them.

Han Shuo was in comparison much closer to the mummy lord and the apparition. Seeing the mummy lord and the apparition's panicked expressions, Han Shuo took the initiative to transmit a message, "I'll assist the two of you!"

Han Shuo immediately rushed toward the mummy lord and the apparition after transmitting his message. As soon as he sent the message, Han Shuo immediately rushed toward the mummy lord and the apparition. He had already prepared the Soul Tremor magic as well as communicated with the little skeleton. Once the little skeleton attacked the mummy lord, Han Shuo would seize the opportunity to unleash Soul Tremor on the apparition.

Regardless the form of the undead creature, their soul was the foundation of their existence. This was the same for the peculiar apparition. If it was taken by surprise by Han Shuo's Soul Tremor, even if its soul wasn't destroyed, it would be severely injured. At that time, Han Shuo and the little skeleton would be able to easily kill the apparition first.

After that, with Han Shuo obstructing the mummy lord and the little skeleton directly killing the huge knight, they would be able to completely control the situation. None of the three undead creatures would be able to escape from the schemes of Han Shuo and the little skeleton.

Han Shuo's plan was extremely good. If the situation proceeded as planned, that would be everything he could wish for. However, just as Han Shuo's consciousness firmly locked onto the apparition and was ready to eliminate the apparition at any time. His consciousness suddenly felt a faint fluctuation from the depths of the pitch-black spring.

The fluctuation was extremely slight, as though it had been accidentally leaked due to a soul being excessively excited. If Han Shuo's consciousness had not improved to its current state, it would perhaps have been hard for him to sense that weak fluctuation. As the fluctuation seemed to contain an ancient aura, it was obvious that there was a formidable undead creature hiding in the spring. This formidable undead creature was unable to be detected by the nearby knight, apparition and even the little skeleton, sufficiently illustrating its strength.

Han Shuo's consciousness hurriedly circulated, attentively comprehending that unintentionally leaked aura with added caution. Han Shuo was suddenly alarmed, momentarily matching that aura with a formidable undead creature recorded in necromancy books.

The strongest existence known in general to necromancers was the bone dragon. The pitch-black spring had actually contained an extremely cunning bone dragon!

The bone dragon has always been a domineering undead creature in the netherworld. Apart from a few more frightening unknown existences, the bone dragon, skeleton king and zombie king were deemed the highest

ranked undead creatures. In the Profound Continent, necromancers had to reach the rank of sacred magus to be able to summon bone dragons.

The bone dragon had always known as the strongest undead creature. This bone dragon that had concealed itself in the spring from beginning to end had made use of the wisps of smoke overflowing the serene luster gem above its head to attract strong undead creatures to this location. Its intentions were extremely clear for all to see.

It seems that the drop of serene luster gem in the middle of the pitch-black spring ought to have always been the bone dragon's bait to lure in strong undead creatures. The huge knight, mummy lord, apparition as well as Han Shuo had all fallen into the bone dragon's trap. If Han Shuo's consciousness had not suddenly sensed the slight fluctuation that arose from the bone dragon's excitement, he reckoned that the one who benefits eventually would have been the bone dragon.

As he charged toward the apparition, Han Shuo hurriedly communicated with the little skeleton, describing everything that he had just sensed to the little skeleton before inquiring if the little skeleton possessed the strength to defeat the bone dragon.

"Father, I would definitely be able to kill and behead the bone dragon in the future. However, I'm unable to do that now. I still do not have that strength for the time being!" The little skeleton sent a message over, on one hand stating that he possessed the possibility of infinite evolutions while on the other hand, he stated that he temporarily didn't have the power to deal with the bone dragon."

When Han Shuo heard that the little skeleton wasn't a match for the bone dragon, his brain rapidly worked. When he neared the apparition, he immediately issued a different instruction to the little skeleton.

The mummy lord's sarcophagus suddenly smashed toward the little skeleton, while the apparition erratically retreated, while unleashing an unknown enchantment. The wraiths that had emerged from its body suddenly assembled into a gigantic network of wraiths, attempting to trap the little skeleton.

Han Shuo materialized a bone shield, the huge sinister bone shield suddenly obstructed the mummy lord's way, establishing a solid defense for the mummy lord and the apparition. This allowed the mummy lord and apparition to relax, only focusing on attacking the little skeleton.

When the little skeleton who was riding the bone demon saw that he was about to be trapped by the apparition's network of wraiths, the bone demon suddenly changed its direction, descending toward the pitch-black spring.

While the undead creatures had yet to react, the seven bone spurs on the little skeleton's back suddenly shot out toward the sinister-looking plant. He also firmly threw his javelin-like three meter bone spear into the middle of the spring.

A frightening roar suddenly sounded from the depths of the lifeless spring. The pitch-black spring suddenly boiled, forming huge waves.

Bone spears condensed from the surrounding surging death qi suddenly shot into the depths of the boiling spring, appearing to have pierced the extremely cunning bone dragon, causing the bone dragon to temporarily be unable to emerge from the depths of the spring.

Right at this moment, the little skeleton's seven bone spurs shot toward the sinister-looking plant, completely chopping through the plant's rhizomes. Faint blue smoke started to leak out from the serene luster gem that seemed to be supported by numerous withered branches and leaves. After chopping through the plant, the seven bone spurs seized the opportunity to congregate and lift up the serene luster gem which flew into the little skeleton's palm in the blink of an eye.

The three meter long bone spear suddenly flew out from within the ground, resembling lightning as it returned to the little skeleton's hand. The little skeleton then urged the bone demon to fly toward Han Shuo without even looking at the rapidly boiling pitch-black spring.

"Treacherous, despicable skeleton, I, bone dragon Zasika, will inevitably exterminate you!" A loud roar could be heard from underground as a huge bone dragon whose whole body was made up of steel like long bones

suddenly rose out of the spring, giving off a formidable death qi which spread through the entire valley.

The huge knight, mummy lord and the apparition who were about to attack the little skeleton from all directions suddenly glanced at each other in terror before frantically fleeing toward the surroundings of the valley, ignoring the little skeleton. The lower ranked zombie warriors and hate warriors seemed to be petrified in fear, instinctively submitting themselves and not daring to move from their positions.



# Chapter 387: Absorbing the serene luster gem

The extremely cunning bone dragon Zasika was around fifteen meters long. His body was made out of thick and solid white bones, as though it was built from the hardest iron and stone. Its body was also overflowing in rich death qi.

When the bone dragon roared, all the higher ranked undead creatures started to flee, while the low ranked undead creatures stood still, shivering under the pressure of the bone dragon's imposing aura.

The netherworld's bone dragon was different from the Profound Continent's standard dragon race. As a special clan of dragons that were born in the netherworld, bone dragons possessed enormous strength from the moment they were born. This was because they were formed from pure white bones that were resistant to the majority of physical and magical attacks.

Bone dragons were peculiar creatures brought up in the netherworld's unusual environment. They were also able to nimbly manipulate the netherworld's death qi, even possessing a few mystical dragon breath abilities. This resulted in them being more powerful than most dragon clans in the Profound Continent.

The three undead creatures that had planned to surround and attack the little skeleton had already fled in different directions upon hearing the bone dragon's roar, no longer interested in attacking the little skeleton. The little skeleton who had obtained the serene luster gem while bone dragon Zasika wasn't paying attention immediately flew toward Han Shuo. When he was about to reach Han Shuo, Han Shuo immediately abandoned the skeletal body he had condensed from death qi and willed his consciousness to float by the little skeleton's side.

Once Han Shuo's consciousness reached the little skeleton's side, the little skeleton shoved the serene luster gem into Han Shuo's wraith-like consciousness without a second thought. He then urged the bone demon

to escape into the distance.

When the bone dragon flew out of the pitch-black spring, it immediately emitted the imposing aura of a high ranked undead creature. Once the numerous undead creatures had fled, he stared at the rapidly fleeing little skeleton and roared, “Sinister, despicable skeleton, you won’t be able to escape.”

After uttering a long, loud cry into the boundless sky, the bone dragon directly pursued the little skeleton. The bone demon beneath the little skeleton had been remolded by the little skeleton with the bones of the supreme ranked magical creature found within the taboo land of the Profound Continent. Within the netherworld, the flying speed of the remolded bone demon was actually extremely quick. Even the lightning quick bone dragon Zasika wasn’t able to catch up in a short period of time.

At this moment, the serene luster gem that the little skeleton casually stuffed into Han Shuo’s consciousness suddenly blended with the mental energy within his consciousness. A mysterious mental energy suddenly entered Han Shuo’s consciousness, gradually combining with the original mental energy within.

Han Shuo suddenly trembled. This method of growing his mental strength had the same feeling as when he was imbued with mental strength under the Cemetery of Death. Han Shuo could almost confirm immediately that the item that had improved his mental strength in the Cemetery of Death must have also been a serene luster gem.

However, this wasn’t the time to ponder why there would be a serene luster gem in the Cemetery of Death. Having had prior experience, Han Shuo immediately absorbed the mental energy flowing out from the serene luster gem into his consciousness to his heart’s content. He also tried his utmost in seizing the chance to refine the serene luster gem’s mysterious energy.

Out of a sudden, an incomparably huge amount of mental energy rushed into Han Shuo’s consciousness. This caused a sharp pain to spread out,

soon after Han Shuo was dizzy and wasn't sure what he should do.

“Argh...”

As Han Shuo gave out a resonant shout in pain, back in the Profound Continent, the skeletal staff his true body was holding on to whistled sharply and endlessly. Han Shuo's originally muddled eyes gradually regained clarity.

While a huge amount of mental energy was still revolving within his mind, Han Shuo suddenly felt that he was holding something hard in his left hand. Looking down, he saw that it was actually the mysterious skeletal staff. Han Shuo was shocked but became ecstatic shortly after. He understood that he had once again returned unfathomably to the Profound Continent from the netherworld.

Excessively excited, Han Shuo didn't ponder any further, hastily discarding all distracting thoughts and started melding the remaining pure mental energy flowing within his consciousness with his original mental energy. At this moment, he was filled with immense joy.

After an unknown period of time, Han Shuo gradually sensed that the mental energy from the netherworld's serene luster gem had been fully absorbed. At that moment, an intense shout was transmitted from the little skeleton in the netherworld. Han Shuo suddenly recalled the recent experience of escaping from the netherworld and remembered that the little skeleton was still being pursued by bone dragon Zasika.

The little skeleton's shout was obviously a cry for help. Han Shuo didn't hesitate, chanting the lowest ranked necromancy spell. The little skeleton riding the bone demon abruptly arrived in the hidden underground room.

The little skeleton had actually come out unscathed. However, the bone demon he was riding on had more than ten of its bones broken, probably by the bone dragon. Once he arrived from the netherworld, the little skeleton patted his chest like a human, while still having lingering fears. He then transmitted a message to Han Shuo, “That cunning bone dragon is truly extremely frightening. However, I will definitely make him pay in the future.”

Han Shuo looked toward the little skeleton, his heart truly had unbounded emotions. This little skeleton who had the ambition to kill the bone dragon was the same fellow that helped him at that time to clear the garbage in the middle of the night?

“Father, how did you enter my world?” The little skeleton asked, its Purple Demon Eye glistening as it looked at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo had gradually adapted to the way the little skeleton addressed him. He laughed bitterly as he shook his head, replying, “I have no idea. However, I understand that it has something to do with this skeletal staff. For the time being, I still have not fully comprehended how it happens. However, I believe I would be able to be clear about the situation very quickly.”

After Han Shuo explained the situation to the little skeleton, he knitted his brows, inquiring, “Do you know what exactly is the serene luster gem that I absorbed?”

“This type of serene luster gem is an extremely rare item in our world. It can temper our souls, causing our souls to become purer. It is extremely beneficial to our evolution.” The little skeleton explained for a while, pausing for a moment before continuing, “Father, in our world, there similarly are some unusual items as well as peculiar existences. For example, that apparition had evolved from a wraith. That huge knight is a soul from another plane that descended into our world and was developed from an evil knight’s body after absorbing death qi within the world...”

The little skeleton seemed to have planned to explain the world he knew to Han Shuo, taking great pains to explain the situation in the netherworld to Han Shuo, as though to sweep away the misunderstandings Han Shuo had of the netherworld.

From the little skeleton’s descriptions, Han Shuo gradually realized that he still had a one-sided understanding of the netherworld. It turns out that the creatures in the netherworld were not limited to those that he knew from necromancy texts. The undead creatures that were listed on necromancy texts were those that ancient necromancers were aware of

and had found the corresponding summoning spell.

There were also a few evolved or mutated undead creatures as well as eccentric undead creatures that had been naturally produced by death qi in a particular occasion at a particular location. These undead creatures were not known to necromancers and had never been successfully summoned. These special existences were equally formidable, so much so that some of them were stronger than bone dragons.

However, previous necromancers had never encountered them nor had the way to summon them. Hence, they did not exist in necromancy books. However, for the little skeleton who had spent much time in the netherworld, he who had the same origin as these undead creatures naturally understood a few peculiarities that previous necromancers didn't know of.

According to the little skeleton's narration, Han Shuo also found out that the netherworld was split into regions and territories. Some of the most ancient formidable existences occupied vast territories, ceaselessly campaigning against one another. There were even extremely formidable undead creatures that possessed the strength to tear apart the restrictions of their position, having the frightening strength to travel across the world with their own strength.

"Father, I ought to return!" while Han Shuo was slowly comprehending the little skeleton's words, the little skeleton suddenly transmitted a message.

Much time has passed. As Han Shuo also had a mental connection to the earth zombie and the other zombies, he could directly send the little skeleton to their side. In that case, the little skeleton and bone dragon Zasika would be separated by an extremely large distance and the bone dragon would naturally be unable to endanger the little skeleton again.

Once the little skeleton reminded Han Shuo, he smiled as he nodded his head and then sent the little skeleton back to the netherworld. Even after the little skeleton had left, Han Shuo still pondered on the little skeleton's narration. The things that the little skeleton had just mentioned exceeded

Han Shuo's comprehension, causing Han Shuo to momentarily be unable to adapt.

Han Shuo had gained a new level of understanding of the netherworld from the little skeleton's descriptions. He was also clear that that world was different from what he first imagined. It seemed like not all the creatures in the netherworld could be summoned by necromancers. Many formidable undead creatures that had transcended the bindings of their position would definitely not be restricted by the strength of a necromancer's contract.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo stopped thinking about matters concerning the netherworld. Han Shuo then chanted a spell and utilizing his mental energy, rows of bone spears took shape in front of him, silently forming motionlessly in the air. Han Shuo simply counted the number of bone spears and was pleasantly surprised to find out that the number of bone spears had increased by a third. This meant that Han Shuo's mental strength had indeed improved substantially. Although his mental strength was still within the realm of grand magus, the stronger his mental strength, the might from a spell would also be greater. Currently, Han Shuo could release that many more bone spears with the same spell. This sufficiently proved that Han Shuo's mental strength had indeed undergone substantial improvement in the netherworld.

"Serene luster gem. Truly a good item. However, why would a serene luster gem appear under the Cemetery of Death? Also, why would the skeletal staff be able to let the soul enter the netherworld, could it be that there was some kind of connection between the Cemetery of Death and the creatures in the undead world?" Han Shuo knitted his brows as he contemplated.

Han Shuo couldn't resolve this question in a short time. However, he knew that the Cemetery of Death definitely contained many secrets and planned to carefully explore the Cemetery of Death after a period of time, to take a look if there were other items that he had yet to discover.

After his consciousness had entered the netherworld, Han Shuo had lost track of time. Now that he had returned to the Profound Continent, Han

Shuo didn't know how long had passed, hastily exiting the hidden room and returning to the ground level of his official residence and calling Steward Kallas over.

Steward Kallas immediately spoke when he rushed over, "Lord Count, where have you been the past few days! Miss Phoebe has come over three times to look for you and His Majesty has also requested for you to head to the royal palace and meet him. Furthermore, there has been bad rumors about you spreading around, making me extremely anxious."

"What bad rumors?" Han Shuo first grasped the main issue, inquiring from Kallas about the harmful news about himself.

"This... this..." Steward Kallas hummed and hawed, only replied fearfully when Han Shuo stared at him, "There has been rumors spreading that you are a member of the Calamity Church. Very few ordinary people know about the Calamity Church but many nobles and people of status understood that the Calamity Church was an evil organization.

Han Shuo was shocked when he heard Kallas's response. The Calamity Church was the symbol of evil in the eyes of many nobles. Of everyone in the continent that knew of the Calamity Church's existence, there shouldn't be many that held good impressions of them.

Han Shuo had never dared to have too much contact with the Calamity Church precisely because he was afraid of leaving such an impression. Never would he have thought that although he always kept a distance from them, such a situation still happened in the end.

Without much consideration, Han Shuo knew who the rumors had originated from. Apart from the Church of Light and Lawrence's political enemies, Han Shuo did not have many enemies within the Lancelot Kingdom. In recent days, it was the moment for Han Shuo who was rising rapidly within the kingdom to have major undertakings. However, it was precisely this rumor that could ruin Han Shuo.

This matter was quite thorny. Han Shuo hesitated a moment, before replying Steward Kallas, "I understand. You can withdraw first and help me invite Prince Lawrence and Miss Phoebe over. Just tell them that I

want to talk to them tonight.”

After giving Kallas his orders, Han Shuo immediately left the manor. He hesitated a moment, before heading to the Dark Mantle’s headquarters to look for Candide.

When Candide saw Han Shuo, he immediately said, “Why have you only appeared now! Come with me to meet the king. I’m aware of your affairs and have already spoken to his majesty about it previously. This matter has become quite huge, we must handle it carefully.”

While on their way to the royal palace, Candide pointed out that the rumors had originated from the Church of Light, eldest prince Charles as well as the Grand Duke. As one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, it was naturally very simple for Candide to investigate such a matter.

Han Shuo and Candide discussed for a while, before directly entering the royal palace through the Dark Mantle’s teleporting array, immediately heading for King Uhtred’s palace.



# Chapter 388: His Majesty's plea

An old man past his prime sat on the throne, living the last vestiges of his life. The aura of life seemed to be slipping away from his body at every moment. He could only keep his frail body straight by leaning against the throne, his originally bright eyes had also been veiled by a layer of gray.

Han Shuo followed Candide inside. Glancing at the declining Uhtred, Han Shuo understood that his death was imminent. It was no wonder that the princes of the Lancelot Empire were so brazen in their attempts to seize power.

"Your Majesty, Count Bryan has come to see you!" Candide said respectfully after saluting the emperor.

Uhtred coughed violently, his gray eyes gradually showing a hint of vitality. Forcing himself upright, he swept his eyes over Candide and Han Shuo, ultimately fixing his gaze on Han Shuo as he asked weakly, "Bryan, Candide has already mentioned to me your achievements in Brettel City over the past few months, you've done quite well!"

"Your Majesty flatters me, this was my duty." Han Shuo had discussed with Candide on the way here and understood that it was best that he watched his mouth when speaking to such a person, only responding to any questions asked.

"I heard news circulating outside about you having some sort of relationship with the Calamity Church. Hoho, that's rather interesting. With your clean origins and the contributions you made for the Lancelot Empire, how could they implicate you with a sinister church like them!" Uhtred muttered, as though he was speaking to himself.

"Your Majesty should realize that those are purely rumors fabricated by enemies." Han Shuo replied. "In that case, do you know who is making up such rumors and what their intentions are?" Uhtred looked at Han Shuo and inquired.

Han Shuo replied while shaking his head, "I don't know."

“Candide, you can leave first. I have something I want to speak to Bryan about alone.” Uhtred did not question this matter in detail, glancing at Candide instead and instructed in a soft voice.

Candida didn’t respond, bowing politely toward Uhtred before turning around to leave the main hall. He only gave Han Shuo a meaningful glance as he passed by, to hint that Han Shuo should not say things that ought not to be said.

After Candide left, Uhtred suddenly sighed and said: “Among my sons, I feel I owe Lawrence the most. I heard you and Lawrence are very close, is that true?”

Han Shuo was started, unable to really grasp Uhtred’s intentions. Most of the nobles in Ossen City were in the know about the relationship between him and Lawrence, so it wasn’t at all strange for Uhtred to know about his relationship with Lawrence. Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, then nodded honestly and replied, “Yes, your Majesty!”

“In that case, you’re definitely supporting Lawrence?” Uhtred asked once more.

“Yes, Your Majesty!” Han Shuo answered once again.

Uhtred was silent for a long time, his two pupils affixed intently on Han Shuo. It was only when Uhtred saw Han Shuo looking a little uneasy that he spoke, “Bryan. There are some matters that I want to discuss with you.” “Your Majesty, feel free to tell me anything. As your subject, I will naturally willing to share some of your worries.” Han Shuo replied again.

Uhtred sighed. He suddenly stared at Han Shuo, saying, “Bryan, I hope you can promise me one thing. Regardless of how my other three sons treat you, please spare their lives.”

Han Shuo was momentarily speechless, suspiciously looking toward Uhtred as he inquired, “Why has Your Majesty said such a thing?”

“Bryan, if you agree to my terms, I will hand the throne to Lawrence and help you two to consolidate the power of Lancelot Empire.” Uhtred stared fixedly on Han Shuo speaking prudently.

Han Shuo felt extremely stirred up, astonished as he looked at Uhtred, momentarily unsure what was wrong with Uhtred to have actually said such an ineffable sentence. He simply looked at Uhtred in a daze, forgetting to reply.

“As long as you agree to my terms, I’ll assist you and Lawrence. What do you think?” Uhtred immediately followed up, appearing somewhat anxious, so much so that it contained a hint of pleading.

As the true ruler of Lancelot Empire, as long as Uhtred hasn’t passed away, even if he was extremely ill, he was still the person who held the utmost power in Lancelot Empire. However at this moment, Uhtred’s tone while speaking to Han Shuo unexpectedly had an odd hint of pleading. This was something Han Shuo could never have expected.

In such a moment, Han Shuo even thought if Uhtred’s illness was too severe, that caused Uhtred to absent-mindedly say such ridiculous things. However, when Han Shuo carefully observed Uhtred, he discovered that although Uhtred’s body was incomparably weak, his spirit wasn’t confused at all. That proved that Uhtred’s emotional state was indeed normal.

While Han Shuo was still extremely astounded, Uhtred asked once again. Han Shuo rapidly racked his brains and then probed Uhtred, “As long as I spare the lives of the three princes?”

Uhtred had a delighted expression as he rapidly nodding his head, hurriedly saying, “That’s right, as long as you spare their lives. You can strip them of all their power and even imprison them in a small cell, as long as they are able to survive.”

“In that case, I’ll agree to your terms, Your Majesty!” Han Shuo no longer hesitated, immediately responding.

Lancelot Empire’s true ruler, His Majesty Uhtred actually visibly sighed in relief. His weak expression gave a slight smile as he waved his hand as he said, “Bryan, I now confer you the title of Marquis. In addition, I will command space sacred magus Mister Sabakas to help establish a magic transporting array in Brettel City as well as help you eliminate the

unfavorable news about you. Also...”

Uhtred suddenly narrated a series of promises, causing Han Shuo to be stunned, staring blankly as he wondered what was going on with Uhtred today. When Uhtred finished narrating his promises, he then said, “Bryan, you can take your leave. I hope you will not mention today’s matter to anyone else, not even to Candide or Lawrence.”

“Your Majesty, I’ll promise you. However, could you tell me the reason? I am truly unable to comprehend why you would make such a decision.” Han Shuo looked flabbergasted at Uhtred while he asked.

Uhtred shook his head, laughing bitterly as he replied, “It’s better if you aren’t aware. This is for your benefit. You may leave now!”

Han Shuo couldn’t make sense of the matter, looking at Uhtred bafflingly. He stared blankly for a moment before knitting his brows, bowing to Uhtred before exiting. He was feeling extremely puzzled but didn’t know who he could rant to.

When Han Shuo left, Uhtred seemed to age even more, sighing as he said, “As a father, I have done all I can for the three of you. Hopefully, all of you are able to survive after I die.”

Space sacred magus Sabakas and old astrologer Madam Grace abruptly appeared before Uhtred. Madam Grace was extremely pale, appearing more likely than Uhtred to die. There didn’t seem to be much vitality in her whole body.

When Uhtred saw the two of them appear, he sighed again. He looked toward old astrologer Madam Grace and said, “Madam, I’ve never doubted your judgement all these years. You said that Bryan will truly help Lancelot Empire prosper?”

Grace wiggled her lips, as though wanting to drive away the thick wrinkles by her mouth, replying with a weak voice, “Your Majesty, on your request I’ve consumed my vitality to make a divination. I only know that whoever this person assists, that person will be able to become the new king. As long as he is present in Lancelot Empire, Lancelot Empire will not perish. That is all!”

“That is already sufficient. I didn’t expect that the person influencing my Lancelot Empire’s future would actually be such a young fellow.” Uhtred muttered to himself, before looking toward Grace and Sabakas, suddenly saying, “My days are numbered. I hope that you will promise me one thing after I die.”

“Your Majesty, you need not exhort me, I think I might leave this world before you. I have also been extremely tired in recent years, my life has also finally ought to reach its end.” old astrologer Grace faintly sighed as she helplessly replied Uhtred.

“Madam, I’m sorry. You had consumed your vitality for Lancelot Empire.” Uhtred understood that every time old astrologer Madam Grace made a divination, it would consume her vitality. The more complicated the matter, the more vitality would be consumed.

The divination this time was regarding the fate of the entire Lancelot Empire and had completely exhausted her vitality. Her death could be said to be single-handedly caused by Uhtred. However, as it concerned Lancelot Empire’s future, Uhtred had no other choice and could only have old astrologer Grace give some clarity.

Even without old astrologer Madam Grace’s foretelling, matters might still progress along the same trajectory. However, the struggle for power among the princes would undoubtedly result in irreversible damage to Lancelot Empire’s overall strength. In that situation, even if Lawrence succeeded in seizing the throne, Lancelot Empire’s strength would be far from before.

Uhtred was precisely afraid of such a situation occurring. Hence he would rather have old astrologer Grace consume her vitality to foretell the future. This was so that he could minimize the loss in the kingdom’s strength so that when Lawrence succeeded the throne, Lancelot Empire would still be as prosperous as before.

“You need not apologize. My teacher had also exhausted her vitality and died for the sake of Lancelot Empire. Perhaps this is precisely the destiny for us astrologers. Ai...” old astrologer Madam Grace helplessly sighed,

before looking toward Sabakas and said, "In the limited time I have remaining, I hope you can send me to places I have never seen before."

"Don't worry, no matter where you want to go, I'm able to bring you there." Sabakas amiably smiled as he replied, he then turned his head toward Lancelot Empire's King Uhtred and asked, "Your Majesty, what did you want to tell me a moment ago?"

"If Bryan does not abide by his promise, I hope that you can help me kill him." Uhtred hesitated a moment before replying Sabakas.

"Your Majesty, I can only promise you that I will try my utmost. If the day comes when I might not be able to deal with him, I hope you would forgive me." space sacred magus Sabakas carefully thought it over before replying Uhtred.

When one reaches a similar realm as Sabakas, they would long since considered to have surpassed authority. Even Lancelot Empire's king would not have the authority to order him to do things he isn't willing to do. Sabakas vaguely knew a few things from astrologer Grace's prophecy and that was why he replied Uhtred in this way.

Uhtred nodded, smiling as he said, "In that case, I can only thank you."

"Alright, Your Majesty probably has many matters to attend to, we wouldn't continue disturbing you then." Sabakas replied, neither haughty nor humble. He looked toward old astrologer Grace as a white light wrapped around the two of them. They then disappeared in a flash. Lancelot Empire's King Uhtred then started to help Lawrence pave the way to the throne.

When Han Shuo returned to his residence from the palace, he discovered that Lawrence and Phoebe had not waited till the evening and had already been waiting. It looked like they were extremely eager to meet Han Shuo.

Phoebe's eyes were glistening, her line of sight never leaving Han Shuo from beginning to end. When Han Shuo had sent his servants away and led the two of them to an inner living room, Phoebe protested coquettishly with a hint of rage, "What kind of guy are you. Having returned to Ossen

City yet you never came over to look for me, has your time in Brettel City been too satisfying that you have forgotten this old me?"

Along the way, Han Shuo was somewhat muddle-headed, continuously pondering over what King Uhtred had told him. He was unable to understand what was going on with Uhtred, to have actually made such a queer proposal.

Han Shuo only reacted when he heard Phoebe protesting coquettishly, couldn't help but smile bitterly as he replied, "My lady, of all people to forget I would never forget you. You should know that whenever I obtain something good, the first person I think of is precisely you. If not, why would Starry Sky arrive in your hands so quickly."

Hearing Han Shuo's reply, Phoebe's beautiful expression had an added delight and her voice became much gentler as she tenderly questioned, "In that case, what shameful deeds have you done ever since you returned to Ossen City? I've come over a few times but the steward had always said that you weren't within the residence."

"That was because I had to handle some proper business. The majority of the time was spent in the Dark Mantle's headquarters participating in meetings. I had also just visited the palace. In short, I have not been idle." Han Shuo explained to Phoebe.

"Alright, alright. The two of you can slowly chat after I leave." Lawrence teased before looking toward Han Shuo and asked, "Bryan, you have just returned from the palace, what did my royal father talk to you about?"

When Lawrence spoke out, Phoebe blushed as though thinking that once Lawrence leaves, she would engage in wonderful matters with Han Shuo. She suddenly became silent while her face becoming red.

Han Shuo knew what Lawrence was concerned about, recalling his recent agreement with His Majesty. He couldn't help but have a bout of suspicion once again. He then smiled bitterly as he shook his head, replying, "Lawrence, I've promised His Majesty that I wouldn't divulge our conversation to anyone else. His Majesty had especially urged me before I left to not tell you about our discussion."

Lawrence became solemn and distracted, hesitating for a moment before asking, “Then, could you tell me if I was mentioned in your conversation and did the matters you discussed to my benefit?”

Han Shuo thought for a moment before nodding and replied, “Lawrence, I can definitively tell you, the focus of my conversation with His Majesty is precisely about you. Merely, they are all matters that are advantageous to you. I believe the likelihood of you obtaining the throne will increase dramatically.”

“Is... is that for real? Bryan, you are speaking the truth?” Hearing Han Shuo’s reply, Lawrence was clearly indescribably ecstatic, to the extent that he suddenly stood up from his chair. Lawrence, who was unable to hold back the ecstasy in his heart, directly stood in front of Han Shuo, pressing down on Han Shuo’s shoulders, impatiently inquiring as he looked into Han Shuo’s eyes.

Han Shuo gave his affirmation, repetitively nodding his head as he said, “That’s right. Although I can divulge the specifics of our conversations, I can guarantee that your royal father would definitely pave the way for you. Lawrence, your fortune has arrived!”

Lawrence endlessly laughed to his heart’s content, his wild side being revealed after experiencing a long period of oppression. He laughed heartily as he said, “Thank you, Bryan. You are my luck. No matter what you and royal father spoke about, I believe you definitely played a large part. I will never forget your kindness.”

Lawrence’s mind was extremely nimble, realizing that Han Shuo was a key person just from his words. Otherwise, why would Uhtred not find others to talk to, only looking for him?

“Bryan, you wouldn’t be joking right? Don’t tell me that His Highness plans to support Senior Lawrence?” Phoebe reacted from her charming and gentle reverie, having a shocked expression as she looked at Han Shuo, as if she didn’t believe what Han Shuo was saying.

“Don’t ask me about the specifics. Honestly speaking, even now I still can’t believe it myself. However, the truth is as such. You will be aware of



it very soon.” Han Shuo spread his arms in a helpless posture as he explained to Phoebe.

Lawrence had yet calmed down from his surprise, animatedly saying, “Alright, in that case, I’ll return early to prepare. If it turns out as you said, I need to immediately make arrangements.”

“Go ahead, you should indeed make proper preparations.” Han Shuo gladly agreed.

“Senior, you only remember your own matters, did you forget what we discussed just now? Bryan is currently in great danger. If you don’t help him now, he would be labeled as a member of an evil church by Charles and the others!” seeing Lawrence wanting to leave, Phoebe snorted lightly, unable to resist rebuking Lawrence.

Lawrence slapped his own head. That was the reason why they were here. He first smiled apologetically toward Han Shuo before saying with a grave expression, “Bryan, there are currently some rumors that are extremely harmful to you. I think we should carefully figure out a strategy to handle this. This matter is disseminated by Church of Light’s Kosse and Charles. Their aim is to ruin the reputation and image you had exhaustingly established in Brettel City.”

“We shouldn’t bother about these matters. His Majesty has already agreed to help me clear up this matter.” Han Shuo calmly replied Lawrence.

Lawrence and Phoebe looked at each other, both having stunned expressions. Seeing Lawrence’s expression, Han Shuo couldn’t help but smile as he said, “Alright, you should just leave first and be busy with your own matters. There’s no need to be troubled about these matters, your royal father will help us with them.”

“Alright then, I won’t bother the two of you any longer.” Lawrence understood, winking at Han Shuo and Phoebe, laughing as he left.

“Hey, what’s with your expression. Dammit, you have been led astray by Han Shuo!” Phoebe’s charming face was captivatingly red as she rained curses towards Lawrence’s rear view.

Once Lawrence left, Han Shuo smiled as he walked toward Phoebe, pulling her into his embrace, carrying the flailing Phoebe directly to his bedroom. Along the way, he stroked his hands up and down restlessly along Phoebe's body. A while later, Phoebe had lazily curled up on Han Shuo's wide chest, her whole body not having the slightest strength. However, Han Shuo was still in high spirits, without any signs of exhaustion. He instead conveniently took out a necromancy book, assiduously studying it.

Phoebe had not used any of the aura in her body, her exhaustion was purely from her physical body. Looking at Han Shuo who was in great spirits, Phoebe had a sweet smiling expression. Her complaints from these few days had all disappeared, unable to conceal her extremely content amorous feelings. She was obviously extremely pleased.

A strand of mysterious energy flowed within Phoebe's body, slowly circulating through Phoebe's limbs and bones, nourishing Phoebe's body. It gave Phoebe an extremely comfortable feeling, as though that strand of energy was replenishing her body, helping her body gradually recover and even strengthen.

Phoebe finely examined the refinement and nourishment of that strand of energy, suddenly reacting. This mysterious energy came from Han Shuo. Previously every time after she had experienced pleasure with Han Shuo, Phoebe seemed to sense the existence of such an energy even while dazed. Merely the previous few times Phoebe had been overly exhausted and had fallen asleep immediately and had never sensed it as clearly before.

However, Phoebe could sense that her body was improving. Previously when she refined her niedan, her body seemed to also be purified. The training of her aura had been much easier as compared to the past. It also seemed like the changes in her body was the reason why Phoebe was able to become a great swordsman so quickly.

Slowly sensing for a while, Phoebe couldn't help but fiercely gaze at Han Shuo who was solemnly studying the necromancy book. She suddenly understood in her heart that every time they had engaged in pleasure, Han Shuo would send a strand of unknown energy into her body, helping her

remold her body, causing her body's state to become better.

"Bryan!" Phoebe suddenly whispered softly, raising her head to look at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo, who was studying a bone demon's characteristics, lightly grunted in response, smiling as he looked at Phoebe, his large hand conveniently smacking Phoebe's perky and round butt as he asked teasingly, "Yes? You want more?"

Phoebe's stunningly beautiful face reddened, blushing in shame as she pulling up the thin quilt to cover her body, hiding her nosebleed inducing perfect curves, saying softly, "No, my whole body is already devoid of strength, you damned fellow!"

"Hehe, what do you want to say then?" Han Shuo put down the necromancy book in his hand, his left hand tenderly helping her pull the quilt to conceal her jade-like skin, smiling as he asked.

"Have you always left behind something special within my body every time we pleasured each other?" Phoebe's face was red as she inquired in a low voice.

"Of course, I have indeed left behind something special. Heh heh. Those are the seeds of life, the original essence in creating humans. Merely they haven't been able to germinate. Why have you asked about this? Could it be that you want to ask why your stomach has not become big? Oh, you can't blame me, perhaps you haven't worked hard enough?" Han Shuo smiled deviously as he replied Phoebe.

When Phoebe saw Han Shuo's evil smile, she knew that he must have misunderstood her question. She couldn't help but embarrassedly reproached him, "Not that thing. I am referring to the energy that helped me alter my body!"

When Phoebe said that, Han Shuo was suddenly enlightened, replying, "So you were referring to that. Hehe, don't worry, that energy is only beneficial to your body and would absolutely not cause any harm. You shouldn't care too much about it. In any case, you only need to know that it would cause your body to improve."

“I know, of course I know the benefits that energy brings about to my body. I’m only worried if it would cause harm to your strength?” Phoebe naturally understood the changes to her body. However, as a young great swordmaster, Phoebe knew that no matter what kind of energy leaves the main body, it would have an effect on the person involved. What she was worried about was whether Han Shuo was harmed.

“Heh heh, you need not worry. This is called duo cultivation. When I transmit energy into you, I’m actually also obtaining some energy from your body. It’s just that you aren’t aware of it. Otherwise, why would I make you perform so many unusual positions? This is actually a type of martial technique. To think that you still have wild thoughts.” Han Shuo smiled as he explained to Phoebe.

Listening to Han Shuo’s explanation, Phoebe’s blush had spread from her neck to her whole body. She couldn’t help but hammer Han Shuo’s chest, saying, “Nonsense! Since when was there a technique that was practiced this way. You wanting me to assume so many embarrassing positions was simply to satisfy your unusual hobby. You evil person. Still wanting to lie to me!”

Helplessly shrugging his shoulders, Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he explained, “My lady, I am truly not deceiving you. There are countless martial techniques that you don’t know about. However, this technique indeed exists. The positions I want you to assume also really have special purposes. It is just that you haven’t carefully experienced it and have instead been lost in pleasure. If you are able to carefully comprehend it the next time, you would know that I’m telling the truth.”

Phoebe was only somewhat convinced by Han Shuo’s explanation, staring blankly at Han Shuo for a while, realizing that Han Shuo didn’t seem to be joking. She then softly said, “Bryan, you are saying the truth. That is truly a type of martial technique.” Nodding his head, Han Shuo smiled as he replied, “Of course. It is precisely through this method that our pleasure would aid in increasing each other’s strength. Don’t you worry, the energy within your body wouldn’t cause me any harm.”

As Han Shuo explained, although Phoebe was still astonished, she didn’t

continue questioning this matter. She instead knitted her brows as she pondered. After a while, Phoebe suddenly recalled something, intensely looking at Han Shuo as she asked, "Bryan, there's a question I've held back for very long, you must answer me today."

"Speak, what's your question?" Han Shuo's large hand caressed Phoebe's smooth back, his eyes squinting as he said lazily.

"What's the deal with Emily? Don't tell me that you have no relation with Emily. Hmph, I've seen her a few times, her skin and state of her body are simply identical to mine. Bryan, I hope you can honestly tell me about the relationship between the two of you and not lie to me." Phoebe stared fixedly at Han Shuo as she questioned him overbearingly.

When Han Shuo heard the name "Emily", he unexpectedly shuddered. When Phoebe finished her question, his mind had suddenly become a mess. After hurriedly considered for a moment, Han Shuo sighed as he said, "Since you already know, I won't hide it from you any longer. The previous time in the Dark Forest, due to my martial technique undergoing cultivation deviation, I raped her while I was unconscious..."

Since things have reached this point, Han Shuo knew that no amount of concealment would be effective, thus he systematically described the matters between Emily and himself.

"As I expected, you really had an affair with her. I had always been wondering why her skin was as white and glossy as mine. Great, it turns out it had been nourished by you. Bryan ah Bryan, you are truly awesome, to actually dare to rape the Betteridge Family's daughter-in-law..." on one hand, Phoebe was glaring angrily at Han Shuo as she clamored, on the other hand, she wanted to wear her clothes and leave in spite of Han Shuo's obstruction.

Han Shuo embraced Phoebe tightly, hurriedly explaining, "Under those circumstances, I had no choice. You should know that you are the most important to me. To have been together with Emily was just a coincidence..."

"I don't think it's that simple. That Emily has such a seductive

appearance. Is she very good in bed? Did she tempt you till you are confused and disoriented? Do you know that she is Mister Han's daughter-in-law? That her brother is the terrifying Amyes?"

Han Shuo nodded and then explained, "However, when I raped her, I only took her as a spy of the Empire!"

Shaking of Han Shuo, Phoebe swiftly wore her clothes, hatefully staring at Han Shuo, her expression filled with resentment as she shouted, "I had already felt that there was something fishy between you and Emily previously at the banquet by Lawrence's father. It looks like you two have known each other since long ago. Emily has gone too far, to actually following your bad example in deceiving me."

When she finished her sentence, Phoebe had already finished dressing up and was furiously heading out.

"Where are you going?" Han Shuo was shocked, hastily putting on his clothes.

"I'm going to find that coquettish hussy, Emily. Don't follow me, I want to speak to her alone." Phoebe replied with a sentence before rushing out of Han Shuo's residence.

# Chapter 389: Improving circumstances of the necromancy major

Phoebe was furious as she left, her last sentence firmly rejecting Han Shuo's plan to follow her. Han Shuo, who had gotten up to put on his clothes, hesitated for a while before ultimately deciding not to follow Phoebe.

The Betteridge Family was a celebrated noble family within the empire. Even though Mister Hahn has withdrawn from the military, his influence still remained. If Phoebe went to talk to Emily by herself, it would perhaps not cause much of a problem. However, if Han Shuo went along as well, what would happen between the two ladies and Han Shuo would be unpredictable.

Han Shuo definitely didn't want to be screamed at by two girls within the Betteridge Family. If that happened, not only would it affect Han Shuo's career, it would also ruin the reputation of Phoebe and Emily.

Han Shuo frowned as he blanked out momentarily, not knowing what he should do. He decided to just send out two mystical demons to follow behind Phoebe.

In recent times, Ossen City was shrouded in darkness, with hidden dangers everywhere. Han Shuo was afraid that Phoebe who supported Lawrence would encounter trouble. Furthermore, he also wanted to find out what Phoebe wanted to talk to Emily about. If the situation goes south, he would have no choice and be forced to step in.

As the mystical demons followed Phoebe to the Betteridge Family, contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, the originally enraged Phoebe had already concealed her emotions when she reached the doorstep of the Betteridge Family and was instead tranquil as she asked the guard if she could meet Emily.

When Han Shuo saw that Phoebe did not cause a racket the moment she reached the Betteridge Family, he couldn't help letting out a breath. He

understood that although Phoebe was angry, she still knew to act appropriately. When Emily heard that Phoebe had specially come to visit, she was suddenly started. She knew she was hiding something and the previous few times she had met Phoebe, she had faintly felt that something was inappropriate and knew that an intelligent woman like Phoebe would definitely sense something.

Now that Phoebe had come to look for her specifically, Emily knew that the trouble that would have come has finally arrived. She calmed her disturbed state of mind and then actively head out to welcome Phoebe.

“Hey, Miss Phoebe? Hehe, it’s been awhile since we met, to what do I owe this visit?” Emily has been part of Dark Mantle for many years and was still able to show a natural appearance even though she had a guilty conscience, showing a splendid smile as greeting Phoebe like a sister.

“Hehe, Miss Emily, isn’t that because I miss you. Oh, it’s been a long time since we met, sister Emily seems to be looking much younger, what is your secret? You must share it with me!” Phoebe who has run a business for a long time was also able to hold in her anger, smiling as she greeted Emily.

Emily felt troubled. When Phoebe mentioned her sore spot, she knew that Phoebe did not come with good intentions. Emily naturally knew the cause of the changes to her body. The beautiful fair-skinned Phoebe was in an extremely similar condition as herself. It was naturally self-evident the reason for Phoebe to bring up this matter.

“I don’t deserve Miss Phoebe’s praise. Perhaps it is because there isn’t much happening recently, being idle and having slept much more. I definitely don’t look younger!” Emily smiled as she played down the matter. Seeing that there were still guards around, she couldn’t help but lightly chuckle as she walked toward Phoebe, smiling as she said, “Since it is rare for you to come over, let’s head to my room to talk about more intimate matters.”

“That was exactly my intention!” Phoebe smiled lightly as she replied, still keeping a natural expression as she walked into the residence with



Emily. The two of them looked like a pair of sisters, as though there was simply no friction between them.

Han Shuo who had seen and heard the whole conversation between the two of them through a mystical demon couldn't help but inwardly admire the calmness of both women and also sort of understood how elegant women fought. It wasn't the loud shouting and screaming he imagined, but was instead a more obscure and implicit battle.

After Emily led Phoebe into her personal room, Emily very carefully placed layer upon layer of enchantments around the room, perhaps to prevent their conversation from leaking. Phoebe looked on indifferently as Emily placed soundproofing, vision-obscuring enchantments, not saying a word.

Once Emily had finished placing her enchantments, Han Shuo's two mystical demons felt a dark aura gradually spreading out in all directions. After hesitating for a moment, Han Shuo withdrew the two mystical demons, having them stay outside the room. In that way, the mystical demons would not be discovered by Emily's enchantments, but he would also not be able to hear their conversation.

"Hai, having too many women is indeed troublesome!" Han Shuo couldn't help but sigh. However, he knew that by his nature, his self-control in this area was definitely lacking.

Just as Han Shuo was sighing, Steward Kallas came in, looking for Han Shuo, handing over a letter while saying respectfully, "Lord Marquis, this is a letter for you."

"Lord Marquis?" Han Shuo was stunned, looking over at Steward Kallas before questioning suspiciously, "Kallas, did you address me wrongly?"

"No, I definitely did not!" Steward Kallas answered, smiling as he looked toward Han Shuo before continuing, "Lord Marquis, although His Majesty's official document has not been issued, there's no need for you to keep us in the dark. Hehe, we are your staff, yet we had to find out from others that His Majesty had conferred upon you a higher title.

When Kallas made that statement, Han Shuo had a sudden realization.

He understood that Lancelot Empire's King Uhtred must have immediately set out to help Lawrence pave the way once Han Shuo left the palace. His title of Marquis must have also been announced in advance.

Now that even Steward Kallas knew about this, it adequately illustrated that King Uhtred had disseminated the news of Han Shuo's promotion. Han Shuo could only sigh at King Uhtred's high efficiency. He then knitted his brows and asked, "Oh, as for those negative rumors about me, are they still being spread?"

"Lord Marquis, His Majesty has already confirmed your innocent background and ordered that no one should doubt your loyalty to the Empire. If anyone dared to spread rumors about you, His Majesty would immediately punish him for slander. Within a day's time, there was no longer anyone that dared talk about you being from the Calamity Church." Steward Kallas looked at Han Shuo reverently as he answered sincerely.

Han Shuo had merely made a trip to the imperial palace, yet once he returned, His Majesty made a series of major actions, suppressing all the negative discussions about Han Shuo and even conferred the noble title of Marquis upon Han Shuo. This was ample proof of His Majesty's trust and generosity toward Han Shuo. Kallas was truly convinced by Han Shuo.

However, Kallas would never know that within the palace, Lancelot Empire's most powerful person actually had a pleading tone when talking to Han Shuo, not having the slightest arrogant attitude of a superior towards a subordinate.

"Who sent the letter?" Han Shuo nonchalantly asked while looking at the letter.

"The person who sent it seemed to be a student of Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. He said that it was Master Fanny that told him to pass this to you. You had previously made it clear to pay special attention to matters regarding Master Fanny. Hence, I didn't dare tarry, delivering it to you immediately." Steward Kallas replied.

"That's good!" Han Shuo gave praise before waving his hand for Kallas

to withdraw. He then opened the envelope to retrieve and read the light green letter within.

Fanny's penmanship was deft and graceful. The contents of the letter contained faint attraction, faintly displaying part of Fanny's longing. It also mentioned that today was the first day for the necromancy major to recruit new students and she hoped that Han Shuo could find time to make a trip to the necromancy major and perhaps make a speech, so as to keep up appearances for the necromancy major.

After he finished reading the letter, Han Shuo's nose was filled with the delicate fragrance of the light green writing paper, as if smelling the refreshing scent on Fanny's body. Remembering Dean Emma's previous expectations of him, Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, before deciding to make a trip to Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Brimming in the scent of spring, Babylon Academy's yearly recruitment was in full swing.

As Lancelot Empire's largest incubator for talent, Babylon Academy of Magic and Force was the place everyone, regardless of nobles or commoners, yearned to join. Every youngster's goal was to become a noble mage or knight. If one did not have outstanding talent in magic, picking the next choice in becoming a swordsman was also a decent choice.

As the empire's largest training institution, the yearly recruitment of Babylon Academy of Magic and Force which is located in the empire's capital was always extremely lively. Most of the empire's talents would flock to Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, hoping to be able to be a student of the academy.

Generally, as long as one enters Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, and successfully graduates, one would have a beautiful future, regardless if they are a commoner or a noble. Of course, if the student was a child of nobility and studied magic, the student's prospects would naturally be even brighter.

Students would undergo many tests and would be able to choose a major suited to their mental strength and their ability to sense the magical elements. Generally, if one was able to sense a particular element better, it

would be easier for them to study in that major. Of course, this wasn't absolute. There were people who were only able to weakly sense the darkness element, but due to their interest, they eventually became dark grand magi. The foundation only plays a small part while one's final accomplishments would still be dependent on themselves.

Hence, when students pass all the different tests and reach the time in choosing their major, the crux would often be their interest and the major's strength rather than the student choosing the major based on which element they could sense the strongest.

All along, Babylon Academy of Magic and Force advocated and insisted all along on respecting the student's interest and choice. None of the majors had the right to force outstanding students to join their major. The final decision would be made by the student, while what each major had to do was to take advantage of their strengths in attracting excellent students to join.

This was the same for the necromancy major. The necromancy major that had declined for many years had become a branch of the dark major. However, the necromancy major and dark major were after all not the same major. When it's time to recruit new students, the necromancy major also had the qualifications to recruit students independently.

In an incomparably wide plaza, each magic major of Babylon Academy of Magic and Force occupied their own area, individually establishing numerous recruitment points for the light, dark, fire, water, wind, earth, lightning, summoning, space and necromancy majors.

Every major had made their recruitment point noticeable, either displaying large banners that stated their major's strengths or inviting outstanding seniors that had graduated from their major to attend and attract the crowd or promising benefits for entering their major. Every major spared no effort in showing off their major, so as to draw outstanding students to their own major.

Talent was the most fundamental aspect of a student in Babylon Academy. As long as a major was able to produce an extraordinary mage,

not only would it bring glory to the whole major, the major would also have an advantage in all future school activities. The stronger the major, the more funds and resources they could apply for.

Taking the earth major for example. Thirty years ago, the constantly declining earth major had welcomed Dempus Gaier, causing the earth major to lead in many consecutive school competitions by a wide margin. The current Dempus Gaier had become a well-known earth sacred magus within Lancelot Empire, allowing the earth major to rise from many years of decline to be the strongest major in the academy.

There were many similar examples, the reason why the light and dark major had held the advantage for so many years was also due to the appearance of a few outstanding students in recent years. The weak and bullied necromancy major also stood out due to Han Shuo's appearance, faintly showing signs of splitting from the dark major and becoming independent.

In the remote northeast corner of the plaza, five tall skeleton warriors raised a large banner which showed "The necromancy major welcomes you to join them" behind a large table. The two instructors, Fanny and Gene sat at the desk, while Lisa, Amy, Athena and the other necromancy students were shouting their lungs out.

"Why are we allocated this area, this area clearly deviates from the core zone. Those fellows in the dark major are obviously forcing us aside. Hmph!" Lisa angrily shouted, turning her head to look at the calm Fanny before asking, "Master Fanny, do you think Bryan will come? It has been a long time since he last came by the necromancy major. That fellow has become a celebrity in the empire, could it be that he has forgotten his friends here, oh and you as well?"

A long time has passed and Lisa had long since got over her previous anger toward Fanny and Han Shuo. However, only Lisa knew if she still bitterly longed for Han Shuo, and even Fanny was unable to see through her.

Having experienced the tragic downfall of her family, Lisa was much

stronger than Fanny could imagine. She was no longer the previously willful girl who only knew to cause trouble. Rather, she had truly calmed her mind in studying necromancy magic. Currently, Lisa had actually become a journeyman mage with Fanny's assistance.

Fanny smiled as she glanced at Lisa, explaining, "Haven't I already asked Derek to send a letter to him? If he has received my letter and just so happen to have nothing to handle, I believe he would come. Hehe, don't be worried. Although the location of our necromancy major is slightly secluded, I still believe there will be students that come on account of its reputation."

Fanny naturally wouldn't tell Lisa that when Han Shuo had returned from Brettel City, the first person he had looked for was herself. At that time, when Han Shuo told her that he had immediately headed to Babylon Academy to look for her once he entered Ossen City, Fanny was secretly delighted for quite a while.

In this period of time, Han Shuo has risen rapidly within the empire, with nobles and commoners everywhere spreading Han Shuo's impressive accomplishments. In particular, Han Shuo's achievement of killing the leader of Brut Merchant Alliance's Redbud Knights, Celt and his green dragon was spread widely to every corner of Lancelot Empire.

Han Shuo's rise had caused the necromancy major to similarly be in the spotlight. Currently within Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, none of the other majors dared to blatantly bully the necromancy major. Even Dean Emma was clearly siding the necromancy major, which made Fanny feel extremely relaxed.

"Master Fanny, how many new students do you think we can recruit this year?" Gene asked Fanny who was sitting beside him. Gene who was originally infatuated with Fanny had previously seen Fanny and Han Shuo being intimate by accident. In addition, with Fanny had succeeded in becoming a necromancy archmage, his feelings had gradually faded.

No matter which aspect was compared, an adept mage instructor like himself was a far cry from the rising necromancy grand magus Han Shuo.

When Fanny had also become a necromancy archmage, Gene had given up even more completely.

In this way, Gene focused his energy on his career, on one hand striving hard in studying magic, on the other hand, attempting to develop and promote teaching as a career. His contribution to the growth of the necromancy major in this period of time wasn't small.

Previously when he had returned to his hometown, Gene had mentioned that he was once the instructor of Brettel City's Count Bryan, immediately causing a sensation in the small town. Gene had also benefited from Han Shuo's status, causing Gene's resentment toward Han Shuo to slowly dissipate. "Who knows? Hehe, perhaps there will be a few." Fanny smiled as she replied.

"Excuse me, may I ask, is this the necromancy major? Did the Empire's necromancy grand magus Count Bryan graduate from this major?" a youngster that was dressed exquisitely and was followed by a steward had come over and inquired courteously.

"That's right, Bryan did indeed graduate from our major." Gene was delighted, hastily answering.

"Ha, I've finally found it, why are you so secluded!" The youngster shouted excitedly, before animatedly saying, "My mental strength is excellent and have the strongest affinity for dark magic. However, I choose the necromancy major, I hope you will accept me!"

After finishing his sentence, the youngster shouted loudly toward a few companions that were pacing back and forth in the distance, "Friends, I've found the necromancy major. They are over here, you should come over!"

After the youngster shouted, the other teenagers all had delighted expressions, excitedly running towards Fanny's direction. The results of these students in the mental strength test were exceptional and they were also all from noble backgrounds. They were precisely the people that instructors of every major coveted. No one expected that all of a sudden, all of them would run toward the necromancy major.

# Chapter 390: Respect

“Haha, welcome, welcome. Choosing the necromancy major is definitely the correct decision!” When Gene saw these few young students making a beeline for their position, he couldn’t help but chuckle as he hastily stood up, taking out a few pamphlets and passed one to each person. He smiled as he explained, “Everyone fill in your details. Hehe, there aren’t many rules in our necromancy major and the school fees is the lowest.”

These youngsters that came over were clearly attracted by Han Shuo’s reputation. After hearing Gene’s instructions, all of them excitedly leaned over the table to fill in their forms.

There were a few youngsters that had been lingering a distance away and they didn’t seem to be from the same group. However, their goal was identical and were also searching for the necromancy major’s location. When they heard the shouts coming from this direction, all of them had an excited look as they headed for the necromancy major’s area.

“Hey Carlisle, your mental strength is excellent and your affinity with the darkness element is extremely high. As long as you are willing to study dark magic, you will definitely become a dark grand magus. Don’t leave, for a student like you, our dark major also gives many benefits.” a dark magic professor hastily shouted as he looked at a youngster directly heading toward the necromancy major in the corner.

“I’m sorry but I was under the impression that the dark major and necromancy major were the same and hence came over here. I didn’t that that the necromancy major could actually enroll students on their own. I apologise. The reason I’m here is because i want to become a necromancy grand magus like Marquis Bryan, not because of the dark major!” For this youngster to find out about Han Shuo’s title of Marquis, he definitely does not come from a simple background. He was neither haughty nor humble as he replied, performing a bow before leaving the dark major’s recruitment point in large strides without any hesitation.

The expression of dark major archmage Deo who was sitting behind the



dark major's recruitment table gradually became unsightly. Carlisle was a student that he fancied for a long time. From the start when Carlisle entered Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, Deo was immediately certain that Carlisle was a good seedling in studying dark magic.

So as to recruit Carlisle, Deo even sent a few teachers to separately approach him. Carlisle had also showed great passion from the start and was always extremely pleased. Who would have known that in the end, Carlisle actually headed for the necromancy major without even looking back, even saying that the reason why he was amicable with them was purely because he misunderstood the relation between the dark major and the necromancy major. That was practically a slap to Deo's face.

"Isn't it just a petty slave achieving unexpected success, what is so amazing about that. Hmph." The dark major teacher that was rejected by Carlisle couldn't help but censure furiously, attempting to vent the resentment in his heart.

"Deo, isn't the necromancy major a branch of the dark major? Why does the current situation seem like the necromancy major faintly pressuring the dark major instead. I didn't expect that in the time that I left the dark major, not only did you not progress, you actually led the dark major to such a state?" A tall and lean middle aged magus appeared next to Deo, frowning as he berated Deo who was the dark major's person in charge.

"Crowley, although you have become a dark grand magus, you have always been outside the Lancelot Empire. Previously your reputation was very big, but there hasn't been any youngsters that know about you for a long time. However, this Bryan has been rising rapidly these days and within the hearts of the youngsters in the Empire, only he is a true hero. Your era has passed." Deo glanced at the middle aged magus, smiling bitterly as he replied.

Crowley and Deo were both previously from Babylon Academy's dark major. At that time when Crowley was in the dark major, the competition between majors had been dominated by the dark major for consecutive years. He only took a very short time after he advanced to the rank of adept mage and graduated to advance even further to become a dark

archmage, causing a sensation within the Lancelot Empire for many years.

However, after Crowley became an archmage, he couldn't make a breakthrough. After a while, he left Lancelot Empire, travelling to many nations within the Profound Continent and was finally able to become a dark grand magus a few years ago. Deo and Crowley were from the same year, but Deo clearly didn't have as much talent as Crowley, only reaching the rank of dark archmage. Deo had heard that Crowley had returned to the Lancelot Empire and thus invited him to show his support.

Unfortunately, Crowley had left the Lancelot Empire for too long that even some of the elderly had forgotten about him, not to mention the young students that adored heroes. Crowley had been standing here for quite a while and even though Deo painstakingly introduced him, there wasn't anyone that took notice of him.

"Deo, that fellow Bryan really became a necromancy grand magus in such a short time?" a magus who studied dark magic would naturally have a sinister aura wrapping around their body. Candide, one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle had this aura, and this grand magus named Crowley had this aura too. The somber expression he gave Deo would definitely cause an average person who saw it to be fearful.

When Deo heard Crowley's question, although he was extremely unwilling to admit it, but the truth could not be changed. He could only smile bitterly and replied, "That youngster is a freak, he really became a necromancy grand magus that quickly. What is more frightening is that he simply didn't stay in the necromancy major for a long time, only appearing a few times at crucial moments. No one knows how he managed to train that quickly."

"Oh, hehe, that's indeed somewhat interesting. Unfortunately that person isn't here, otherwise I would truly want to meet him. I have been forgotten by the people in Lancelot Empire for too long and would indeed need to compete with an expert so that more people will know that I've returned." Crowley muttered to himself while having a pensive expression.

Deo glanced at Crowley, egging him on, "That's right, Crowley, currently

that fellow is having rising prestige within Lancelot Empire. The fastest way for you to make a name for yourself is to defeat him. Hehe, you can indeed try. That fellow had just advanced to necromancy grand magus and I feel he is surely not your match.”

As Deo and Crowley were previously in the same year, Deo was extremely clear about Crowley’s character. Deo could tell just by looking at Crowley’s expression what he was thinking about and couldn’t help but egg him on. In the years when Crowley was still in the dark major, he was famous for being proud and arrogant. Deo could see that Crowley’s temperament had not changed even after so many years.

“Unfortunately, that fellow isn’t here today. Otherwise I could seize the opportunity to stop his rise!” Deo’s suggestion matched Crowley’s intentions. He was absolutely confident in his own strength and couldn’t help but become restless.

While they were discussing at the dark major, other teachers in the rest of the majors were also silently cursing. This was especially so at the light major. At this moment, the person in charge of the light major, archmage Voigtlander was similarly having a deflated expression as he shouted furiously, “What is going on!! Liliac had such a strong affinity with the light element but actually headed to the enemy necromancy major. Doesn’t she know that with her circumstances, studying light magic would have the best prospects? How can those dark creatures of the necromancy major be able to match light magic, this is simply preposterous!”

Seated behind the light major’s area was someone Han Shuo was familiar with – one of Dark Mantle’s three heavyweights, light grand magus Amyes. Currently, Amyes was enjoying a pot of good tea, sitting leisurely and smiling as he looked at Voigtlander, not sharing any opinions.

The swordmasters stood behind Amyes, dedicated to Amyes’ protection. They also didn’t care about Voigtlander’s words. In their eyes, Amyes’ safety was the most important.

Voigtlander indignantly complained and then faced the invited Amyes

and said, "Lord Amyes, do you think this matter is absurd? The necromancy major is such a small major, yet they actually became so lucky because of a small servant, even snatching away our light major's students."

Amyes had previously graduated from the light major, eventually becoming a chancellor of authority within the Lancelot Empire. In the eyes of Lancelot Empire's nobles, Amyes was a terrifying demon. Once Amyes has fixed his attention on a certain noble family, that noble family will definitely meet with misfortune.

However, although Amyes didn't have a favourable impression of Voigtlander who was two ranks below himself, he still had some feelings for the light major. Hence when he received Voigtlander's invitation, Amyes agreed to attend. At present, as he heard Voigtlander's complaints, Amyes only smiled faintly and replied gracefully, "Bryan is a Marquis of the Empire and is regarded highly by His Majesty. It is best that you are careful with what you say."

For Voigtlander who didn't know that Han Shuo was a member of Dark Mantle to blindly ridicule Han Shuo in front of Amyes, he would definitely not get any benefits. When Voigtlander heard Amyes reply, he was astonished as he looked at Amyes, not understanding why Amyes was speaking on behalf of Han Shuo.

"Haha, you should just carry on with your own matters. Those students that enter the necromancy major have all done so out of blind adoration of a hero. After some time, when they realise they are not suited to studying necromancy magic, I believe they will still recognise the facts and return to the light major. There's no need for you to worry." As a high-ranking member of Dark Mantle, Amyes could see the main issue in a glance and couldn't help but console Voigtlander. "I, I just can't swallow my anger!" Voigtlander pondered for a moment and understood that what Amyes said was reasonable. However, he still couldn't help but shout angrily.

Amyes hiddenly looked at Voigtlander in disdain, thinking in his heart that the current Bryan is simply not someone a teacher of the light major

can contend against. Pondering for a while, as well as taking to account his feelings for the light major, Amyes reminded, "Voigtlander, I'll say one thing, this Bryan isn't someone you can provoke. Even if you can't swallow your anger you should forcefully contain it. If not, it would lead to your own demise."

Amyes controlled a division of Dark Mantle and had a close relationship with His Majesty. From the series of arrangements His Majesty had made today, he could already spot some clues and understood that prior to His Majesty's passing, no one within Lancelot Empire would be able to act against Han Shuo. Even he himself wouldn't not be able to, much less a light major's teacher?

"Th-this, Lord Amyes, where do these words stem from?" Voigtlander was startled, somewhat baffled as he inquired.

"Go comprehend it yourself. Haha, the reason why I've said this to you is on the account of you inviting me. Look at those fellows in the dark major, I can guarantee that they would pay bitterly sooner or later. Oh, it's not sooner or later, maybe they would pay bitterly very soon. Ha, That fellow actually came, didn't he just depart from His Majesty's place not long ago?" Amyes first warned Voigtlander, before suddenly spotting a tall and imposing figure in the distance. He couldn't help but exclaiming softly.

Following Amyes line of sight, Voigtlander also saw the approaching Han Shuo. He couldn't help but cry in alarm, "Good gracious, how has that fellow become so tall!"

The previous time Voigtlander saw Han Shuo, he wasn't even 1.80 meters. Han Shuo had immediately looked for Fanny every time he went to the necromancy major and normal people would simply not have the chance to see Han Shuo. The figure of Han Shuo who trained in demonic magic was currently as imposing as a demonic god, naturally exuding devilishly attractive traits.

Even though he was within a sea of people, Han Shuo's tall and imposing body and traits would still draw in everyone's gaze, causing everyone to focus their attention on him, inevitably becoming everyone's

focal point.

“Master Fanny, it’s Bryan!! Bryan’s here, he really came!” Lisa was originally glancing around senselessly, not expecting Han Shuo to really return. When she saw Han Shuo’s prominent figure in the corner of her eye, her heart was in upheaval and she was unable to resist crying out in surprise.

“It seems that only when I truly see him that I realise that all these days of trying to forget him has been useless. I, I’m still unable to forget him!” after crying out in surprise, Lisa’s expression suddenly dulled as she sighed inwardly.

When she heard Lisa’s cry, Fanny’s eyes gave off a joyous radiance of disbelief. She was somewhat unable to resist immediately standing up, but remembered that there were many people around. She couldn’t help but blush as she sat back down, scolding herself inwardly for losing control. She imitated the action of taking a sip of water, controlling her tone as much as possible as she said to the group of excited youngsters, “That person is Bryan, he can be considered as your senior.”

These new necromancy students that rushed over due to Han Shuo’s reputation had just completed the procedures to enter the necromancy major. When they heard Fanny’s sentence, they couldn’t help but blush, all of them standing on tiptoe to do their utmost in seeing a little further, searching for any trace of their hero. In that moment, their young and tender hearts were filled with emotions and excitement.

As Han Shuo continued walking, he realised that due to his appearance, numerous gazes were uniformly converging on him. When Han Shuo looked around and did not immediately see the necromancy major’s recruitment point, he couldn’t help but become suspicious.

However, Han Shuo understood that the necromancy major was a branch of the dark major and the dark major’s location was actually extremely conspicuous. Only after a mystical demon floated upward to overlook the area, did he spot Fanny in a corner behind the dark major. When Han Shuo saw the words on the banner being held up by five

skeleton warriors, he couldn't help but laugh and think inwardly, as Lancelot Empire's largest magic academy, why does the recruitment seem like a food market?

Han Shuo continued walking toward the necromancy major as he pondered. Just as Han Shuo was about to reach the necromancy major's recruitment point, Deo hastily pulled Crowley, saying in a low voice, "That fellow is Bryan, if you intend to seize the chance to become famous, defeating him is a good idea!"

Crowley followed Deo's gaze, couldn't help but blew a raspberry, "Deo, did you make a mistake, is that fellow really a necromancer? Why does he look like he's more well-built than barbarian warriors!"

Deo was somewhat speechless, having an ugly expression as he explained, "That's right, it's him. Merely, it is said that he also practices a mysterious martial technique and had previously defeated Brut Merchant Alliance's Leah Cain. Crowley, could it be that you are afraid?"

"Also practices a martial technique..." Crowley stared blankly, before smiling confidently as he replied, "A magus that isn't focused on one thing is the easiest to deal with. If you didn't mention this point, I would still be somewhat apprehensive. Since that is the case, I feel reassured."

As Han Shuo headed for the necromancy major, he was slightly surprised at the amount of attention he was getting. He didn't think that his appearance would actually cause such so many people to be flustered.

The light major's recruitment point was also at a very eye-catching location. Han Shuo had noticed Amyes through a mystical demon and when he passed by the light major's recruitment point, he couldn't help but nodding his head to send his greetings to Amyes who was leisurely sipping tea. As Amyes was one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, he could also be considered Han Shuo's immediate superior. Furthermore, Amyes was Emily's brother. No matter publicly or privately, Han Shuo had to show respect when he saw Amyes.

When Amyes who was originally sitting there leisurely sipping tea saw Han Shuo's greeting, he didn't dare be disrespectful and actually stood up

and smiled as he returned the greeting.

For someone like Amyes to be so respectful to an upstart like Han Shuo, Voigtlander was slightly surprised. As he recalled what Amyes had advised him, Voigtlander suddenly understood, and instead viewed the dark major in schadenfreude. Seeing Crowley's restless appearance, it seemed like a show was about to begin.

Seeing Amyes stand up to return the greeting, Han Shuo was similarly astonished. No matter how he saw it, with Amyes' status, even returning the greeting while seated was already showing face to Han Shuo. He truly didn't think that Amyes would actually stand and show his respect.

This signified that Amyes treated Han Shuo as someone on the same level and simply not treating Han Shuo as a subordinate. Otherwise, regardless of his age or qualifications within Dark Mantle, there was simply no need for Amyes to stand and return the greeting.

Showing a splendid smile, Han Shuo who was slightly confused directly headed for the necromancy major, not thinking deeply about the reason behind Amyes' friendliness.

Suddenly, a malicious looking middle aged magus stood in Han Shuo's way. Crowley hiddenly measured up Han Shuo, suddenly saying, "Are you Count Bryan? Haha, let me introduce myself, I am Crowley and have graduated from Babylon Academy's dark major. I have always been fascinated by the exploration of magic and have recently just returned to Lancelot Empire..."

"Get to the point!" Han Shuo knitted his brows, interrupting before Crowley could complete her sentence.

Crowley had an embarrassed expression, not expecting that with Han Shuo's position as a noble Count, he actually rudely interrupted his speech. That caused Crowley to be dazed for a moment.

"I heard that Count Bryan is a necromancy grand magus. May I know if Lord Count would give me the honor of comparing notes with me?" After Crowley was interrupted by Han Shuo, he was a little annoyed, getting right to the point and issuing his challenge.



When they heard this sentence, the students and teachers in the dark major were shocked. The attention of the nearby majors were all focused here and had also heard Crowley's loud challenge. They all became excited in an instant, hastily abandoning their current tasks and rushed over.

Over at the necromancy major, Fanny had continuously gazed at Han Shuo once he appeared and had clearly heard the challenge by dark major's Crowley. Before Fanny could express anything, Lisa and the other students had already headed over. Fanny hesitated a moment, turning around and said to Gene, "Master Gene, sorry to trouble you to look after this place, I'll head over to take a look!"

"Sure, go ahead. I will look after this area." Gene knew the real relationship between Fanny and Han Shuo, nodding understandingly as he replied.

"Let's go over and take a look too. Haha, where did this fellow come from, to go as far as to challenge our hero." all the new necromancy students that had joined because of Han Shuo's reputation excitedly ran over.

Amyes who had just sat down suddenly spurted out a mouth of tea, awkwardly looking at Voigtlander who was on the receiving end. He embarrassingly smiled before saying, "I'm really sorry, that fellow really did as i predicted, wanting to seize the opportunity to make a name for himself. Haha." "It's nothing, it's nothing, my lord is indeed formidable." as Voigtlander used a napkin to wipe away the tea on his body, he smiled and complimented Amyes. He wouldn't dare blame Amyes!

# Chapter 391: No turning back

Han Shuo surveyed the no longer young magus in front of him. Crowley was a dark grand magus. An average student in Babylon Academy of Magic and Force might not have any impression of him. However, Han Shuo who once did odd jobs within the necromancy major knew of this person's existence.

At that time, Han Shuo and Jack were always in charge of cleaning the statues along the path first thing in the morning. All the outstanding graduates from past years of the academy each had a statue placed along the path. Crowley was impressively one of the numerous statues which Han Shuo had previously cleaned for a period of time.

The time when Crowley was in the dark major was formerly also the dark major's period of glory. Ever since Crowley became a journeyman mage, four consecutive years of the academy's competition between majors had been swept by the dark major's team that was led by Crowley. After Crowley had graduated from the dark major, he very quickly also became a dark archmage. Crowley really had many major achievements before he traveled around the Profound Continent in the past few years.

Merely, too much time has passed. Due to Crowley's fascination in further advancing, his reputation had slowly waned and was gradually forgotten by the people in Lancelot Empire. It even reached the point where some new teachers and students of the dark major had never heard any information about him.

Han Shuo looked at Crowley who had issued him a challenge, recalling the time when he was an errand slave looking up at Crowley's statue. Han Shuo suddenly had an absurd feeling in his heart. Just a while ago, he had actually become such a person's opponent and was even being challenged by him. Han Shuo could feel a sense of pride rising within himself.

It was precisely because of this that Han Shuo had an extremely splendid smile. However, when Crowley saw Han Shuo's splendid smile, Crowley interpreted it as Han Shuo completely looking down on him. Crowley felt

that he was being insulted, holding back the anger in his heart and said, "Count Bryan, what is the meaning of this. Could it be that you feel contempt about my challenge and intend to reject it?"

Smiling as he shook his head, Han Shuo couldn't help but straightened his mind which was imagining wildly. He then sized up Crowley more seriously, hesitating a moment before knitting his brows and said, "You have misunderstood. I was only recalling past events. When I was still an errand servant in the necromancy department, I had previously cleaned your statue. Who would have guessed that today you would issue a challenge to me? Honestly speaking, I feel extremely honored!"

Crowley was astonished and couldn't help but turn his head to look at his old friend in the dark major, Deo, seemingly wanting to seek confirmation from Deo about the matter.

"That's right. A few years ago, as an errand servant, he had previously cleaned the hallway leading to the dark major's building. Ah, when you became a dark grand magus had previously applied with the dean to place your statue there. What is said is correct, he had indeed cleaned your statue before." Deo felt somewhat awkward as he explained but still narrated in full detail to clear Crowley's doubts.

When Crowley heard Deo's explanation and considered that Han Shuo had previously cleaned his statue, he couldn't help but hesitate slightly in his heart and actually didn't really want to challenge Han Shuo anymore. No matter what, Han Shuo had previously shown respect to him. For him to act in this way appeared slightly insincere.

By the side, the dark major's person in charge Deo saw Crowley showing some hesitation, he couldn't help but hastily gave Crowley a meaningful glance before smiling slightly and said to Han Shuo, "Count Bryan, so do you actually plan to accept Crowley's challenge or not?"

"Of course, didn't I just say it a moment ago, I'm extremely honored!" Han Shuo smiled cheerfully as he replied, shooting a glance at Deo. Han Shuo understood what Deo was planning, but he had absolute confidence and wasn't afraid of defeating Crowley here.

“Very good. In that case, I would act as the witness, are both of you agreeable?” Suddenly, Amyes walked over from the light major’s area, gracefully smiling as he suggested.

The light major’s person in charge, Voigtlander had also walked over with Amyes. Voigtlander had a schadenfreude expression as he looked over. Regardless of the dark major’s Crowley or Han Shuo, they were considered the enemy to Voigtlander. For these two sides to battle, he would be enjoying happily no matter who won or lost.

“Crowley, this is Lord Amyes, you should have heard of him!” When Deo saw Amyes turning up uninvited and even made such a suggestion, hastily introducing Amyes to Crowley who had left the Lancelot Empire for a long time.

Previously when Crowley left the Lancelot Empire, Amyes was only a Dark Star envoy of Dark Mantle. Thus, he would naturally not know Amyes. However, when he returned to the Lancelot Empire, he did find out about the current bigwigs in the Lancelot Empire. When he heard Deo’s introduction, he immediately greeted Amyes respectfully, grinning as he said, “Of course. With Lord Amyes witnessing this battle would be for the best.”

“I’m extremely honored as well.” Han Shuo bowed toward Amyes courteously as he replied, causing Amyes to return the greeting once again.

The surrounding teachers and students from the various factions all continuously rushed over. These people have heard of Han Shuo’s great name and seeing that Han Shuo, a recently broken through grand magus necromancer upstart was sparring with a dark grand magus of unknown origin, all of them were indescribably excited.

There weren’t many grand magus ranked characters within Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, with most teachers of the various factions being at adept mage or archmage ranks. As the students would hardly even be able to see teachers sparring with each other, they had definitely not come across a spar between two grand magi and hence were extremely

excited.

“Bryan, all the best, you will definitely win!” Out of a sudden, a familiar voice rang in his ear. Han Shuo turned to take a look, noticing Lisa in a corner of the surrounding waving a fist animatedly to cheer him on.

Han Shuo felt a warmth in his heart, recalling how Lisa had always believed and supported him a long time ago. After all these time, Lisa had matured from an unruly and willful girl, not only appearing more youthful and energetic, she also had an additional unyielding temperament. It seems that the period of time where she suffered pain had also given her benefits.

While Han Shuo gazed at Lisa, he also saw Fanny who was beside Lisa. Fanny didn't have the same unconditional trust that Lisa had in Han Shuo. Instead, her eyes were forever filled with worry. No matter how strong Han Shuo became, as long as there was a trace of danger, she would be worried for Han Shuo.

Admiring the two women's splendid grins, Han Shuo then turned back to face Crowley, courteously inquiring, “How would you like to compete? With my persistent character, those that have battled me opening have never been able to survive.”

Hearing this statement, Crowley was startled, showing an obvious stunned expression. What Crowley knew about Han Shuo's origins and past was based on what Deo had told him. He personally didn't know much about Han Shuo's matters. Now that he heard Han Shuo making such a statement, he suddenly had an uneasy feeling.

“On this point, I can help Bryan elaborate. Including Brut Merchant Alliance's Leah Cain, Bryan had dueled and killed his opponent on thirteen occasions. Right, just to warn Mister Crowley, among those that Bryan has killed include Redbud Knights commander, dragon rider Celt. Hehe, I was afraid you didn't know, hence I'm informing you in advance.” Amyes could see that Crowley was somewhat astonished, figuring out that he perhaps was clear about Han Shuo's past and hence couldn't help but enlighten Crowley.

Hearing Amyes' comments, Crowley was shaken once again, his gaze towards Deo already containing hints of resentment. When Deo saw Crowley looking at him resentfully, he clearly had a guilty conscience, awkwardly turning his head. After hesitating for a moment, Deo suddenly said, "Let's forget about it, hehe, both of you are in fact considered members of our dark major. Let's not compete on such an auspicious day, lest we harm the friendly relations."

When Deo saw Crowley's resentful gaze, as well as heard Amyes' reminder, he finally cleared his mind of his fury. Crowley was invited by the dark major, if he was defeated by Han Shuo, Deo would definitely be reproached and perhaps even the dark major's teachers would push the blame to him after the event.

"Mister Crowley, I feel that we should just let it pass. Hehe, what Mister Deo said is reasonable. Let's not hurt the harmony, both of you are considered to be on the same side!" Amyes smiled gently as he advised Crowley.

"No, I still wish to compare notes with Count Bryan." Under the gaze of the crowd, Crowley had no means of backing down. Hence, he forced himself to insist on competing.

At this moment, a ray of white light radiated in the center and Babylon Academy's Dean Emma appeared. She looked at both Han Shuo and Crowley before smiling and said, "Comparing notes in magic is a common way of improvement among magi. However, as you aren't enemies, there's no need for a life or death duel. Bryan, today's our annual recruitment, you wouldn't be thinking of not giving face to your alma mater right?"

"Of course not, I was just joking. Hehe. In any case, it's just a spar. If Mister Crowley doesn't mind, how about we change our location?" When Han Shuo saw Emma appear, he immediately had a friendly smile on his face and invited Crowley to another location.

Crowley was clearly relieved, forcefully laughing as he replied, "I've left for too long and aren't familiar with this place. Where do you think would be a more suitable location?"

“There’s no need to choose, just use the dark major’s number one practice grounds. There’s a large-scale magic barrier there. It should be fine as long as the both of you pay a little attention, please do not harm the friendly relations.” when Emma saw that Han Shuo wasn’t serious, she felt relieved, smiling as she spoke.

Just like this, Han Shuo and Crowley both agreed. The recruitment was suddenly paused midway and when Han Shuo and Crowley entered the large practice grounds, teachers and students of the various majors had also rushed over.

# Chapter 392: I admit defeat

The dark major's number one practice field was extremely wide. The sparring between Han Shuo and Crowley had attracted numerous teachers and students over to watch. Among them were Amyes and Dean Emma, who were the witnesses for the battle as well as being in charge of ensuring everyone's safety.

There was a barrier deployed within the practice field to prevent the strength of the magic from spreading out. On top of that, Emma personally partitioned a separate small space for the audience to hide in while they watched the battle. The recruitment outside could be considered to have been temporarily ceased.

"Dean, why are you willing to let the two of them duel on such an occasion?" as Amyes and Emma stood together, Amyes who was dressed in a spotless white robe and appearing otherworldly refined, had a smile on his face as he asked Dean Emma.

Emma glanced at Amyes who was just walking out of Babylon Academy of Magic and Force. Previously when Amyes was studying in the light major, Emma was already the teacher in charge of the space major. Emma could also be considered as Amyes senior within Babylon Academy. Hence, Amyes was very respectful toward her.

"During that time, that fellow Crowley was proud and arrogant. I see that he has not really changed even after such a long time and dampening his spirit isn't a bad thing. Besides, Bryan had just become a grand magus necromancer and probably still isn't very adept at controlling some of the new necromancy magic. A spar which doesn't cause disharmony would actually really be beneficial to their progress." Emma benevolently smiled, her face covered with wrinkles as she explained to Amyes.

"In that case, who do you think will win?" Amyes pondered for a while, before inquiring.

"Hehe, I believe you ought to be clearer than me on this?" Emma faintly smiled as she glanced at Amyes, as though implying something.



Amyes chuckled when he heard Emma's response, nodding his head without replying. As one of the heavyweights of Dark Mantle, Amyes knew of Han Shuo's accomplishments in recent days. Through the baptism of blood and fire, Han Shuo, as a necromancer who grasped mysterious techniques, had already done many hidden large-scale moves.

Apart from Redbud Knights' leader dragon rider Celt, Han Shuo had also fought with the Church of Light's Red Archbishop Kosse multiple times. Amyes was also aware of other news. To be able to kill light grand magus Ferguson before becoming a grand magus himself, regardless of how you saw it, Han Shuo had a higher chance of winning.

The reason why Amyes was interested to judge the battle this time around, was simply because he wanted to personally witness Han Shuo's improvement. In fact, Amyes wouldn't be surprised at a victory. Han Shuo beating Crowley was something both Amyes and Emma felt was inevitable.

Members of every faction were full of expectations as they watched the two grand magus in the center. The eyes of necromancy major's Fanny, Lisa and other students were even brighter, their gazes fixed on Han Shuo, wanting to clearly see Han Shuo's every move.

"Within the Lancelot Empire, it isn't that there aren't grand magus necromancers. However, those people were absorbed in exploring magical knowledge and rarely appeared before others. This would perhaps be the only time your generation would be able to watch a grand magus necromancer fight. No matter what, you have to watch attentively."

Although Fanny was worried for Han Shuo, there wasn't much she could say now that things have developed to this point. As an instructor for the necromancy major, Fanny gave instructions to all the students to watch carefully, with Fanny herself also completely focusing her attention on the fight.

"Teacher Fanny, don't worry. We will earnestly watch Bryan's moves." Lisa shouted excitedly, her bright eyes fixed on Han Shuo's figure from the beginning.

“Although it’s just a spar, Mister Crowley shouldn’t hold back. Hehe, I’m a necromancer, if you give me the time to summon undead creatures, I think that would be disadvantageous to you.” Han Shuo smiled calmly as he said to the opposing Crowley who had taken out a green magic staff.

Han Shuo had complete confidence in dealing with Crowley. As his mental strength had once again improved greatly after just returning from the netherworld, Han Shuo’s mental state was unprecedentedly good. Having reached the separate demon realm, Han Shuo could monitor Crowley’s every movement with the assistance of a few mystical demons. The strength and speed of his body were also something Crowley couldn’t compare to. As Han Shuo stably surpassed Crowley in all aspects, he appeared extremely confident.

“In that case, I wouldn’t be polite. Count Bryan, please be careful.” Crowley, who had learned of Han Shuo’s prowess from Deo and Amyes just before entering the practice field, did not underestimate him because of his age. He instead regarded Han Shuo as the strongest opponent in his whole life. Once Crowley, who did not dare relax the slightest, finished speaking, the magic staff in his hand started emitting grayish-brown light following his incantation. The dark elements within the practice field suddenly seemed to enliven like elves. As Crowley slowly chanted his magic spell, six huge Hands of Death suddenly formed around Han Shuo, fiercely crushing down toward Han Shuo.

The grand magus ranked Crowley was indeed outstanding, already using the mighty Hands of Death as his first move. Furthermore, he was able to form six at once, clearly treating Han Shuo as his life’s most formidable opponent.

The six Hands of Death were much more lifelike than what Emily had used. The six gigantic Hands of Death even had fine veined patterns on their palms, as though really belonging to some dark world’s creature. The coarse and long fingers also had sharp hook-like fingernails, appearing extremely terrifying.

It could be seen that Crowley was extremely cautious and didn’t immediately attack Han Shuo violently. He simply nimbly manipulated six

Hands of Death to gradually approach Han Shuo. In this way, he would slowly cause terrifying pressure to Han Shuo yet still abiding by the principles of a spar.

When Han Shuo saw the six Hands of Death uniformly pressing on, he understood that Crowley really did not intend to gun for his life and was really in accordance with Emma's words to purely spar. This caused Han Shuo who was prepared to deal with sudden changes to have a favorable impression of Crowley.

Taking out his white bone staff, Han Shuo recited the incantation for the Soul Vortex necromancy magic. Out of a sudden, hundreds of wraiths appeared, revolving rapidly in the void in front of Han Shuo, forming a vortex that sucked up the surrounding magic elements. The six Hands of Death that were slowly pressing toward Han Shuo suddenly felt the intense force of attraction generated by the Soul Vortex, one after another involuntarily being sucked toward the Soul Vortex in front of Han Shuo.

'Soul Vortex' was a grand magus ranked necromancy magic that Han Shuo had just mastered. This necromancy magic utilized the power of wraiths. In the netherworld, a single wraith's strength was next to nothing. However, by controlling hundreds of wraiths with his mental energy and forming 'Soul Tremor' according to necromancy laws, Han Shuo was able to generate enormous might.

Against those peculiar magic that contained magic elements, this 'Soul Vortex' was able to create an intense suction force, pulling these magic attacks into the vortex and using the numerous wraiths to grind them away little by little. Furthermore, if creatures with souls were sucked into the 'Soul Vortex', the numerous wraiths could directly bind the creature's soul and dragging it from the Profound Continent into the netherworld.

For all living creatures in this world, once they were dragged to the netherworld, their soul would never find the way to return. To the people in the Profound Continent, creatures who were dragged into the netherworld can be considered as dead.

After the 'Soul Vortex' was formed, Han Shuo's silk-like mental energy

entered the spell, assisting the revolving of the wraiths and vortex. The strength of the suction force gradually increased after the insertion of Han Shuo's mental energy and the revolving of the vortex. The six Hands of Death which were slowly pressing towards Han Shuo suddenly became extremely heavy, as though becoming a stream flowing into the ocean, slowly entering the 'Soul Vortex'.

Crowley and Han Shuo were separated by a big distance, hence Crowley wasn't affected by the pull of the 'Soul Vortex'. Furthermore, the suction force formed by the 'Soul Vortex' was only effective toward attacks formed from magic elements and living creatures possessing souls. It wasn't effective toward ordinary objects and physical attacks.

When Crowley saw the six Hands of Death actually being absorbed completely, his expression became even heavier. He understood in his heart that Han Shuo's grand magus necromancer strength was indeed extremely formidable. The disappearance of the six Hands of Death caused Crowley to be fearful and simultaneously become even more cautious.

Following his reciting of another spell, the green magic staff in his hand started slowly emitting gloomy light again. When Crowley finished reciting his spell, he pointed the green magic staff at Han Shuo, causing a mysterious contract to suddenly form between himself and Han Shuo.

Dense dark elements suddenly condensed together, violently crowding into the space surrounding Han Shuo. Han Shuo's body suddenly tense and was actually unable to move. Not only his limbs were bound, even his mouth seemed to be covered, the dark elements were like a rope, slowly constricting around Han Shuo.

'Prison of Darkness' was an advanced dark magic, utilizing one's mental energy to gather the dark element and form a contract with the enemy and firmly imprisoning the enemy, causing the enemy to be unable to move his body.

In just a sudden, apart from his mental energy and demonic yuan energy that could still be circulated, Han Shuo's physical body had been firmly

bound by the dark elements. During this process, Crowley waved his green magic staff once again and five Spheres of Destruction slowly formed and approached Han Shuo.

Crowley had a slightly pleased expression. This was his most proficient and most confident magic. Han Shuo had just advanced to become a grand magus necromancer, hence his mental strength definitely shouldn't be as resilient as his own. 'Prison of Darkness' was actually just a contest of mental strength. For a high ranked dark grand magus like Crowley, he could use 'Prison of Darkness' to completely imprison magi who had lower mental strength than himself, causing them to be unable to move.

He had specifically focused on this weak point of Han Shuo just advancing to become a grand magus necromancer, believing that Han Shuo's mental strength was definitely not as abundant as his own. This was why he had suddenly unleashed the 'Prison of Darkness'. When Han Shuo was restricted by 'Prison of Darkness' Crowley felt pleased with himself, thinking his heart that such a prominent figure was actually restricted by the 'Prison of Darkness'.

Emma and Amyes who were by the side both watched him attentively. Adding that Crowley had only wanted to make use of Han Shuo to become famous, he would definitely not plan to kill Han Shuo. Thus, when the deadly Spheres of Destruction were formed, Crowley did not immediately launch them at Han Shuo and had slowly sent them toward Han Shuo instead.

"Count Bryan, you've lost. Concede before the Sphere of Destruction hits you!" Crowley had a confident expression, smiling as he looked at the motionless Han Shuo.

Hearing this sentence, the surrounding spectators were in an uproar, evidently not foreseeing such a situation to happen. Those necromancy students that had joined due to Han Shuo's reputation all showed doubtful, hesitating expressions. Lisa upon seeing their expressions suddenly shouted angrily, "You brats, what kind of expression is that. How could Bryan lose to such an old fellow."

Lisa's fiend-like appearance actually intimidated the new students, causing them to involuntarily turn their heads and not dare to look at the fiery Lisa, so as to avoid Lisa unleashing her anger on them.

"Hehe, Crowley is indeed Crowley. Once he spotted the weakness in the brat's mental strength, he used the 'Prison of Darkness' to restrict him before he could summon any undead creatures. Who would have thought, it seems like Crowley is really going to win!" Dark major's teacher-in-charge Deo couldn't repress his happiness, his voice sounding happier than usual as he explained to the surrounding dark major's instructors and students.

Contrariwise, Dean Emma and Amyes both had calm expressions, as though not at all anxious for Han Shuo and instead gazed amusingly at Han Shuo, wanting to see how Han Shuo responded.

Having absorbed a serene luster gem, Han Shuo's mental strength wasn't weaker than Crowley's. However, Han Shuo did not use his mental strength to resist Crowley and instead incited his demonic yuan energy to strengthen his body once again. When Han Shuo suddenly struggled, a sharp and clear "Pa" sounded.

"That doesn't seem likely!" Han Shuo smiled as he replied. The 'Prison of Darkness' had been broken and he waved the white bone staff, shooting out rows of bone spears, smashing apart the five Spheres of Destruction that had yet to reach his body. He then summoned an old fey demon to charge toward Crowley, before summoning a few evil knights and an undead army to emerge.

"Crowley lost!" Emma smiled as she said, before looking at Amyes and asked, "However, how did Bryan break Crowley's 'Prison of Darkness'? I did not detect any fluctuation in his mental energy. Hehe, Amyes, did you notice how he did it?"

Amyes shrugged his shoulders as he replied gracefully, "Even the Dean did not see it clearly, how could I have figured it out. Hehe, however, Bryan has always been following Lord Candide. I believe based on your relationship with Lord Candide, you ought to be more familiar regarding

Bryan's situation."

Amyes had previously focused his attention on Han Shuo, precisely to see how he reacted. He had never doubted Han Shuo's victory because as a character who could defeat Celt as well as Red Archbishop Kosse, Han Shuo was definitely not someone Crowley could defeat.

Merely, what surprised Amyes was that even with his complete attention, he did not decipher how Han Shuo had achieved victory. However, the only thing Amyes could confirm was that Han Shuo really did not utilize mental energy!

Right, it must definitely be that mysterious martial technique. This fellow could already unleash such strength just by using his martial technique. With his strength as a grand magus necromancer in addition to that, it seems that Lancelot Empire would really be his to control in the future. To have such a mysterious martial technique, who exactly is his master? Why have i not heard of him and have also not been able to find out? This is indeed too strange. Amyes thought silently as he gazed at Han Shuo.

"Did you see that, did all you fools see that?" Lisa was ecstatic, shouting at the youngsters, cheering after Han Shuo easily neutralized the Prison of Darkness.

When Han Shuo summoned his undead creatures, these youngsters had all cried out in surprise. Some of the youngsters were incomparably excited as they saw the sinister dark creatures, shouting to their companions, "Look at that, that's called an evil knight. It's as powerful as a human earth knight but its physical body is even harder."

The girls were somewhat instinctively fearful of these fierce undead creatures. However, with the explanation of these youngsters, they became extremely inquisitive. In particular, Lisa's shouting had allowed them to relax and start to timidly size up these undead creatures.

From the moment Han Shuo opened his mouth to speak, Crowley knew that he had lost. When he saw the enormous undead army appear, Crowley had thoroughly lost confidence in achieving victory.

In the Profound Continent, the bane of necromancers are light magi. Apart from them, in duels between magi of the same rank, once numerous undead creatures appear, it would essentially signify the necromancer's victory. For instance, just the old fey demon that had appeared this time was enough to cause a headache for Crowley. Adding on the numerous undead creatures, apart from rapidly purifying them with light magic, magi of other majors would appear to be out of options.

Sure enough, even before the old fey demon had reached Crowley, Crowley sighed dejectedly, putting down the green magic staff in his hand and shouted loudly, "Count Bryan, I admit defeat!"



# Chapter 393: Being a role model

At this moment, the old fey demon and its thick sharp claws had already charged before Crowley. Hearing Crowley's declaration, Han Shuo gave orders with a thought. All the undead creatures froze in a flash, displaying Han Shuo's extraordinary manipulation ability to the extreme.

Although Crowley was conceited and vain, he still abided by the rules during the sparring. When he felt that he was able to beat Han Shuo comfortably, he still didn't increase the speed of the Spheres of Destruction to attack Han Shuo. This caused Han Shuo to have a good impression of him and thus when Han Shuo saw him admitting defeat, Han Shuo immediately made the undead creatures cease their attack.

When Crowley was flustered as he looked at the old fey demon in front of him, all the undead creatures from the surroundings suddenly disappeared following Han Shuo's long incantation. Only when the old fey demon that was the first to appear in front of him also suddenly disappeared did Crowley truly loosen his breath.

"Mister Crowley, your strength is extremely profound. I believe that most grand magi would not be your match. If Mister Crowley is interested, I can help to recommend you to Third Prince Lawrence, there's no harm in considering it." after sending all the undead creatures back to the netherworld, Han Shuo had gone over to the side of dark grand magus Crowley, commenting in a low voice.

Crowley's strength was truly remarkable. There weren't many magi who could become grand magus in the Lancelot Empire and all of them possessed lofty positions. Since Crowley had returned from travel across various countries, he would surely wish to have an illustrious status within the empire. Such a character was a target that every power would pursue. This was the same for Lawrence as well, hence Han Shuo invited him on behalf of Lawrence.

Crowley clearly understood a little of Lancelot Empire's current situation and couldn't help but show an uncomfortable expression. As His

Majesty's illegitimate child, Lawrence was the least supported successor. If Crowley followed Lawrence, he simply wouldn't know if he would suffer a calamity after the successor has been chosen.

"Mister Crowley, I know what you are apprehensive about. However, some matters aren't determined by external rumors. Hehe, you give Lawrence some time which can also be considered giving yourself some time. You can decide again on which power you choose after a few days." When Han Shuo saw that Crowley didn't respond, he smiled and elaborated further.

"Alright, on account of Count Bryan's honor, I'll consider for a few more days." Crowley could tell that there were hidden meanings within Han Shuo's sentence and thus hesitated a while before replying.

Han Shuo nodded his head, smiling as he replied, "In the future, you will definitely be proud of your decision today!"

Han Shuo directly departed the practice field without explaining further, not showing any reaction to the crowd's shock and the necromancy students' cheers. He first nodded his head toward Amyes and Dean Emma from afar to send his regards, before heading toward Fanny's group of necromancy major student, smiling as he said, "Teacher Fanny, the recruitment can continue."

When Fanny saw Han Shuo heading over with his eyes on her from beginning to end, she felt shy yet delighted, hurriedly saying, "Let's go, everyone shouldn't stay here anymore. Let's continue with our unfinished matters."

When Han Shuo and Fanny left the area together, Amyes's gaze was continuously fixed on Han Shuo's movement. Only after Han Shuo disappeared from the practice field did he mumble softly to himself while seeming to be thinking about something, "That youngster is still a Casanova. That female teacher, why does it seem like I've seen her before somewhere..."

Dean Emma glanced at Amyes who seemed to be deep in thought and felt somewhat amazed. Who knew that Amyes' gaze was that sharp,

appearing to recall something just by taking a glimpse at Fanny. This caused Emma to be shocked, thinking inwardly that as one of the three heavyweights, just like Candide, Amyes really can't be belittled.

"Alright, this matter has already ended, I'll also take my leave. Hehe, Amyes do take a good walk around, it seems like you haven't returned to your alma mater for a long time." Seeing Amyes having an expression of deep thought, Emma suddenly spoke, as though not wanting him to realize Fanny's identity that quickly.

As one of the three heavyweights of the Empire's Dark Mantle, Amyes knew the secret matters of each noble at the back of his hand, even Firenze at the southern border of the empire was no exception. Having browsed over numerous materials, Amyes had once seen information pertaining to Firenze's family. However, Fanny was much younger at that time and Amyes only saw a few pictures at that time. For him to be able to feel that someone was familiar just based on pictures he saw a few years ago, his memory is already extremely astonishing.

Amyes who was pondering deeply had his thoughts broken by Emma's words. He didn't continue contemplating and instead smiled gracefully and replied, "Dean, go ahead to handle your matters, I'll just walk around casually and will be leaving soon."

Emma smiled and nodded, a streak of white light flashed as she disappeared. After Emma left, Amyes couldn't help but glance at Crowley who had just walked out of the practice field. He suddenly said, "Mister Crowley, it's best if you carefully consider what Marquis Bryan had just said. Hehe, as a schoolmate, I hope that you would make the right choice."

"Mar... Marquis?" Crowley who was currently sampling the bitter taste of defeat raised his head and say that the one who spoke was Amyes. Thinking over what Amyes had just said, he couldn't help but become suspicious.

"Yes, Marquis Bryan! Just today, His Majesty has already officially conferred Bryan as Marquis. The various cities and towns surrounding Brettel City, including a few bandit areas that he occupied, would be

Marquis Bryan's territory. Besides, I'm afraid that no one amongst equally ranked grand magi would be able to defeat him. For you to lose to him isn't something shameful, you shouldn't mind too much about it. Instead, you should properly think about what he said to you previously. I've said my piece, it's up to you if you listen!" Amyes smiled as he explained, before leaving with two swordmasters, not waiting for Crowley's response.

"Marquis, he's actually already a Marquis!" Crowley muttered to himself, before his eyes slowly brightened, saying to himself softly, "That Amyes is His Majesty's Hand of Darkness and surely knows of certain matters. It looks like in this trip back to school, it appears that apart from being defeated, I still gained something. I must definitely consider things properly."

While Crowley was still deliberating which power he should join, Han Shuo and Fanny's group had already reached the necromancy major's area. With Han Shuo overseeing the necromancy major, the recruitment of the necromancy major was incomparably smooth. In the end, there were actually more than fifty students joining the necromancy major. Amongst them, there were more than ten who had excellent mental strength, greatly surpassing the other majors.

"Haha, this is great. According to our academy's regulations, as long as the number of students in a major exceeds a hundred, the major can become a completely independent and self-sufficient major. Teacher Fanny, our current enrollment has a hundred and thirty-two people and can clearly apply to the dean to be independent of the dark major." after tidying up all the documents, Gene couldn't help but laugh heartily.

When she heard Gene's statement, Fanny was also delighted, smiling as she said, "That's right. Our necromancy major can now become completely independent and no longer be part of the dark major. That shouldn't be a problem!"

"Awesome, I have long since had enough of the faces of those fellows in the dark major. In the future, we no longer need to mix with them. Our necromancy major would just be the necromancy major, no longer a branch of another major." Lisa was extremely excited as she shouted

loudly.

Lisa's voice was extremely loud, transmitting into the distance. The dark major wasn't far from the necromancy major and the dark major's teacher-in-charge Deo clearly heard Lisa's deliberate shout. However, Han Shuo was currently with the necromancy major, and Crowley had just been defeated by Han Shuo. Furthermore, Deo found out from Crowley that Han Shuo had already become a Marquis. This made Deo even more fearful of provoking Han Shuo. Although he was extremely unhappy, he didn't dare to respond.

Amidst the cheers from everyone in the necromancy major, the two instructors, Fanny and Gene led the newly accepted students to the necromancy major to handle the relevant procedures. When they reached the necromancy major's area, Gene took charge of matters, while Han Shuo followed Fanny, talking a little about the essence of necromancy magic in the necromancy major's practice field, as well as helping to clear some of the problematic doubts of the students.

Having studied necromancy magic to the rank of grand magus necromancer, Han Shuo's theoretical and practical knowledge both greatly surpassed Fanny. His comprehension of necromancy magic was much higher as well. Many questions that Gene and Fanny couldn't explain became easy when they reached Han Shuo.

Afterwards, even Gene who had finished handling matters had come over. After hesitating a while, Gene also asked Han Shuo about a few questions he usually came across. The necromancy major had a harmonious atmosphere, with Han Shuo's existence bringing hope to both the necromancy major's new and existing students.

It seemed that from this moment onward, the necromancy major who had always had a small and weak image no longer existed. With Han Shuo's astronomical rise within the Empire's ranks, the necromancy major also rose in tandem within Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, gradually having its own sense of proportion, breaking away from the longstanding dependent relationship with the dark major.

Only when the sky had gradually darkened did everyone disperse at Fanny and Gene's instructions. Toward the end when even Gene had left, Lisa hesitated a moment, staring at Han Shuo as she asked, "Bryan if I want to look for you, can I find you at your residence?"

"Of course. If you are free, you can come over to look for me anytime. Hehe, of course, I wouldn't be in my residence most of the time. If you are unable to find me, please don't blame me." Han Shuo smiled as he replied.

"Hee hee, as long as you agree. Alright, I'll leave first. Teacher Fanny, Bryan is extremely popular nowadays, you need to watch him closely!" Lisa smiled happily before winking toward Fanny, pulling a funny face before leaving.

After Lisa had left, Fanny's charming face was flushed. She gazed at Han Shuo affectionately and said, "Bryan, thank you. I didn't think you would come by today."

"I just happen to be free and no matter what I have to give you face. Right, if you really want to thank me, you shouldn't simply use words. I generally prefer people to express themselves through their actions." Han Shuo laughed deviously, beaming at Fanny as he replied.

Fanny resentfully rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, before hesitating a moment and whispered, "In that case, how do you want me to show my thanks?"

Out of a sudden, Han Shuo had already appeared in front of Fanny, lowering his head as he looked at Fanny whose blush had spread to her neck, extending a finger and pointed at his lips, chuckling as he said, "Take the initiative to kiss me once, that can be considered expressing your thanks!"

"You, you brat. You have already become a high-ranked noble, why have you still not changed your lewd heart!" Fanny blushed, unable to resist beating Han Shuo's chest with her fist as she pouted playfully.

"Come on, who asked Teacher to be so beautiful and alluring. Hehe, my soul has already been hooked by you. If I don't flirt with you, who should I flirt with!" Han Shuo frivolously moved his lips toward Fanny,

continuously pestering Fanny.

Fanny's present mood was unprecedentedly good and besides, she also truly liked Han Shuo. After acting coy for a while, she was eventually still unable to resist Han Shuo, blushing as she superficially kissed Han Shuo's lips.

However, when Fanny shifted away, she was embraced by Han Shuo, who forcefully kissed her. Out of Han Shuo's expectations, Fanny responded ardently soon after, giving Han Shuo a carefree, uninhibited and breathtaking feeling. Overwhelmed by Fanny's response, Han Shuo's hands started moving dishonestly again, wandering around Fanny's beautiful body.

Only when Fanny was kissed till she was out of breath and her body was incomparably fervent did she moan softly as she pushed Han Shuo away to gasp for breath. Still blushing, she moved further away from Han Shuo, calming her rapidly heaving plump peaks. She then said tenderly, "Bryan, my father will reach Ossen City soon. If you don't meet him this time around, he said that he would lead his troops to attack Brettel City!"

Hearing this, Han Shuo suddenly sobered, as though a bucket of cold water had been poured on him. He knitted his brows and forced a smile as he asked Fanny, "You've told your father my identity?"

Nodding her head, Fanny hastily explained, "He has constantly asked and even investigated. I only told him when I knew that we would definitely be unable to conceal it any longer. Furthermore, you might not know my father's identity. You shouldn't be under the impression that he is joking. My father is different from other people, he is capable of doing anything."

"I know, your father is the true lord in the eyes of the people at the southern border, Howling Legion's Firenze?" Han Shuo took a deep breath before looking at Fanny and replied.

"How, how did you find out? When did you find out about this?" Fanny was shocked as she lightly cried out.

"A few days ago. When I had just returned from Brettel City, Dean

Emma told me when I came to look for you.” Han Shuo honestly explained to Fanny, before replying reluctantly, “Alright, when your father arrives, I’ll go with you to meet him.”

Han Shuo knew that since Firenze was clear about his origin as well as his relationship with Fanny, Han Shuo could forget about avoiding him. Presently, Han Shuo was already hard pressed by Emily and Phoebe. He didn’t know what the two of them were talking about and even now, they still haven’t come out of the room. Adding in Fanny into the equation, once the three of them know about each other, he wasn’t sure what problems might arise.

Emily was Betteridge Family’s daughter-in-law, her older brother was one of the three heavyweights, Amyes. Behind Phoebe was sacred swordsman Karel, while Fanny’s father, Firenze was a well-known madman, known to be someone you wouldn’t want to provoke. Han Shuo had a headache thinking about what he had to endure once the matter was thoroughly exposed

“Don’t worry, my father treats me the best. He wouldn’t do anything to you. Furthermore, you might just be the type my father likes. Hehe, there’s no need for you to worry.” Fanny thought that Han Shuo was worried about her father, thus she couldn’t help but laugh as she explained.

Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he nodded, before saying, “Alright, I understand. It’s already quite late, I have to leave.”

“Ok, I’ll send you off.” When Fanny knew that Han Shuo agreed to meet her father, her mood clearly improved. She cheerfully walked toward Han Shuo, blushing as she tiptoed and gently kissed Han Shuo’s cheek, before pulling the infatuated Han Shuo along as she said, “Let’s go, I’ll walk you out.”

Han Shuo who had just been kissed by Fanny suddenly made up his mind. No matter what happened in the future, as long as Fanny was willing to be with him, no matter Firenze, sacred swordmaster Karel or Amyes, no one should think of meddling in his affairs. If a peaceful solution couldn’t be found, he wouldn’t hesitate in using force to resolve



matters.

Han Shuo steeled his heart and was no longer agonized, deciding to just deal with matters as they arose. He talked and laughed with Fanny as they walked out of the academy.

“Alright, I’ll take my leave.” Han Shuo turned around and smiled at Fanny, before heading back to his own residence.

After Han Shuo left, Fanny returned to the necromancy major alone. Along the way, Amyes just happened to be leaving and coincidentally saw Fanny. When Amyes saw Fanny once again, the sense of familiarity became stronger. He knitted his brows as he watched Fanny disappear into the distance. After a moment of serious thinking, Amyes suddenly started, muttering softly, “Could it truly be that lunatic’s daughter!”

“Lord, what’s wrong!” one of the swordmasters next to Amyes inquired.

“No, nothing’s wrong. Come, let’s quickly return to the Dark Mantle, I’ve some matters to investigate.” Amyes answered, suddenly hastening his steps.

# Chapter 394: Han Shuo's promise

After leaving Babylon Academy of Magic and Force, Han Shuo had originally decided to return to his residence. However, he discovered through his mystical demon that Emily and Phoebe were walking out of her room.

Contrary to Han Shuo's expectations, Emily's eyes were red, as though she cried. Phoebe, who originally came to admonish Emily was not as overbearing as he had imagined and was instead repeatedly persuading Emily.

Holding each other's hands, their friendship had deepened since the time when they were in the Valley of Sunshine. Emily's eyes were red as she continuously took tissues to wipe the corners of her eyes, her miserable appearance causing others to feel pity for her. Phoebe gently supported Emily as she sighed, "Elder sister, I was rude. I didn't know your life had been like this."

"Let it pass Phoebe, it's already hard for you to be able to forgive me. I am indeed at fault regarding this matter. An unexpected combination of factors just so happened to occur. Ai..." Emily gently wiped the corner of her eyes as she confided in Phoebe.

"Alright, alright. We've almost reached your doorstep, you should head back in and not let others see you in this state. It's all that guy's fault, not yours. I'll settle scores with him and shouldn't have caused trouble for you." Phoebe persuaded Emily, stubbornly urging her to return to her room.

"Phoebe, thank you. You are a good woman, no wonder he likes you so much." After entering her room, Emily held Phoebe's hand and said sincerely.

"Haiz, I wouldn't have expected that Sister's life was worse than mine. I had always thought that as a daughter-in-law of Betteridge Family and also having a brother who wields great authority, your life was surely more blessed than mine. Let's forget it, I will be leaving first. It's already quite

late, you should get some rest.” After she finished speaking, Phoebe released Emily’s hands from her grasp and departed from Emily’s residence.

Han Shuo had heard the whole conversation through his mystical demon, causing him to momentarily feel puzzled. He had originally believed that even if both of them did not cause a ruckus, they would be ridiculing and abusing each other. Who would have thought that the matter would turn out in this way?

Altering his direction, Han Shuo headed towards Betteridge Family. Emily who had just wept precisely needed his comfort at this moment. No matter the situation, Han Shuo did not wish for Emily to be hurt. Having made this decision in his heart, he hastened over.

Having been busy in Babylon Academy of Magic and Force for a long time, the sky had already darkened when Han Shuo left. There were currently very few people on the streets as the night quietly descended. Han Shuo was like a demon in the night, drifting silently across the empty streets toward the Betteridge Family.

Han Shuo did not bother about Phoebe who had left on a carriage, only dispatching a mystical demon to observe and ensure her safety. He had observed during the conversation between the two girls that Phoebe’s emotions seemed to be in check and there shouldn’t be any problems. Currently, only the red-eyed Emily required his comfort. Hence Han Shuo was naturally able to distinguish who he should prioritize.

Although the security of the Betteridge Family was tight, it meant nothing to Han Shuo who had the mystical demons. He easily avoided the guards and silently arrived in front of Emily’s room.

Emily’s magic barrier was still active around her room, hence Han Shuo did not force his way in, for fear of Emily’s erroneous retaliation. Instead, he gently knocked on the door.

“Who’s that!” Emily asked as she slowly headed toward the door.

“It’s me!” Han Shuo said softly.

Emily hastened her steps and arrived at the door within a breath. Upon opening the door, Emily saw that it was indeed Han Shuo and her red eyes suddenly brightened. Looking around to ensure that there was no one around, she then pulled him into the room.

“Why are you here? This is the Betteridge Family, what would happen if you were seen?” After pulling Han Shuo in, Emily hurriedly closed the door and set up a soundproof barrier before questioning him.

“I was worried about you.” Han Shuo suddenly embraced Emily tightly as he replied tenderly.

“I am alright. Phoebe had just left, did you see her?” Being held tightly by Han Shuo, Emily felt her heart calm down and asked softly.

“No, after she found out about this matter today, I was afraid that she would make a scene. Hence I did not head over as well. However, I was keeping an eye on the situation the whole time. Did Phoebe do anything to you? You, you cried?” Han Shuo’s heart ached as he stretched his hand over to stroke the corners of Emily’s eyes as he replied tenderly.

“Hehe, it’s enough for me as long as I know you are worried about me. Phoebe is a good girl, she did not come over to cause a scene. Instead, we bared our hearts to each other and talked. Phoebe even consoled me constantly. You have a good eye for women.” Feeling Han Shuo’s tenderness, she suddenly felt that all her previous sufferings were worth it.

Han Shuo did not speak anymore and instead embraced Emily and gave her a kiss. At this moment, what Emily needed was precisely Han Shuo’s comfort. She couldn’t help but respond enthusiastically, even taking the initiative to help Han Shuo undress. As they kissed intensely, she led Han Shuo to her inner chamber.

Han Shuo could feel Emily’s fiery passion. With thoughts of atonement, Han Shuo was more deliberate in pleasing her. His large hands started wandering around Emily’s body tenderly while his lips were continuously joined with hers. When Emily was out of breath, he whispered sweet nothings into her ears instead.

“Bryan. Oh... Bryan...” Emily moaned softly, appearing extremely

aroused.

While Han Shuo's large hands were fondling Emily's round, satiny bum, Emily had already spontaneously assisted in stripping off her clothes completely. She suddenly fell backward onto her soft pink colored bed, displaying her naked body to Han Shuo. Her almond eyes gazed longingly at Han Shuo, gasping as she said softly, "Bryan, I don't need you to be gentle, be rougher with me!"

Han Shuo was startled for a moment, but soon after he growled as he pounced toward Emily. Discarding all notions of being gentle, he instead treated Emily violently.

The Emily today was wilder than ever before, intensely pandering to Han Shuo till the point where her delicate body could no longer withstand Han Shuo's tempestuous priapic assault. In the end, she fell asleep immediately, devoid of any trace of energy in her body.

As Han Shuo gazed at Emily as she slept in the wake of their pleasure, having been utterly wrung out, he suddenly felt a sense of guilt. Emily was actually his first woman. He had raped her at the beginning and he had only viewed her as a tool to satiate his lust for the longest time.

Only following Emily's silent efforts toward Han Shuo, did he gradually developed feelings for her. However, due to her unique identity, he was unable to give her a proper status. In principle, Phoebe should actually be the one that he should denounce. Emily, who had become his woman while bearing an unusual identity was the real victim.

Ever since Emily and Han Shuo got together, she had always considered his needs and gave her all in doing things for him. As he gazed at the woman fast asleep in front of him, Han Shuo started unwittingly reminiscing about the past. The more he recalled past events between the two of them, the guiltier he felt.

"Ai, I owe you too much, it has been hard on you." Han Shuo sighed, muttering to himself as he gently caressed Emily's face.

"Everything was by my own will, I have never blamed you. Besides, I know you treat me well, there's nothing to feel guilty about." The side of

Emily's lips suddenly curled into a blissful smile, as she opened her eyes after finishing her sentence.

"Oh? Why have you woken up so quickly and not sleep a while more?" Seeing Emily awaken, Han Shuo couldn't help but knit his brows as he gently chided her.

"It's alright. After having sex with you, I could feel the mysterious energy you left within me. This energy has helped me improve my body, which is why I could recover so quickly. Bryan, everything was really of my own will. I know that your heart actually aches for me, but so long as you love me, I don't hope for anything else. After all, my identity has been fixed." Emily stretched out her hand to caress Han Shuo's firm face, smiling as she spoke softly.

"You will definitely get a formal status soon. I swear that I will give it to you, this is something you deserve!" Han Shuo looked at Emily who had done much for him and promised resolutely.

"Bryan, do you want to know what is Phoebe's stance regarding our relationship?" Emily had a joyous expression, kissing his chest before smiling as she asked.

"No matter what Phoebe's stance is, it will not affect our relationship. Even if she firmly disagrees, it wouldn't change a thing. Don't worry, I will talk to Phoebe about this." Han Shuo promised once again, determined to not let Emily suffer any grievances.

"Gege, your words really made me happy!" Emily chuckled and continued, "In any case, Phoebe agreed!"

# Chapter 395: Entering the sect

“Agreed? What did she agree to?” Han Shuo stared blankly and asked suspiciously.

“Naturally it’s agreeing to our matter!” Emily explained cheerfully, “I told Phoebe everything regarding our relationship, emphasizing that due to my identity, we can’t reveal our relationship. I also shared how my husband had suddenly died on the battlefield soon after I entered Betteridge Family. After hearing me out, Phoebe even advised me for quite a while!”

Han Shuo was amazed, suddenly feeling that Phoebe was really fair and reasonable. On the other hand, Emily was also extremely intelligent to be able to be apart of Dark Mantle for so long. Making Phoebe approve of her identity with a few words was enough to prove that Emily’s ability.

Hearing Emily’s words, Han Shuo finally relaxed. He smiled as he gave her a light kiss before saying, “Emily, you are really capable.”

“Alright, alright. Enough of your honeyed words.” Emily happily pushed Han Shuo before saying, “It’s already quite late, you shouldn’t stay here. I still need to go over and send my regards to Father.”

Hearing Emily mention the Betteridge Family head Mister Hahn, Han Shuo thought for a moment before asking, “Which prince does Mister Hahn support?”

“I don’t know, perhaps it is because Father has retired from the military for too long. When the empire was in turmoil, Father was not part of the empire’s government and neither has he mentioned the matters between the princes to me.” Hearing Han Shuo bring up official matters, Emily knitted her brows as she answered. Being silent for a moment, Han Shuo then replied, “If Mister Hahn mentions this matter, or has plans to support a certain prince, you should urge him to not act impulsively this few days, so as to not lead the Betteridge Family down the wrong path.”

Emily was shocked, asking astoundedly, “Why would you say this?”

“Everyone doesn’t think highly of Lawrence. However, if nothing

unexpected happens, the next king would be Lawrence. These few days, you should quietly observe from the side. I reckon that His Majesty would make major decisions very soon.” After discussing terms with King Uhtred, he understood that Lawrence’s situation would change drastically. Hence, he reminded Emily.

“Are you sure your information is accurate?” Emily clearly understood the gravity of this information, having a serious expression as she asked Han Shuo.

Han Shuo nodded his head affirmatively and said, “I went to the palace today and heard this from the king himself. It’s definitely true.”

“In that case, I must share this news with my father and brother immediately. In addition, there are a few other friends who are still observing the situation, I must remind them before it’s too late.” Upon hearing Han Shuo’s words, Emily already started wearing her clothes, carrying a worried expression.

As this matter concerned all nobles of Lancelot Empire, every noble must take a side in this matter. If they chose the wrong side, their family might suffer a decline. Therefore, they must act with caution.

Han Shuo could understand Emily’s anxiety. He stood up and gently helped her put on her silk dress, helped her straighten her disheveled hair and even applied rouge amidst her blissful smile before saying, “Alright, be careful on your way.”

Emily obediently waited for Han Shuo to finish helping her before happily giving him a kiss. She said with a smile, “I know, you shouldn’t stay here for too long. We are in the Betteridge Family residence.”

“I will leave now.” Han Shuo smiled. After sorting his clothes and watching Emily leave to find Hahns, he left silently as well.

Upon entering his residence, Han Shuo felt the heavy killing intent from Bollands. With a glance, he saw Bollands hiding in the shadows.

“Lord Marquis!” Han Shuo hadn’t even entered his room when Bollands suddenly shouted in a low voice and walked out from the shadows.



There were no strong guards within Han Shuo's residence. Apart from Han Shuo, there was no one else within the residence that he would be worried about. Therefore he did not lay down any formations. After all, an expert like Bolland would not be seen by normal people.

Bolland was dressed in long gray robes, had a malevolent face and was shrouded with dense killing intent. Any normal person who saw him would definitely be filled with fear. "Let's talk inside!" Han Shuo glanced at Bolland, smiling before entering his room with Bolland following behind.

Inside the room, Han Shuo surveyed the area through his mystical demons. He saw that there were no suspicious individuals in the surroundings. Phoebe had also returned to the Merchant Guild after being unable to meet Han Shuo.

Sitting down, Han Shuo smiled at Bolland and asked, "So what is your decision?"

Bolland had an excited expression as he nodded his head and answered, "I would like to learn your martial technique. Lord Karel has already agreed, but he wants to meet you in person."

Han Shuo wasn't shocked. In this world, only Han Shuo could give Bolland what he needed, with Bolland's degree of obsession with this martial technique, he would definitely agree. What Han Shuo did not understand was why Karel Ascot would want to see him.

Staring blankly for a moment, Han Shuo frowned as he asked, "Why does Mister Karel want to see me?"

Bolland answered while shaking his head, "I'm not sure."

"I see." Han Shuo muttered to himself before asking, "When does he want to see me? Where should I look for him?"

"If you have the time, my Lord wants me to bring you to see him." Bolland respectfully answered.

"In that case, how about I go meet him immediately. Oh, it is late already. Would Lord Karel already be resting?" Han Shuo originally

wanted to meet him immediately, but thinking further, he corrected himself.

“It’s alright, my lord usually rests very late. If you are free, we can leave now.” Bollands answered.

“Alright then, let’s leave now.” Han Shuo coolly said before heading with Bollands in the direction of the northern Rose Garden.

Under the serene glow of moonlight, Han Shuo and Bollands made their way toward the north. The speed of Bollands who was an experienced assassin was as fast as lightning. In addition, he was used to moving through dark places, therefore normal people could not detect his presence.

Han Shuo, who had reached the separate demon realm, had a few mystical demons to observe his surroundings. Han Shuo drifted around like a specter, not afraid of being seen even on the bright streets. As his speed was also extremely fast, Han Shuo’s shadow was like a stream of smoke brushing past.

Compared to Bolland’s carefulness, Han Shuo appeared calm. With his mystical demons, Han Shuo could easily avoid areas where there were people and still follow Bollands closely.

Upon reaching the region of the Northern Rose Garden, both of them decreased their speeds. In the dead of night, it was the perfect time to carry out indecent matters. On the streets towards Northern Rose Garden, many beautiful carriages could be seen quietly traveling along, with a few butlers or servants gracefully leading them from the front. All of them were headed for the Northern Rose Garden.

As Lancelot Empire’s famous red light district, business at the Northern Rose Garden was fantastic. With the saint swordsman Karel overseeing the safety and Lawrence excelling at running a business, the Northern Rose Garden had simply become a lair for ecstasy.

It was because of the sudden increase in traffic toward the Northern Rose Garden that Han Shuo and Bollands had to slow down. Since Bollands was familiar with the area, he led Han Shuo toward the back

door.

The back door of the Rose Garden was more remote. Usually, only staff used this entrance, unless it was to receive those with sensitive identities. The nobles who were seeking pleasure would not pass by this place.

“Bollands, since you have already decided to join my sect, there are some matters I need to make clear.” Han Shuo said to Bollands as they headed toward the rear entrance.

“Please give your instructions!” Bollands respectfully replied.

“Bollands, you need not be too polite. In the future, you can just call me Senior Brother instead of Marquis. Our sect is called Heavenly Demon Sect and only a few people within the Profound Continent know of us. Our master was formerly an otherworldly expert. He had come to the Profound Continent by chance and imparted this martial technique to me before leaving...” Han Shuo suppressed his voice as he spun some lies.

Bollands listened earnestly. After Han Shuo finished, Bollands was shocked and excitedly said, “To think that Master was so powerful, he was actually an otherworldly expert. No wonder he possessed such mysterious techniques which are unheard of in the whole Profound Continent. Not being able to meet such a figure is indeed regrettable!”

“Heh heh, Master’s strength is unfathomable. I will impart Heavenly Demon Sect’s marital technique to you on behalf of Master. With your aptitude, it will definitely be of much use. Don’t worry, the use and concealment of killing intent is the fundamentals of the Heavenly Demon manual. You will not only be able to quickly grasp it, you will also obtain stronger killing techniques.” Han Shuo solemnly said.

The technique Han Shuo would impart to Bollands was called God Slaying Devil Path, it is not an orthodox demonic cultivator’s technique. Even if Bollands cultivated it to the peak, he would not be able to reach Han Shuo’s level. However, if Bollands was able to proficiently grasp this technique, his strength would definitely soar.

However, this kind of progress had the slight intention of spoiling things through excessive enthusiasm. It completely took advantage of Bollands’

dense killing intent to rapidly increase his strength. However, it wasn't a step by step technique like the one Han Shuo was practicing and didn't have the unlimited possibility for improvement. Han Shuo only needed a junior brother that was able to help him root out dissidents and not someone who could contend against him in terms of demonic arts. Therefore, no matter how much Bolland's improved, he wouldn't be able to threaten Han Shuo's position.

"Senior Brother, thank you." When they were about to enter Northern Rose Garden, Bolland's bowed respectfully to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo wasn't in a hurry to enter Rose Garden. He smiled and replied after receiving Bolland's bow, "As you have yet officially entered the sect, I still can't immediately impart our sect's technique to you. Once I met Mister Karel, I will help you handle the entrance rites. After you have officially joined Heavenly Demon Sect, I will help you reform your body before teaching you our sect's techniques."

"I will listen to senior brother." Although Bolland's was older, he was still respectful in front of Han Shuo and did not dare to have any slightest neglect.

Han Shuo smiled as he nodded his head, "Alright, bring me into the Rose Garden."

Bolland's led Han Shuo down the path Lawrence had previously used that led to the secret chamber. After opening the passageway, Bolland's led Han Shuo through many complicated alleys before they finally reached the location of saint swordsman Karel.

Saint swordsman Karel was sitting on a boulder in the huge white space. Although his hair was white, he was glistening with vigor as his kindly eyes leisurely looked toward the front. Seeing Han Shuo enter, Karel smiled, "Kid, you are truly not simple!"

Bolland's left after leading Han Shuo to the location, leaving Karel and Han Shuo alone. After hearing Karel's praise, Han Shuo couldn't help but smile reservedly, "You are overly praising me."

"For you to have gifted divine weapon Starry Sky to Phoebe, hehe, your

intentions are very good.” Karel smiled before continuing, “I won’t get involved in the matter of you instructing Bollands, you need not be worried. I have never regarded Bollands as a servant and he always had his freedom. For him to be so excited to learn this martial technique from you, you must definitely possess something that attracts him. I will respect his decision.”

“In that case, why have you summoned me?” Han Shuo had a relaxed expression as he smiled and asked.

“I only wish to see the person whom old astrologer Madam Grace had prophesied to be able to bring prosperity to the Lancelot Empire. And also to find out what do you plan to do for the Lancelot Empire.” Karel stared brightly at Han Shuo, smiling as he replied.

Han Shuo suddenly realized why Uhtred had spoken in such a strange manner!

# Chapter 396: Sacred swordmaster's proposal

It turns out that everything was because of old astrologer Grace's divination. It seems like he would really be the savior of the Lancelot Empire in the future? Previously in the Dark Mantle headquarters, Grace had a peculiar expression as she looked at him. Could she have seen something then?

Hearing Karel's sentence, Han Shuo suddenly had some realization. He knitted his brows to ponder for a moment, before smiling bitterly as he looked toward Karel and said, "To be frank with you, I have only just heard of this news. I have not thought about what I can do for the Lancelot Empire and have only considered what I should do for myself."

When Karel heard Han Shuo's truthful answer, he laughed involuntarily and said, "Perhaps, in the course of you helping yourself, you would have also unknowingly helped Lancelot Empire alter its power and accomplishing an expansion of its territory. For example, assisting Lawrence in becoming king or you ambitiously attacking the seven duchies. Although these can be considered your own actions, their final outcome would still alter the structure of the Lancelot Empire."

Han Shuo couldn't help but consider for a moment upon hearing what Karel said. He suddenly realized that what Karel said indeed made sense. He had been considered a member of the Lancelot Empire ever since he arrived in this world. He personally felt that life in this country was pretty good and he also had many friends and lovers within the country. In this case, when Han Shuo realizes his own ambitions, he is also considered to be benefiting the Lancelot Empire at the same time.

"Haha, my lord is truly a wise person. What you said really makes a lot of sense." Han Shuo looked at Karel, not hiding his flattery at all.

When Karel heard Han Shuo flattering himself so brazenly, his gaze became a little odd. He smiled faintly as he said to Han Shuo, "Phoebe is my dearest disciple and your relationship with Phoebe can be considered

to be official. Furthermore, Lawrence is also my disciple. You aren't really an outsider. There isn't a big difference in Bolland's following you or me. Also, I'll mention some things openly to you."

"If senior has any advice, do not hesitate to share them. I will definitely keep your words in mind." Han Shuo was initially still worried that Karel would not allow Bolland's to study under him. Now that he heard Karel putting it this way, he also felt that it was reasonable. Based on Karel's relationship with Phoebe and Lawrence, they were truly not strangers to each other. For Bolland's to follow Han Shuo, they were still considered to be on the same faction.

However, Han Shuo faintly realized inwardly that Bolland's finding him today to give his reply was most likely because Karel had received some information from old astrologer Grace. He understood that Lawrence and Han Shuo were the future hope of Lancelot Empire and thus was willing to allow Bolland's to train under Han Shuo.

Seeing that Han Shuo was sincere, Karel smiled as he nodded and said, "You might have already learned a little from Lawrence regarding Bolland's' origins. At that time when Bolland's was an assassin, his hands were truly considered to be reeking in blood. Bolland's' assassin habits have not diminished even after so many years. I hope that you are able to lead him onto the path of righteousness and not become an irrational tool for slaughter. Can you promise me this?" It seems that Karel was pretty good to Bolland's. Not only did he respect Bolland's decision and allow Bolland's to leave his side, he was also worried about Bolland's' future. However, Han Shuo's purpose in teaching Bolland's the God Slaying Devil Path was to groom Bolland's into a tool to eliminate dissidents. Merely, with a proper demonic cultivation, Bolland's wouldn't lose his rationality to become a madman that only knows of slaughter.

Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, frowning as he pondered over and over before honestly replying Karel, "Bolland's' bloodthirsty nature wouldn't be altered even after training with me. However, my martial technique would be able to properly guide him and allow him to not lose his rationality. When he is able to break through his own bindings, he

would no longer need to rely on slaughter to increase his strength.

Therefore, I can only guarantee that he would always be clear-headed and not become a killing machine that you mentioned. However, for him to progress in the early stages of the martial technique, it would definitely require his potential to be ignited through killing. Only by releasing the killing intent he had forcefully suppressed all these years would he improve by leaps and bounds.”

Karel was stunned when he heard Han Shuo’s explanation. He stared at Han Shuo for a long time before saying, “What exactly is this unusual training method that you want to impart to him? Why does it sound like one of those evil techniques of the Calamity Church? Could you really be as the rumors said, being a member of the Calamity Church?”

Shaking his head, Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he explained, “It’s completely different. My martial technique is a practice method that is similar to fusing fighting aura and magic. Ah, I’m also unsure of how I should explain it. In any case, my master said that such a martial technique doesn’t originate from the Profound Continent.”

Karel was shocked when he heard this, gazing deeply at Han Shuo for a long time before exclaiming with an excited expression, “A martial technique not belonging to the Profound Continent?! What kind of extraordinary person is your master?”

“That is indeed what he told me. My master possesses enough formidable strength that he could escape the bindings of planes without the use of magical arrays. He also has magical powers able to move mountains and drain seas...” Han Shuo based his description on his understanding of Chu Cang Lan’s abilities.

Ever since Han Shuo revealed his demonic magic, Lancelot Empire’s King Uhtred had known that Han Shuo possessed a mysterious martial technique. sacred swordmaster Karel had naturally known about this long ago. However, the origin of this martial technique was a perpetual curious question to them. Han Shuo naturally required a set of lies to fill this gap and hence repeated to Karel what he had said to Bollands.



When Han Shuo finished his description, Karel was looking at Han Shuo appalled and said, "Your master is perhaps a true divine ranked character. I really don't know how you were that fortunate to run into such a character. No wonder Grace prophesied that whoever you support would be able to become Lancelot Empire's newly-appointed king. It seems like Grace's astrologer is indeed mystical."

Whoever I support would be able to become Lancelot Empire's king? Han Shuo was similarly shocked and became emotional once again. It's no wonder Uhtred even had a trace of pleading in his tone when he spoke with Han Shuo. The old astrologer seemed to have really helped him.

However, the old astrologer was able to predict the future, was she also able to see the past? Was she able to see his true origins and find out that the original Bryan had already died long ago?

"Bryan, is-is your master currently still in the Profound Continent? Can I visit him?" While Han Shuo was letting his imagination run wild, the emotions of sacred swordmaster Karel were suddenly in chaos, his eyes glistening as he looked at Han Shuo and asked.

Han Shuo abruptly returned from his wild thoughts, smiling bitterly as he shook his head. Repeating what he said to Bolland to fob Karel off, "After Master imparted this martial technique to me, he departed from the Profound Continent. I'm also clueless regarding his whereabouts. I'm sorry."

"So that is the case!" Karel was clearly somewhat disappointed as he muttered, "It's truly a pity. I've already remained in this rank for so long, if I have the opportunity to meet such a formidable person and maybe ask for guidance regarding some problems, perhaps I would be able to break through my bindings..."

For people who have reached the level of sacred swordmaster Karel, their only concern was to constantly improve their strength. At his age, he was already numb toward wealth, rank, fame, and power. Even the strength of a country was unable to contain people like him and they only longed for and pursued the rumored half-divine realm mentioned by their

ancestors.

“Previously when I visited the underground world, I met a grade five magical creature. Maybe you have already found out some information about him through the Dark Mantle. The Ancient Lizard King Dagassi had left after reaching the half-divine realm. I suspect that maybe he has also left the Profound Continent and headed for a more expansive plane.” Han Shuo was silent for a while before suddenly speaking again.

Karel who was contemplating something was roused by Han Shuo’s statement. Soon after, Karel sighed and said, “Legends have said that those who reach the half-divine realm would be actively approached by the guardian of the plane of the Profound Continent and the guardian could assist these characters to break away from the Profound Continent’s constraints.

This information was told to us by Stranglethorn Vale’s Stratholme when we previously went to the Seven Grand Duchies. Stratholme was only a step away from the half-divine realm and he vaguely knew some of the Profound Continent’s deeper secrets. It appears that the half-divine magical creature should have obtained the qualifications to leave.”

Old demon Stratholme! Han Shuo creased his brows when he heard of this person once again, this time from Karel. Han Shuo completely understood Stratholme’s true strength, a step away from the half-divine realm. It would seem that he was more formidable than Karel.

Only experts that reached the strength of half-divine realm would possess the qualifications to be summoned by the plane’s guardian. It seemed like the Profound Continent was indeed full of unknown mysteries. Han Shuo was secretly alarmed as he replied, “I reckon that Dagassi has indeed left. Ah, such a distant dream, I truly don’t know when would I have such qualifications.”

“You still have a long time to explore. Furthermore, you have a good master and ought to be quicker than us. Ai, for people like us who are already too old, this bottleneck has been restricting us all along. We can only wait bitterly if we are unable to make a breakthrough.” Karel sighed,

his snow-white hair and loose skin demonstrating the ruthlessness of time. An expert like him could really live much longer than ordinary people but the distance of this final step was incomparably far.

As he looked at Karel, this was the first time Han Shuo realized that even those supreme characters in the Lancelot Empire had their own troubles. Perhaps this was also his only worry! Han Shuo didn't know how to respond and only maintained taciturn in front of Karel, waiting for Karel to awaken from his moodiness.

After a while, Karel vaguely had a trace of comprehension. He then looked at Han Shuo engrossingly, smiling as he said, "I've heard Bollands describe many of your miracles but I've still never truly seen your martial technique. Maybe your martial technique would be able to give me some inspiration. If you don't mind, we can spar a little."

Han Shuo was somewhat startled that with Karel's status, he would suggest to spar with himself. However, Han Shuo understood that what Karel fancied was the technique he practiced and not Han Shuo's personal strength.

Han Shuo stared blankly for a moment before smiling and replied modestly, "A spar is out of the question. For you to be willing to advise me is already more than I could wish for. Do forgive me in advance for being presumptuous."

Karel seemed to appreciate Han Shuo's straightforwardness, smiling as he nodded his head and said, "Don't worry, just use your martial technique to attack me. I'm extremely curious about your martial technique. Let's see what's the difference with the fighting aura I cultivated!"

Han Shuo was similarly excited when he heard Karel's sentence as he had not figured out his true strength ever since he reached the separate demon realm. Han Shuo felt sufficiently confident when facing great swordsman ranked opponents but he had yet to come across sacred swordmaster ranked experts.

Although the dark elves' matriarch Adele that he previously met in the underground world was extremely strong, Han Shuo realized as he stood

before Karel that Adele was still weaker than Karel. Furthermore, Han Shuo didn't truly fight with Adele previously, purely using evil ways to harvest yin to replenish yang and sucked Adele dry and not genuinely fought with Adele.

Han Shuo could perhaps be able to truly understand the current strength of his separate demon realm through fighting with sacred swordmaster Karel. This would also help him make an accurate judgment the next time he met a strong opponent. Therefore, Han Shuo was somewhat excited when he heard Karel's proposal for them to spar.

"The martial technique i practice is called demonic magic, which resembles fighting aura but has different characteristics to fighting aura. Perhaps you would be able to sense it in a while." Han Shuo retreated a few steps, the Demonslayer Edge suddenly appearing in his hand.

"For Bolland to think so highly of you, it proves that your martial technique definitely has its peculiarities. Hehe, Bryan, you don't need to hold back. Don't hesitate to attack me." Karel stood up from the boulder, taking out a translucent longsword from his spatial ring. The longsword was three fingers wide, a hundred and thirty centimeters in length and had a cross engraved on the sword hilt.

# Chapter 397: Cross Slash

Han Shuo was fully aware that when one trained their fighting aura to Karel's level, its power would be extremely frightening. Besides, Han Shuo had intended all along to test his strength against Karel, hence he did not hold back.

Demonic yuan energy rushed into the Demonslayer Edge, activating the power of the violent spirits within, causing it to suddenly burst out with killing intent. With the Demonslayer edge as the core, the killing intent rippled out into the surroundings.

The waves of killing intent appeared material, the friction with the atmosphere producing a peculiar 'chichi' sound as it rippled in the sky. A sinister and ruthless aura could no longer be contained as it flowed out from Han Shuo's body.

Sacred swordmaster Karel was visibly moved, his snow-white brows tightening as his abstruse eyes brightened. As Karel was able to reach the level of sacred swordmaster, it naturally showed that he had outstanding talent. Over many years of fighting, he had seen countless experts as he watched over Lancelot Empire with his rich fighting experience.

Karel could clearly sense the Demonslayer Edge in Han Shuo's hand bursting with frightening killing intent. The killing intent that had spread all around had a hint of viciousness, as though containing a violent explosive force, causing Karel to truly be startled.

Within the Profound Continent, most experts gradually realised the importance of imposing themselves before battle. However, there has never been anyone who could transform this vigor into strength during battle. This was similar to Bolland's use of killing intent to destroy a person's willpower. However, Han Shuo's killing intent was more material. Karel understood that this sort of aura truly existed, unlike Bolland's killing intent which could only intimidate a person's spirit.

As sacred swordmaster Karel was staring at Han Shuo, Han Shuo swung the Demonslayer Edge filled with demonic yuan energy toward Karel,

unleashing the 'Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts'. The Demonslayer Edge suddenly revolved rapidly, the bloody radiance resembling the petals of a blooming flower.

With every rotation, a quill-like blood light was formed. Midway through the 'Bloody radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts', the blood colored light have already formed a hedgehog-like ball of quills, containing dense killing intent and giving off a sharp whistle as it flew at high-speed toward saint swordmaster Karel.

"Mystical martial technique!" Karel suddenly praised loudly, suddenly raising the longsword in his hand, gathering a golden colored fighting aura and sending a sword thrust toward the approaching blood colored ball of quills.

Golden fighting aura was something only sacred swordmasters and sacred knights were able to use. This was the appearance of fighting aura at peak concentration. Han Shuo could clearly sense the destructive power it contained. Although the golden fighting aura was different in nature from demonic yuan energy, it similarly contained formidable explosive strength.

As Karel raised his longsword, it emitted lustrous golden light. As his raised arm drew circular arcs, the tip of the longsword suddenly shot out waves of crossed-shaped swordlight. The crossed-shaped swordlight were arranged from small to big as they struck Han Shuo's blood colored ball of quills in succession.

With the moniker of 'Cross saint swordmaster', Karel was indeed befitting of his reputation. The various sword lights all formed crosses as they shot toward Han Shuo's ball of quills, rapidly grinding away at the demonic yuan energy contained within the Demonslayer Edge.

The tyrannical 'Bloody Radiance of Ten Thousand Cuts' was neutralized by the cross-shaped sword lights even before reaching Karel. From start to finish, Karel had a relaxed expression, clearly yet to use the limits of his strength.

When the blooming Ten Thousand Cuts were all obliterated and

revealing the Demonslayer Edge's original appearance, Han Shuo acted. The Demonslayer Edge which had been shooting towards Karel in a straight line suddenly froze in midair, before suddenly following a mysterious curved trajectory as it slashed toward Karel.

"Oh? Interesting!" Karel exclaimed softly, raising his head to watch the Demonslayer Edge's downward chop as he struck out with his sword to brush away the approaching Demonslayer Edge.

Han Shuo who was originally watching Karel with both eyes suddenly shut his eyes, fully concentrating on controlling the Demonslayer Edge, using the 'Law of Activating Magic' to unceasingly slash at Karel from all directions.

At the beginning, the Demonslayer Edge wasn't very fast. However, Han Shuo slowly increased its speed, causing the Demonslayer Edge to gradually become a lightning-like phantom. He also incited the violent spirits within the Demonslayer Edge, causing an endless resentful aura to spread out.

At first, saint swordmaster Karel was still able to effortlessly deal with Han Shuo's attacks. However, his expression became serious soon after. Bright golden light enveloped Karel's body, as crossed-shaped sword lights shot out. On one hand, he had to use his longsword to resist the Demonslayer Edge's high speed slashes while on the other, he has to concentrate his mental strength to withstand the demonic aura emitting from the Demonslayer Edge.

It must be said that sacred swordmaster Karel was indeed exceptional. As Karel who was able to stand proudly at the peak of Lancelot Empire faced Han Shuo's all out tempest, he had never given off the slightest indication of defeat, appearing as calm as before.

When Han Shuo had exhausted half of his demonic yuan energy, he saw that Karel still hadn't shown any weariness. Han Shuo then poured mystical glacial spellfire into the Demonslayer Edge, causing blossoms of red and purple spell fire to shoot out with every slash of the Demonslayer Edge. Extremely cold and extremely hot energy constantly shot out,

causing much inconvenience to Karel.

Afterwards, twelve mystical demons became corporeal, becoming malevolent ghosts as they attempted to enter Karel's body. Karel gave a gasp of surprise before suddenly exclaiming, "Truly mysterious. This martial technique is indeed different from any training method in the Profound Continent."

Facing numerous attacks, Karel still had the opportunity to shout. Shortly after, the longsword in his hand suddenly exploded in resplendent golden light as a giant cross-shaped sword light emerged abruptly, carrying a ravaging force as it spread in all directions, unexpectedly causing a sudden explosion.

The boulder he was on was the first to be unable to bear the impact as it broke into pieces with a bang. As rubble flew about, the ground actually started to cave in, as though a enormous force had bombarded the ground, crushing everything in the surroundings.

Han Shuo was shocked, rapidly recalling the twelve mystical demons and soared into the sky and landed next to Karel in a flash. The Demonslayer Edge that had been attacking constantly flew back into Han Shuo's hand, the remaining demonic yuan energy frantically pouring into the Demonslayer Edge while the killing intent and the wrathful energy from the violent spirits within the Demonslayer Edge converged to form a seven meter long blood colored edge which violently slashed in tandem with the Demonslayer Edge toward Karel's astonishing giant cross-shaped sword light.

A fierce explosion spread out from the point of contact, causing the barrier that enveloped the area to collapse. The vast space suddenly regained its original appearance, revealing the original form of the wide stone room. When the barrier was destroyed, a fierce ripple simultaneously spread out, causing the ground to tremor in its wake.

An astonishing explosive force suddenly rushed through the Demonslayer Edge, rushing through the sword hilt into Han Shuo's body. Han Shuo's descending body couldn't resist flying backward at high speed



before finally crashing into the rock ceiling and forming a three meter deep indent.

“What’s going on, what’s going on?”

“Is there an earthquake?”

“Ah, the bed is still moving!”

Within the Rose Garden above the two of them, nobles who were in the process of seeking pleasure with beauties suddenly felt the tremors under their feet. They were all shocked and started talking about it one after another.

A few of the guards watching over the Rose Garden were surprised as well, not knowing what had happened as they aimlessly attempted to find the cause of the earthquake.

Just at this moment, the fierce looking Bollands suddenly appeared among the guards of the Rose Garden, chiding coldly, “What are you panicking for, it’s just a small earthquake. We are at the heart of Ossen City. Apart from some alteration to nature, what else can happen.”

Bollands was a true fiend in the eyes of these guards. When Bollands spoke, all the guards quietened down, following Bollands instructions to console the fearful nobles. The majority of the nobles calmed down upon hearing the guards’ explanation.

However, there were still a few cowardly nobles who immediately abandoned the beauties in their bed and hurriedly fled the Rose Garden, afraid that there would be a few more tremors from below the Rose Garden, causing them to leave their precious lives in this place.

Although Bollands calmed the frenetic mood of the guards, he was still restless, unable to understand what had happened. He had just brought Han Shuo underground and Bollands didn’t wish that anything happened to either his old master Karel or his newly recognised senior brother.

Yet, the fierce tremors was clearly caused by the exchange between the two of them. Bollands was aware of saint swordmaster Karel’s terrifying strength and also knew that Han Shuo was a reckless, unfearing character.

He feared that the two of them had not reach a conclusion in their fight and after finally waiting for the people aboveground to settle down, Bollands hurriedly headed for the secret location.

The flustered Bollands had just entered the underground when he heard Karel's bright laughter even before reaching Karel's location. Once he heard Karel's laughter, he suddenly relaxed yet was somewhat apprehensive.

A space archmage had deployed a complicated barrier around Karel's wide practice chamber. Not only was it able to isolate sound and sight, once someone entered the barrier, they would have the feeling of entering a separate world. Currently, Bollands was able to hear Karel's laughter even before nearing that area, which indicated a shocking fact.

The barrier has been destroyed!

Once Bollands verified this matter, he hastily entered the vast stone room. The scene that entered his eyes was beyond his expectations. The boulder which saint swordmaster Karel usually sat on had become a small stone, while Karel stood on an area which seemed to be the epicenter of the earthquake, smiling as he looked at an indent in the ceiling.

Within the indent, Han Shuo shook his shoulders and twisted his body within the deep indentation. The solid rock shattered and fell as Han Shuo similarly smiled as he leaped to the ground.

"Bollands, it seems like your choice is indeed decent. This brat's martial technique is atrocious. In my many years of traveling the continent, I've never seen nor heard of such a martial technique. He had only trained for a few years and already possess such frightening strength. As time passes, I really don't know how strong he would get. No wonder old astrologer Grace made such a prediction." saint swordmaster Karel smiled as he look at the entering Bollands, showing his approval.

Bollands was very respectful as he faced Karel and said, "I've seen senior brother's martial technique before and it's extremely mysterious. He had long since proficiently use the thing that I have always bitterly studied yet have been unable to comprehend to a level that far exceeds my

imagination.

Popping sounds emitted from Han Shuo who had just landed on the ground. As Han Shuo moved his muscles and bones, traces of blood and black colored radiance circulated through his skin like electricity. Han Shuo smiled as he creaked his neck and said, "Mister Karel's truly deserving of his reputation. It seems that you still haven't utilized your full strength. Hehe, I've truly benefited from this battle."

With just a sword and golden fighting aura, Karel stood tall while under Han Shuo's torrential attacks. At the end, his strike of explosive force possessed unparalleled ferocity, completely clashing with his elderly appearance of one past his prime. This caused Han Shuo to truly be amazed.

Wine truly gets better with age. Han Shuo understood that just with his demonic magic at separate demon realm, he shouldn't be able to defeat Karel. However, if he used necromancy magic as well as summoned the little skeleton and the four zombies, he had confidence in beating Karel. From his previous visit to the other dimension, Han Shuo knew that the little skeleton's strength was far from ordinary.

"I didn't utilize my full strength, but you didn't use necromancy magic either right? Hehe The undead creatures summoned by a grand magus necromancer would indeed be troublesome to deal with. Brat, you are pretty good, Phoebe really has good taste." Karel smiled as he said, pausing for a moment before continuing, "Our spar has let me realize that your martial technique is extremely peculiar. It's similar to the fusion of fighting aura and magic and looks like it is indeed suitable for Bolland's to train in."

Fighting aura only possessed pure destructive energy. However, Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy was able to forge the body, treat certain illnesses and even influence an opponent's soul, truly possessing all kinds of remarkable abilities.

Fighting aura was slowly formed by purely training the body. Demonic yuan energy could form a consciousness and a demon infant. Killing

intent as well as the unique energy of Heaven and earth or even some herbs and strange items were able to enhance demonic yuan energy. From certain angles, demonic yuan energy was indeed way more mysterious.

“Bollands, wait outside with Bryan. I need to properly meditate. I’ve obtained great gains from this battle!” Karel smiled and instructed Bollands while Han Shuo was contemplating.

# Chapter 398: A structure from the other dimension?

As they walked out the Northern Rose Garden, Bollands followed Han Shuo closely the entire time.

As Han Shuo stared flabbergasted at Bollands, Bollands said respectfully, "Senior brother, from today onward, I will officially leave the Rose Garden and follow you."

Han Shuo hadn't expected Bollands to be so straightforward. After thinking for a moment, he smiled and said, "How about this? In this period of time, you will still be in charge of protecting Lawrence and ensuring his safety. When he doesn't need your protection anymore, you can return to my side. I make preparations to arrange for your entrance ceremony after some time. Once we performed the ceremony, I will immediately impart to you the martial technique."

"Alright then. In that case, I will continue to protect Prince Lawrence." Hao Shuo's instructions were now of higher importance than Karel's. Bollands was used to listening to orders, hence he nodded and agreed.

Under Han Shuo's orders, Bollands gradually sunk into the darkness. Han Shuo understood that Bollands had gone to secretly protect Lawrence and headed back to his residence alone.

It was currently a sensitive time in Ossen City. The streets were tightly guarded during the night as city guards patrolled all pathways within the city. Even while the nobles entertained themselves at night, they still wouldn't forget to talk about proper business.

Han Shuo had previously heard via a mystical demon the discussion between many nobles within the Northern Rose Garden about the princes, debating about which prince they should support.

Han Shuo had also just realized abruptly why King Uhtred already acted quickly. All of a sudden, all officials who had close relations with Lawrence had been, more or less, promoted for all kinds of reasons.

Lawrence, who originally had the least support, was suddenly being ardently paid attention to.. King Uhtred's obvious favoritism caused the nobles and princes to be apprehensive, as they couldn't understand the reason behind Uhtred's actions.

Sacred swordmaster Karel, who had always maintained neutrality and had never expressed his support for Lawrence, had declared when he left the imperial palace that if anyone dared to deal with Lawrence underhandedly, they would face his wrath. Karel had even hinted at Duke Ashburn's despicableness.

Even the Dark Mantle organization which acted as the empire's underground agents suddenly had close dealings with Lawrence. Amyes who was feared by all nobles was even seen visiting Lawrence's residence at night. This seemingly proved that the Dark Mantle and Lawrence had allied secretly.

Lawrence, who had been suppressed by the other princes for a long time, suddenly had a surge in circumstances and became the topic of discussion between nobles. A number of influential personages who had never taken Lawrence seriously now had a sudden change of opinion.

"King Uhtred has been in power in the Lancelot Empire for many years. It seems that before Uhtred dies, the whole Lancelot Empire will act as he commands. His successor would ultimately still be his personal choice." Han Shuo pondered inwardly as he unhurriedly walked toward his residence.

Late in the night, the streets were quiet. Han Shuo moved swiftly, not leaving any tracks on the streets. A couple of mystical demons watched the surroundings stealthily as Han Shuo easily evaded the city guards and returned quickly to his own residence.

When Han Shuo reached his residence, he realized that other than a few guards and the old steward, all the servants had already slept. When Kallas saw Han Shuo appear, he hastily greeted him and soon after said in a low voice, "Lord Marquis, there's someone in the room who wishes to see you."

Han Shuo stared blankly, baffled that someone actually came over so late at night and couldn't help but be astonished. A mystical demon flew over in the direction Kallas had given and soon after a handsome and graceful figure suddenly entered Han Shuo's sight.

It was actually him! Han Shuo was shocked. He then nodded towards Kallas and instructed, "Alright then, it's already quite late. You should rest early. I can go over by myself."

Kallas didn't say anything else, bowing towards Han Shuo and then immediately withdrawing.

Han Shuo walked over to the room for receiving guests. Once he entered, the door closed automatically. Han Shuo frowned when he saw the handsome grand magus necromancer before him and asked, "Why are you here?"

Wolf gave a carefree smile and leisurely looked at Han Shuo, "I came over to thank you. Thanks to the skeletal staff, you've helped me regain my youth. Hehe. I'm especially grateful for this.."

"In recent days, there have been some rumors circulating that are not beneficial to me. I wouldn't want your arrival to cause misunderstandings. If there aren't any matters, it's best that you don't come over and cause trouble for me. Your identity is too sensitive and you're someone I cannot provoke." Han Shuo didn't have any enmity towards Wolf, but he didn't have any favorable impression of him either. Nowadays, Kosse's group had been stopping at nothing to cause him to lose his standing within Ossen City. Even though Han Shuo had Uhtred's help, if he really let Kosse latch onto credible evidence, it would be hard for Han Shuo to manage.

"Relax. It's precisely because I don't want to give you trouble that I chose to appear so late at night. Furthermore, an average people wouldn't know my identity. Even if it were previous enemies from the Church of Light, they probably wouldn't be able to recognize me too. Hence, you need not worry, I won't bring you any trouble." Wolf explained.

Hearing him say this, Han Shuo examined Wolf's appearance carefully

and couldn't help but agree that his words did contain some truth. It was impossible to connect the current Wolf who was elegant, handsome and full of a dignified aura with the previous Wolf who looked inhuman and had a dense aura of death. If not for the changes due to the skeletal staff, even if someone were to beat Han Shuo to death, he wouldn't believe that the graceful youth in front of him was that centuries-old Wolf.

"Why have you come to find me?" Han Shuo relaxed slightly, but still wrinkled his brows and annoyed looked at Wolf.

"Hey, we should be considered allies, and are truly friends. From the beginning, our Calamity Church has always thought of you as a friend. Besides, I'm also a necromancer, you shouldn't be so indifferent toward me." Wolf shrugged and said with a little sorrow.

Han Shuo was shocked by his words. Thinking about it, it was indeed as Wolf said. Everyone in the Profound Continent was afraid of the evil Calamity Church. Once he showed his ability to refine undead creatures that weren't afraid of light magic, they had tossed him an olive branch and even spared no effort in protecting him.

When Wolf discovered that Han Shuo had the skeletal staff, Calamity Church's attitude towards Han Shuo was so amicable that it made him a little vexed. Looking at the earnest Wolf in front of him, Han Shuo really didn't know how to treat him.

Han Shuo relaxed, no longer having a cold and emotionless expression. He smiled faintly as he pulled over a chair, sat down and asked, "In that case, could Mister Wolf tell me what you came here for? And also, how exactly does Calamity Church want to treat me?"

When Wolf saw that Han Shuo's expression was no longer indifferent, he smiled happily and said, "This should be the way! We will be friends. Hehe. Very good friends!! There aren't many necromancers in this world and even fewer Grand magus necromancers Yet, both you and I are grand magus necromancers. We ought to have many similar interests. Ha. I really had not expected that you would actually become a grand magus necromancer so quickly. Hehe. It seems like you must have gained many



things from the Holy Land.”

“Holy Land? What Holy Land?” Han Shuo looked distracted and asked suspiciously.

Wolf seemed to know that Han Shuo would ask this question. He straightened himself, appearing slightly excited as he said, “ The Holy Land is what our Calamity Church calls that place. Most of the people in the Profound Continent call it the Cemetery of Death. Hehe, since the skeleton staff is in your possession I don’t think you would be able to deny that you’ve been to the Holy Land.

Moreover, you’ve only practiced necromancy for less than five years and yet you’ve already become a grand magus necromancer, which took me a couple of centuries to reach. This is already enough to illustrate the issue. There’s also the undead creatures that aren’t afraid of light magic and other mysteries that prove that you’ve been to the Holy Land.”

When Wolf said this, Han Shuo’s heart surged with waves of emotion. He realized that he hadn’t been cautious enough, or it could be said that he knew too little about the Calamity Church and the secrets about necromancers. This was why Wolf was able to recognize the skeletal staff. For Wolf to be so certain in his words, clearly showed that he had surmised the truth.

Han Shuo’s expression momentarily wavered, his eyes indistinctly revealing an ominous glint. He was considering if he should kill everyone who knew his secrets but after a round of contemplation, he knew it was already too late. Wolf had probably already shared this information with the Calamity Church.

Observing Han Shuo’s virulent gaze, even Wolf who had lived for a long time felt apprehensive. As a necromancer who had high accomplishments, Wolf could clearly sense Han Shuo’s concealed killing intent. Wolf who was being stared fixedly by Han Shuo unexpectedly had a feeling of palpitation, causing him to be startled.

Only when faced with the rebuke of high-ranked people in the evil Calamity Church would Wolf have such a feeling of apprehension. He

would never have thought that he would feel a hint of fear from someone who was so much younger than him. Wolf was very clear what this feeling implied.

He knew that only when experts who could threaten his life were discontented and had the intention to kill him would he instinctually palpitate in fear!

Could this youth who had just become a grand magus necromancer possess the ability to kill him?

Illusion, it must be an illusion! Wolf reassured himself before awkwardly saying to Han Shuo, "Don't be so hostile towards me. Our Calamity Church will really never become your enemy. Since the skeletal staff has already recognized you as its master, you are a noble within our Calamity Church. There are many areas in which the Calamity Church will need rely on you, hence we require you to be living well."

"In that case, if my death brings about more benefits, you all would've already acted?" Han Shuo squinted his eyes, sizing up Wolf as he replied slowly.

"Uh..." Wolf's expression became more awkward. He hesitated for a while before nodding and said, "If we could kill you and there would be only benefits and no harm to the Calamity Church, I think my superiors would have given the order to kill you long ago and not decree to protect you and cooperate with you."

Wolf could still be considered as a frank person. Han Shuo knew how the infamously evil Calamity Church handled matters. When he first saw Belinda, even though she was just an alchemist, she had already attempted to kill everyone in the hotel without inhibition. She didn't place any importance on the lives of strangers, believing that everything was proper and as a matter of course.

Coldly snorting, Han Shuo knew that Wolf already knew about the matters regarding the Cemetery of Death. However, Han Shuo naturally wouldn't reveal any details. He expressionlessly replied, "Don't stick your noses into my business. Be honest about the reason why you are here!"

Seeing Han Shuo becoming displeased, Wolf hastily explained, “Regarding the Holy Land, we can temporarily not discuss it. I came here to inform you regarding some secrets of the skeletal staff and the Holy Land. This would probably be the information that you long for the most.”

“Oh? Didn’t you previously say that if I didn’t join the Calamity Church you wouldn’t tell me the secrets about the skeletal staff? Why have you now specifically come here to tell me this information? I had clearly stated previously that I wouldn’t join the Calamity Church. It’s best if you don’t act rashly.” Han Shuo said to Wolf.

For some unknown reason, the grand magus necromancer Wolf, who should’ve been aloof and surpassed ordinary people, was unbelievably humble and even seemed to be deliberately currying favor as he spoke to Han Shuo.

From the time you picked up the skeleton staff, you’re already considered a member of our Calamity Church! Wolf said inwardly before smiling as he explained, “Don’t worry. My superiors gave me the order and so I will naturally tell you the situation of the skeletal staff and the Holy Land. However, what I will tell you is only what I know. There are things that I don’t know about and I’m powerless to help.”

“In that case, it would be a waste to not listen. Go ahead then.” Han Shuo spoke indifferently, no longer appearing as pressing as the previous time. However, he was inwardly so curious that he could die. Only he himself could understand this fact.

“Then I’ll first talk about the Holy Land. Within the Calamity Church, it is rumored that the Holy Land possesses a magical transportation array. That transportation array has the mysterious ability to connect between planes, in particular, it can intercommunicate with the netherworld. Necromancers can rely on their original body to enter the netherworld to explore unknown territories within the nether realm and improve their necromancy magic.

Furthermore, there is another legend within the Calamity Church. I’m not sure whether this legend is true but I’ve once heard the pope say that

the Holy Land wasn't a structure of the Profound Continent. Instead, it came from another plane to the Profound Continent. I surmise that the plane it came from was the netherworld." Wolf breathed in deeply as he explained to Han Shuo.

# Chapter 399: Three abilities of the Tri-colored skeletal staff

Hearing what Wolf said, emotions surged uncontrollably within Han Shuo's heart. The Calamity Church was probably aware of some information regarding the Cemetery of Death. What Wolf had just stated was probably true.

The center of the first layer in the Cemetery of Death was indeed an ancient magic transportation array. It is precisely through this ancient magic transportation array that Han Shuo could travel everywhere without restrictions. When he heard Wolf say that the transportation array could also connect between planes, Han Shuo was indescribably astonished.

Common magic transportation arrays within the continent normally had a limitation of distance. For example, the transportation arrays between large cities in Lancelot Empire could only cover a few hundred kilometers. No one has ever heard of deploying a transportation array that could cover a distance of several thousand kilometers.

The further the limit of the transportation array, the higher the requirements were. Apart from the comprehension of the person setting up the array, a painstaking effort had to be expended on materials and finding a favorable location. A space sacred magus could only set up a transportation array that had a maximum distance of two thousand to two and a half thousand kilometers.

Yet, the large-scale transportation array in the center of the Cemetery of Death could, according to Wolf, transport across planes. This was extremely inconceivable to Han Shuo. When Wolf mentioned that the Cemetery of Death was a structure from a different plane, Han Shuo felt even more light-headed.

Seeing Han Shuo's shocked expression, Wolf continued, "Of course, the Holy Land also has another saying. It is said that the transportation array can be moved and it was similar to a Magic Tower and was self-sufficient in attacking and defending. These were all legends handed down within

the church, but I think they are trustworthy.

“As for the skeletal staff in your hands, you can see it as the key to entering the Holy Land. The tri-colored skulls on the skeletal staff each possess a strange power. Firstly, it can multiply the strength of a necromancer’s spells. I think you are already very clear about this power. The second strange power, you’ve already tried it on me. It is the miraculous ability to let a necromancer become youthful again. Not only can it be used by the necromancer in possession of the skeletal staff, it can also be used on other people.

The final power of the skeletal staff, which I’m unsure if you have tried it before, is rumored to be able to open the pathway to the netherworld. The user would be able to enter and exit the netherworld with just a thought. This ability is the most unfathomable. It can allow necromancers familiarize with the netherworld and let them reach a higher level of understanding in necromancy.

Each of the tri-colored skulls contained a different power. However, these three abilities are only theories that have been passed down in the Calamity Church for a long time. As for whether the skeletal staff has more secrets, it’s not something I’m able to comprehend. What I have just told you is all that I know.”

Han Shuo had seen all of the three peculiar abilities of the tri-colored skeletal staff. Hence, he believed Wolf without any doubt. Increasing the strength of magic, recovering one’s youth and voluntarily entering the netherworld with his soul. Han Shuo had experienced all of the three abilities, but other than the first ability to increase the strength of his spells, Han Shuo simply have not comprehended the other two mystical abilities.

In particular, Han Shuo didn’t know anything regarding the mysteries of the last ability. Both the times he entered the netherworld had all been him unexplainably entering and exiting. It was absolutely not how Wolf described, going back and forth with just a thought. It seemed that it wasn’t caused by the skeletal staff, rather it was that Han Shuo hadn’t truly grasped the key in utilizing the skeletal staff.

According to Wolf, once Han Shuo truly controlled the skeletal staff's powers, he would really be able to go back and forth with just a thought, meet up with the little skeleton and the various zombies within the netherworld, easily investigate the unknown mysteries of the netherworld and clarify if the Cemetery of Death was really an unusual structure originating from the netherworld as Wolf had described.

"I came here in accordance with my superiors' orders to tell you some secrets about the skeletal staff and the Holy Land. I think that once you know of these things, you should have a direction for exploration. Hehe. The Calamity Church will become your strong backing. You who wields the skeletal staff is an important part of our Calamity Church. You can deny this, but our core members have already acknowledged this." Wolf smiled as he explained to Han Shuo who was currently deep in thought.

Han Shuo's contemplation was interrupted by Wolf. Soon after, he gave Wolf a glance and said, "What you acknowledge should be the skeletal staff and the Cemetery of Death, right?"

"They're all the same. The role of the skeletal staff on our Calamity Church is extremely important. Once you've truly grasped all the uses of the skeletal staff, there will be superiors who will personally come to find you." Wolf replied without answering Han Shuo's question directly.

"The skeletal staff is of great use to the Calamity Church? Is it primarily because of the last two abilities?" Han Shuo hesitated for a while before questioning closely.

Wolf stared blankly, thinking for a while before nodding as he replied, "You can put it that way. I'm not clear of the specific circumstances, but I know that the Calamity Church has some very powerful existences. However, due to their old age, their bodies have already become extremely weak. Some of them are even reaching the end of their lives. If the skeletal staff is able to grant them a restoration of their youth, these unparalleled existences would cause the Church of Light to tremble.

"And you are a person who can bestow upon them renewed physical strength and allow them to live longer. Hence, your importance to the

Calamity Church is self-evident. More importantly, only you can open the Holy Land. In the future, secrets regarding the Holy Land would also need to be uncovered by you.”

These words were probably not what the superiors instructed him to say and were simply Wolf taking the initiative to show goodwill. Thus, he paused before adding another sentence, “Bryan, these are my own words. I hope you will have a good impression of me. That way, I’ll be inwardly grateful.”

Han Shuo was still reveling in the shock of Wolf’s words. He nodded when he heard what Wolf said, but didn’t make any promises.

“Alright then, it’s already quite late. I will be leaving now.” After Wolf finished speaking, he respectfully gave Han Shuo a card and said, “This contains the way to contact me. If you require my or our strength, you can look for me at any time. We will spare no effort in assisting you.”

Han Shuo received the card in passing as he apathetically nodded again. His head was filled with the details of the Cemetery of Death and the skeletal staff. Han Shuo was extremely shocked when he heard about these matters from Wolf, causing him to want to rapidly understand the main points.

Han Shuo knew all along that the Cemetery of Death contained many secrets. However, he hadn’t been able to decipher its real secrets despite staying in the Cemetery of Death for quite a period of time. However, Wolf’s sharing had given Han Shuo a direction to explore, allowing Han Shuo to realize the aspects of the Cemetery of Death which were the most attractive.

“Perhaps I should enter a deeper level in the Cemetery of Death to explore. Maybe the next level might have the answers I need!” Han Shuo silently assessed the situation and made a decision.

While Han Shuo was pondering quietly, grand magus necromancer Wolf had already left soundlessly. Han Shuo raised his head to look outside, realizing that the full moon in the sky was gradually becoming hidden. Without him knowing, the night had almost passed by.



Han Shuo thought for a while. His curiosity about the mysteries of the Cemetery of Death and the skeletal staff was getting stronger and stronger. With the magic transportation array that directly led to the Cemetery of Death, traveling to and fro was extremely convenient. Since there didn't seem to be any important matters tomorrow, Han Shuo immediately went to the secret chamber and activated the transportation array.

Once Han Shuo reached the Cemetery of Death, even before Han Shuo could uncover the secrets within the Cemetery of Death, the connection between dark dragon Gilbert and himself was immediately established.

The distance between Lancelot Empire's Ossen City and the Valley of Sunshine was too far. Although Han Shuo and Gilbert had the power of the contract between them, it only allowed Han Shuo to detect whether Gilbert was dead and couldn't sense his location or thoughts.

However, the Dark Forest was very close to the Valley of Sunshine. As both Han Shuo and Gilbert's strength had increased by a substantial amount, the connection between them had become clearer. Once Han Shuo established a connection with Gilbert, he immediately sensed that Gilbert wanted to meet him urgently.

Han Shuo, who had originally planned on exploring the secrets of the Cemetery of Death, recognized Gilbert's urgency. He had no choice but temporarily shelve his plan of immediately investigating the Cemetery of Death. He hurriedly left the Cemetery of Death and rushed toward the Valley of Sunshine.

Along the way, Han Shuo unleashed the Art of Demonic Nine Heavens. Without wasting too much time, he arrived at the cliff within the Valley of Sunshine where the Soul Destroyer Mercenary Group were hiding. Gilbert had already felt Han Shuo's aura and had waited at the bottom of the cliff for a long time.

There was also a coquettish and attractive woman standing beside Gilbert. The woman had a well-developed body and a gorgeous appearance. Her sepia-colored hair was weaved into nine little braids

which cascaded down her shoulders, making her appear pretty and mature, possessing a unique flavor.

When Han Shuo landed, the woman was evidently somewhat fearful, unconsciously moving nearer to Gilbert. Gilbert casually embraced the charming woman and explained to Han Shuo, “This is Lania. She was subdued by me in the Dark Forest. You’ve seen her before!”

Hydra! Han Shuo stared blankly but understood soon after. He couldn’t help but take another look. Lania bowed politely toward Han Shuo and said delicately, “Master!”

Han Shuo didn’t further question the hydra, Lania, and only nodded toward her. He then frowned and asked Gilbert, “What happened that made you so anxious for me to come?”

“Trunks is missing. There’s no sign of him in the whole Valley of Sunshine!” Gilbert said worriedly.

# Chapter 400: Fallen tiger in grassland [1]

“What happened?” Han Shuo was somewhat in disbelief. Trunks currently had the strength of a great swordmaster and perhaps in the entire Valley of Sunshine, only the thrice berserk berserker Laureton could overpower him in battle. However, even Laureton didn’t have the power to kill Trunks by himself.

Trunks was a cautious man who was also very familiar with the terrain near the Valley of Sunshine. He shouldn’t have met with any trouble, but now that he had suddenly went missing truly surprised Han Shuo.

“After he returned from Janet’s place, there had been no trace of him for four days in a row. Even when there were no missions, he had never been away for that long. And even if he didn’t return, he should have left a message, but there has been no news this time around. We sent people to ask Janet and learned that Trunks had indeed left from her place. He’d brought a dozen brothers along, there is no trace of them, either.” Dark dragon Gilbert explained to Han Shuo with a glum face.

Knitting his brows, Han Shuo pondered for a while before asking, “Has Trunks had disputes with any powers recently?”

“Ten days ago, we ambushed the Butcher bandit group together with Janet under Trunks’ lead. Trunks and Janet even killed Butcher Gustav. His bandit group can be considered to be wiped out from the Valley of Sunshine. Apart from this, we didn’t have any other disputes with other forces.” It was Grant who’d spoken. As Trunk’s old friend, he was very worried for Trunks’ safety. As the Valley of Sunshine was in an area situated at the center of three countries, over the years, it had become a special area where the most abundant goods from the three countries could be gathered. Han Shuo had provided Trunks the capital to create the Soul Destroyer mercenary band with the original intention precisely to take over the Valley of Sunshine. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have given Trunks a Rebirth Pill for Trunks’ reformation.

These days, the Soul Destroyer mercenary group had gradually grown in

scale, becoming one of the powers within the Valley of Sunshine. Trunks suddenly having a mishap had already impacted the development of the Soul Destroyer mercenary group, which wasn't an outcome Han Shuo was willing to see. As he listened to Gilbert and Grant narrate what'd happened, Han Shuo had been completely silent.

"Honored master, do you think something has happened to Trunks?" Gilbert couldn't help but ask upon seeing Han Shuo staying silent.

"Nonsense!" Han Shuo unhappily berated. He thought for a bit before saying, "We temporarily don't know Trunks' situation, so everyone shouldn't act rashly. Don't take on any missions for now, let's wait for Trunks' matter to be settled first."

"Master, we have been searching for Trunks for days but there's no news of him. Do we keep looking?" Gilbert scratched his head in distress as he asked Han Shuo.

"You guys assemble everyone, I think we have run into big trouble this time. Currently, in the Valley of Sunshine, the number of powers that dare to touch the Soul Destroyer mercenary band can be counted on the fingers. Since something bad has happened to Trunks, I think the Soul Destroyer is next on the list." Taking a deep breath, Han Shuo told the dark dragon and Grant.

"Right, why don't I see Odysseus' group?" Han Shuo couldn't help but ask in surprise when he discovered that Odysseus' unique little group wasn't here.

"They are on a mission and temporarily haven't returned to the Valley of Sunshine. They should still be in the Orc Empire at the moment." Gilbert quickly answered.

"Alright, Gilbert, follow me outside, the rest remain in the valley. It's best to call the brothers outside to return. Watch over this place carefully." Han Shuo threw Gilbert a glance before directly walking out.

Lania the hydra was in human form as Gilbert casually held her in his embrace. She couldn't help but speak out upon hearing Han Shuo's words, "Master, I can also be of help!"

The hydra race was also one of lascivious nature, no different from the underground world's dark dragon race. In the previous trip to the depths of the Dark Forest, this hydra had once tried to surreptitiously kill Han Shuo and Gilbert, which had unexpectedly inconvenienced Gilbert. The hydra and Gilbert's deadly combat had instead evolved into a sex war and the dark dragon had used the demonic method Han Shuo had taught him to subdue her.

The current strength of the hydra Lania was obviously beneath that of Gilbert. As someone who indulged in sexual desire, after she was conquered by Gilbert, she had unwittingly become the submissive one in the relationship. Gilbert was Han Shuo's magic pet, so the hydra naturally addressed Han Shuo as master.

Furrowing his brows, Han Shuo thought for a while. He then glanced at the hydra and said, "You stay here for now. It'd be bad if there's no expert to oversee this place."

"Mhm, you remain here." Gilbert stared at the hydra and chided, "What master says goes. From now on, you aren't allowed to have any objection."

Lania softly smiled in a coquettish, fawning manner and chuckled, "Alright then, I'll stay here and guard this place well for you guys."

Seeing that Han Shuo didn't have his previous ruthless appearance, the hydra Lania slowly relaxed, her speech and behavior no longer as cautious as before.

Han Shuo didn't say anything else. He glanced at dragon Gilbert and leaped into the air. Gilbert transformed right at Han Shuo's feet to accurately catch him and flew up high into the sky.

"Master, where to?!" After Gilbert flew Han Shuo up high in the sky, he inadvertently asked.

"Nowhere. Just take me to a high altitude and stop there!" Han Shuo instructed. The twelve mystical demons floated out one by one, flying towards the directions of the big powers in the Valley of Sunshine.

The Valley of Sunshine was only that big of an area, there weren't many

people who'd have the guts to attack Trunks, only those that were afraid that he'd be a threat to their status. Han Shuo didn't need to think to know that Trunks' disappearance certainly had to do with those people.

It made sense when one thought about it. The Soul Destroyer mercenary band had gradually expanded to the point that it had the power to control the Valley of Sunshine. To the other powers, Trunks had without a doubt become the thorn in their flesh. They'd be very willing to eradicate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

The twelve mystical demons spread out and drifted in every direction of the Valley of Sunshine, towards the Cairo mercenary band, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, the Menlo family, the Katar Orc tribe and even Janet's bandit group along with some other small powers. Each power was visited by a mystical demon.

With the existence of these twelve mystical demons, Han Shuo had the entire Valley of Sunshine and its major forces under his monitoring. Since the Valley of Sunshine was only that big, the people who'd put their hands on Trunks would definitely reveal themselves, Han Shuo was a hundred percent sure of it. Deep within the forest, there was an extremely hidden cave surrounded and heavily concealed by thick tree branches. The cave itself was very narrow and hard to move within.

However, from the depths of this cave echoed the miserable screaming of Trunks. Both his hands and feet were restrained by coarse black manacles while a long and thin iron chain was pierced through his shoulder blade.

Thunder archmage Asa, who followed Florida of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, was currently staring viciously at Trunks. As he waved the magic staff in his hand, bolts of lightning struck on Trunks' body like electric snakes, adding many black scars on Trunks' already seriously injured body.

"Trunks, you also have such a day. When you killed my father Gustav, you didn't think that such a day would come right?" Thunder archmage Asa glared at Trunks with deep hatred. He maliciously whispered an

incantation while elatedly striking bolts of lightning on Trunks' body.

"Damnable old dog. Ahh..." As Trunks screamed out loud in agony, a lightning bolt struck right at his mouth, leaving a black scar on his lips. Two streaks of blood slowly trickled down from the corners of his mouth.

Trunks' entire body was covered in cuts and bruises and tightly imprisoned. In the surrounding was several experts that were sent by various powers to keep watch on him. Asa indeed held a bone-deep grudge towards Trunks, which was why he'd secretly come to take it out on him. If not for the tacit understanding between the experts of the other powers, Asa might have ruthlessly killed Trunks the day Trunks had been caught.

Trunks looked at Asa who was continuously striking him with lightning bolts, his heart also filled with an endless hatred. He had never expected the thunder archmage always following Florida to be the son of Butcher Gustav. No wonder the relationship between the Butcher and the Rainbow Sickles mercenary band was so amicable. It turned out this was why Florida regarded Asa so highly.

"Heh heh, although I can't kill you, I will slowly torture you. The Soul Destroyer mercenary band has rapidly developed in the past two years, but so what? Haha, in two days, they shall be exterminated by our allied forces. After the Soul Destroyer is finished, I will peel your skin off a bit at a time while you are still alive.

Hah, even if you want revenge, you shall never have that chance. Annie who you consider your sister, heh heh, not just Florida who have ridden her, even I and my father have played with her. What can you do about that? Aren't you just like a dog all chained up by me? Haha..." Asa had gone insane as he screamed loudly, striking down one lightning bolt after another.

"Ahhhh... I'll kill you beasts, I swear I will!" Trunks could no longer suppress his fury and howled wretchedly when he heard Asa's narration. The chains all over his body resounded with metallic sounds as Trunks appeared as if he was truly going insane.

1. Fallen tiger in grassland is a Chinese saying which describes that when

the tiger leaves the mountains and is trapped in the grasslands, even a dog can bully the tiger. It describes people of status and power losing their status/power.



# Chapter 401: The alliance based on benefits

It didn't take Han Shuo much effort to thoroughly understand the situation through the mystical demons snooping around. The one behind this hostility directed at Trunks and the Soul Destroyer was Florida of the Rainbow Sickles mercenary band. The other participants included the House of Menlo as well as Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band.

In this world, there was no eternal friends, only eternal benefits. These words had accurately summed up the situation!

In the past, when Laureton and Florida had been competing for power, Han Shuo and Trunks had sided with Laureton. The night Laureton had been surrounded by the four great powers in the small mountain valley, Han Shuo had even aided him to come out of it alive.

From that time, the Cairo mercenary band and Soul Destroyer mercenary band had close relations with Laureton and Trunks constantly cooperating. In the eyes of outsiders, the Cairo and Soul Destroyer mercenary bands had seemed to have formed an alliance.

However, with the Soul Destroyer rapid development in addition to Han Shuo's blazing reputation in the Lancelot Empire, it had pushed the Soul Destroyer mercenary band to become the fifth great power in the Valley of Sunshine. In the recent days, Trunks killing Butcher Gustav had caused the residents in the Valley of Sunshine to be alarmed. Laureton and Florida who were originally the two most promising contenders for the control over the Valley of Sunshine had finally realized that the situation was delicate.

When one's own interest was threatened, friendship and alliance were as fragile as the vows of politicians. Florida and Laureton immediately joined forces. Since Adam Menlo had been heavily injured by Han Shuo previously, he was extremely happy to also participate in this long-planned insidious scheme.

The result was Trunks being ambushed by Laureton and the rest while on the way back from Janet's place and the mercenaries with him completely annihilated. Trunks himself had been captured alive and imprisoned in a hidden cave within the belly of a mountain valley. The major powers had all sent their experts to keep watch over him.

They didn't immediately kill Trunks because although Laureton and the rest coveted the wealth of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, they didn't have much information on the detailed layout of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's base. Therefore, they intended to get it from Trunks' own mouth before making their next move, which would also help decrease the losses on their side.

However, Trunks' tenacity was beyond their expectation. Under the rounds of torture and extortion, he still hadn't revealed any information that they'd wanted. Hence, his body was tormented black and blue till he was on the verge of death.

Presently, in a mansion defended by the Cairo mercenary band within the Valley of Sunshine, the three powers were discussing when to launch their attack on the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. The Soul Destroyer mercenary band had existed in the Valley of Sunshine for a long time. Laureton and the others had long since known its exact location even without Trunks telling them.

Were it not for them not understanding how dangerous the terrain of that area truly was, they'd have already joined hands to wipe out the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, instead of waiting until now to make their move. In the past several days, the three powers had constantly sent people to that region to explore. They had clearly seen the defensive layout on the surface and were about to make a move in a few days.

The major powers in the Valley of Sunshine had been through repeated wars, from which all the parties had sustained a great loss in strength. After Han Shuo had killed light grand magus Ferguson, the relationship between Florida and the Church of Light had been somewhat frail. However, with the existence of the secret silver mine in this area, their relationship slowly stabilized again.

Because of Han Shuo, Calamity Church's dark archmage Edwin naturally wouldn't deal with the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. The Calamity Church and Edwin had originally been cooperating with Laureton, but they had gradually drifted apart. Edwin had sought Trunks out a few times to offer his help, but Trunks had refused his goodwill.

Following Trunks' disappearance, the Calamity Church's Edwin had actually made quite an effort to find out the truth of the situation. However, with the alliance of the three powers in the Valley of Sunshine and the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band being backed up by the Church of Light, Edwin didn't dare to act rashly even though he knew the truth.

The twelve mystical demons had dispersed, scenes of what they see constantly being reflected in Han Shuo's mind. His brain that'd been expanded by demonic magic methodically took in those images, analyzing the contents of speech and actions to gradually discover what was going on.

Finally, he found out the exact location where Trunks was imprisoned!

As dark dragon Gilbert floated in the sky above the Valley of Sunshine, puffs of white clouds drifted around him. The glorious sun shone down upon the entire mountain valley, causing even the pitch black body of the dark dragon to be glistening under the sunlight.

Sitting cross-legged on Gilbert's back which was much wider than a horse carriage, Han Shuo had his eyes closed as he collected information. Suddenly, he slowly opened his bright eyes. As he glanced down at the lush forest within the Valley of Sunshine, his eyes became increasingly bright.

"I must quickly settle the problems in the Valley of Sunshine. My steps can't just stop at this place!" Han Shuo murmured.

The matters of Brettel City, the seven grand duchies, the internal struggle in the Empire, the unceasing disturbances from the Church of Light, the secrets of the Cemetery of Death and the skeletal staff, the study of demonic magic and necromancy magic, the rivalry of the women. Too many matters were constantly piling up, waiting for him to handle. Han

Shuo now had this feeling of wanting to be able to use the doppelganger technique.

Han Shuo's increasingly heightened vision was proportionate to the growth in his ambitions and strength. Now that he looked at the various disturbances in the Valley of Sunshine, he felt that it wouldn't be very hard to deal with all of them. From the time he learned that Trunks was captured, Han Shuo wanted to take care of all of the matters in the Valley of Sunshine in one go.

"Go, fly downward!" Han Shuo instructed dark dragon Gilbert, showing him the exact location.

"Master, you've found Trunks?" Seeing that Han Shuo, who'd closed his eyes and been silent for a long time in the air, suddenly pointing out a location for him, Gilbert couldn't help but ask suspiciously.

"Of course, the direction we're heading is where Trunks is held." Han Shuo replied before urging, "Alright, hurry up a little!"

In the depths of a dark, gloomy mountain cave, thunder archmage Asa was still tirelessly torturing Trunks. Trunks had been roaring in madness, but after the violent electric currents had pierced through his body in addition to Asa pressing a burning red iron piece on his body, Trunks couldn't bear it anymore and had fallen unconscious.

However, Asa clearly had no intention of letting Trunks get off easy. Every time Trunks passed out, Asa would be sure to ruthlessly woke him up. After a few rounds, Trunks was on his dying breath and no longer had the strength to roar anymore. His unfocused eyes carried a deep-rooted hatred as he calmly glared at Asa, his eyes containing a light which frightened Asa.

Asa's guilty conscience churned in fear of Trunks' deep-rooted enmity. However, this feeling of guilt quickly turned into even more insane torturing as the burning red iron once again pressed upon Trunks' chest. Trunks could only stretch his mouth wide in agony, not even letting out a single groan. His face twisted into a terrifyingly savage expression like a demon from stepping out from the eighteenth level of hell.

“Lord Asa, you should stop now, or he might die!” A swordsman named Trulla came over with a frown, reaching his hand out to forcefully seize the burning iron which Asa had been clutching tightly.

Asa’s face darkened, he glared at Trulla and said in a displeased manner, “Trulla, my matters isn’t something your House of Menlo can care about!”

“I have no interest in caring about you, but Trunks’ life is to be kept. This is the decision agreed by all three leaders. No matter how you tortured Trunks, I have no problem as long as he doesn’t die. But if you kill him, we will have to bear the blame of negligence. Do not cause troubles for us!” Trulla wasn’t afraid of Asa, placing the iron in its original place as he said coldly.

Some of the injuries on Trunks’ body were starting to rot, there was even pus flowing from his neck and chest. Trulla who standing nearby involuntarily covered his mouth when he smelled the nauseating smell, disgusted as he fanned with his hand, “F\*ck. You can still stand it?! Forget about it for today. Wait until his body gets better before toying with him again. Otherwise, everyone will object.”

As Trulla said this, he had already lost his patience and walked out. A few members of the Cairo mercenary band looked at Asa in annoyance. One person chimed in, “Asa, your Florida has also agreed. You’d better be more content, don’t break the rules.”

The others people in the mountain cave all revealed an annoyed expression. Even the members of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band who were stationed here with Asa also persuaded him to not make a fuss. Thinking for a while, Asa turned his head to glance at the unconscious Trunks who was on the verge of death, the fury in his heart subsiding a little.

With that many people dissuading him, Asa also didn’t dare to recklessly act on his own accord, so as to avoid rousing the anger of others. He understood that his position in the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band was no longer as firm due to the death of his father Gustav. What was more loathsome was that the bandit group had split up after his father died and

simply didn't remain under him. Otherwise, he wouldn't have had to stay in the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and suffered humiliation.

While Asa was drowned in hatred, sounds of heavy steps resounded from the outside. The sounds were very faint at first, gradually becoming clearer.

"Who is it?" The still unhappy Asa shouted loudly, "Since you've already come, don't you know to report your name?"

The sounds of footsteps were still approached slowly. However, the person didn't respond. Asa couldn't help but curse again, "F\*ck, are you mute? Don't you know how to speak?"

"Something's not right!" Trulla frowned, suddenly taking out a long sword as he said to the people next to him.

"Only we know about this place, what can go wrong? You're overly suspicious. Don't those fellows always deliver our food at this time? It must be them!" Asa took this opportunity to say a few words to Trulla.

The footsteps were still approaching. The sound of each step contained a strange rhythm, giving rise to a sense of terror in people's hearts. It was as if a demon was slowly nearing, its ghastly huge mouth hidden within the darkness, ready to bite into your neck at any moment.

Trulla threw a disdainful glance at Asa, thinking that this bandit's son was indeed not a true mercenary. Be it Cairo mercenary band or the House of Menlo, they were both strict and well-disciplined organizations. There would absolutely not be such a conduct of coming without giving a signal.

"Brothers, be a little careful. The situation is a bit strange!" Trulla tightly grasped his long sword and warned the people on his side.

Some experienced mercenaries from the Cairo mercenary band didn't need Trulla's reminder and had already gathered together cautiously. Even Asa's group from the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band had also clearly separated from the other two powers.

At this critical moment, as the three powers had only joined forces for profit, they still only trusted their own people rather than the fake allies

who reluctantly cooperated for the sake of benefits. The Valley of Sunshine was precisely such a place. They were enemies, be it past or future. However, they currently stood together peacefully in the face of a common enemy.

Tap... tap... The footsteps were getting closer, becoming clearer!

Trulla glanced at the fire adept mage next to him and said, "Cast a flame!"

When that fire adept mage heard Trulla's order, a fire snake meandered its way into the passage, the brown-gray wall could be seen clearly when it glided through.

At this point, even Asa knew that something was wrong. He stared raptly at the only entrance. The members of the Cairo mercenary band had a tacit understanding among themselves as they formed a square formation, ready to face the incoming person's attacks at any moment.

While everyone was focusing their attention on the only tunnel, a string of clear, crisp sounds suddenly rang out from Trunks' location behind their backs. All of them who had their eyes glued on the tunnel turned around to look when they suddenly heard such loud sounds breaking the silence.

Right next to Trunks was Han Shuo with the Demonslayer Edge in hand and a darkened expression as he cut off the iron chains on Trunks' body. The durable iron chains which were made from the recently mined mithril broke apart with each crisp sound. The slender chain piercing through Trunks' shoulder blade was also carefully taken out by Han Shuo.

Trulla's group who had suddenly turned around didn't know how Han Shuo got in. There was only one tunnel which they heard the sound of footsteps from within the cave and they'd all placed their full attention there. Yet, they really hadn't seen anyone coming in from the tunnel!

However, Han Shuo had indeed suddenly appeared out of thin air, as if he'd been standing there all along. His sudden arrival was in such an eerie way that it gave people an extremely vexed feeling.

Seeing the gloomy-faced Han Shuo appear, all of the people keeping watch on Trunks inside the mountain cave felt their hearts tremble momentarily. They saw that Han Shuo had acted as if he didn't see them and only focused on breaking Trunks' shackles with a dark expression. Unknowingly, a feeling of terror couldn't help but gradually form from the bottom of their hearts.

Although Han Shuo hadn't been present in the Valley of Sunshine, stories of him were always spreading around the Valley. The people in the mountain cave, including Asa and Trulla, were all experts of the three powers. Not only did they know of Han Shuo, some of them had once witnessed with their own eyes Han Shuo's actions.

Presently in this narrow belly of the mountain, Han Shuo had noiselessly appeared like a ghost, only silently removing Trunks' shackles. The invisible suppression was as heavy as a mountain, causing palpitations as they grew flustered.

Asa's lips were dry. He once had his hand chopped off by Han Shuo. At that time in the mountain valley, he had witnessed Han Shuo's every blow as he struck Ferguson to death. When Han Shuo left, the stories of him didn't disappear and were instead spread throughout the Valley of Sunshine by the mercenaries who traveled extensively. In particular, the deed of Han Shuo beheading the dragon knight Celt was even more rapidly exaggerated.

Asa knew full well the relationship between Han Shuo and Trunks. He watched as Han Shuo worked on removing the bindings of the dying Trunks with a somber countenance, an icy cold chill abruptly spreading through his entire body. Asa's mind spun rapidly and he suddenly came to a very wise decision after watching Han Shuo for only a dozen seconds.

Whoosh! Asa was the first to rush into the tunnel to leave the cave, fleeing without a fight!

"Damned bastard!" Trulla turned to take a quick look, lowly cursing at Asa's shameless cowardice. Shortly after, he also felt a bit terrified, tightly gripping the long sword in his hand as he put on a strong front and looked



coldly at Han Shuo, “Count Bryan, this has nothing to do with you. You can’t dictate the matters in our Valley of Sunshine. If you leave now, we won’t stop you. Otherwise...”

“Ah? Asa, why do you already returned?” Not waiting for Trulla to finish, the fire archmage next to him suddenly cried out in surprise.

Trulla was stunned. He didn’t rebuke the underling for cutting off on the threat that he’d summoned his courage to say. Trulla promptly turned around to see Asa having a bitter expression as he really returned step by step. Tap, tap... The footsteps in the cave still echoed within everyone’s hearts and actually became heavier!

# Chapter 402: Cutting off the tongue

A 2.5 meters tall creature who was made of white bones that swayed in disorder from the skeleton slowly made its way forward.

This creature was formed purely from bones that were as sharp as lances. The bones fanned out like blooming flower petals, completely obstructing the narrow passage. With each step, a dense aura of death assaulted their senses, as though warning everyone that it didn't belong to this world.

As a high ranked undead creature, the bone demon had to bear the restrictions of the contract to enter this world. It brought along the netherworld's deathly aura, desolation and loathing toward the creatures in this world. As it possessed high intelligence, it could sense the fear of the creatures in front of itself.

When it reached the entrance of the passage, the power of contract ordered it to halt. Its original intention to kill the creatures in front was abruptly forced to an end. When it had arrived, it had already furiously struggled against the caster's contract and understood that the caster was capable of ruining its strength, so it hadn't resisted.

When everybody inside the cave looked towards Asa, they naturally saw this huge bone demon coming and completely blocking the exit. Behind the swaying sharp spears of the bone demon came the constantly echoing sound of heavy footsteps, like drum beats pounding on their panicking hearts.

In the span of a few breaths, a few balls of ghostly fires lit up behind the bone demon, appearing like mini lanterns that slowly drew nearer along with the footsteps. When the ghostly fires reached the bone demon, everyone could see the shadows of a few huge knights under the light from the ghostly fires as they tightly blocked the exit.

At this point, everybody in the mountain cave knew that the only way out was sealed. If they wanted to leave, the only method was to kill the bone demon and evil knights. However, who knew whether there'd be

countless undead creatures in addition to the bone demon and the evil knights?

Within the narrow mountain cave, If there really were a large number of undead creatures, as they didn't have a light mage, it'd simply be harder to get out alive than to reach the sky. As these people's brains quickly spun and they saw that these undead creatures had no intention of entering the cave, their anxious hearts temporarily calmed down. Their eyes couldn't help but turn towards Han Shuo again.

At this moment, Han Shuo had cut all the chains off Trunks and had applied several colorful medicines on his body. Even the rotting wounds full of pus were cleaned up. During this process, Han Shuo's darkened face looked terrifying.

"Count Bryan, this is none of your business. By saving Trunks, you'll become the enemy of our three powers in the Valley of Sunshine. You should consider carefully!" Trulla stammered for a while, before summoning his courage to speak out toward Han Shuo under everyone's intense gaze.

Han Shuo didn't reply, not even turning his head to glance at Trulla!

As he placed his right hand on Trunks' back, black rays of light entered Trunks' body from the hidden angle. The unconscious Trunks could only sense that his fading vitality once again returned little by little.

Trunks gradually even felt a thread of strength. Harboring a bone-deep hatred, he abruptly shouted in his weakened condition, "Asa, I will kill you! I won't let you off even if I die!"

Lightning archmage Asa clearly heard Trunks' subconscious, weak shout. His face was immediately paled as white as paper, his fingers tightly gripping the magic staff. His eyes flickered as he turned to look behind. However, when he saw the bone demon's blazing eyes and the evil knights riding their fire-spitting warhorses, he hastily turned his head back.

After the light shout, Trunks slowly regained his consciousness. As his strength and vitality gradually recovered, he opened his eyes with

difficulty. The first thing that entered his eyes was Han Shuo's frightfully somber face.

However, when he saw Han Shuo's terrifying, gloomy face, Trunks was extremely excited. His mouth pulled up into a silent, wry smile, his dry lips slowly moved, "Bryan, you came?"

Nodding his head, Han Shuo softly sighed and said, "I came a little late, you are already this heavily wounded."

"I'm not dead, so it's not too late! As long as I'm not dead, I still have hope for revenge. Even if my arms and legs are cut off, at least I still have teeth, I want to devour these beasts!!" Trunks' voice wasn't loud, but the enmity in it caused everyone to feel an endless chill.

To the side, Asa felt a chill from the bottom of his heart. His eyes quickly looked around and glanced toward Trulla shortly after. By another side, Trulla was silently communicating with the people from the Cairo mercenary band. The gap between the three powers unknowingly narrowed, as they clearly knew what should be done when facing a common enemy.

Han Shuo was indifferent to their actions, only having his eyes on Trunks. Only after Trunks finished speaking did Han Shuo reply, "Don't worry, you've eaten a Rebirth Pill, even if your tendons are cut off, I can still heal you till your previous state!"

"Gilbert, come over here and help me take good care of Trunks!" Han Shuo shouted towards the area behind Trunks. A rumbling sound could be heard from underground and a moment later, dark dragon Gilbert burrowed out.

When the mystical demon had spotted Trunks suffering such inhuman torture, Han Shuo had immediately ordered Gilbert to approach from underground at the fastest speed possible, while he summoned the undead creatures to seal the only way out of the cave. When Han Shuo had made his way to Trunks' location, dark dragon Gilbert was still in the underground passage hence he was a few minutes slower.

After Gilbert appeared, he took a look at Trunks and his eyes became

bloodshot. He instantly roared in rage, "I want to eat all of you!"

This period of time, Gilbert had always stayed with Trunks, unknowingly giving rise their friendship. Trunks was a person of good character, treating Gilbert with extraordinary generosity. As for dark dragon Gilbert, apart from a few bad points, he was very upright. When he saw Trunks being tortured to the point of being unrecognizable, he couldn't suppress the rage in his heart.

Stopping Gilbert with one hand, Han Shuo instructed coldly, "Look after Trunks. As for these people in the mountain cave, just leave them to me."

"Master, I want to kill them, I want to avenge Trunks too!" Dark dragon Gilbert simply couldn't bear to see Trunks' miserable state. There was even a trace of sobbing in his voice. This was the result of Gilbert's excessive wrath and grief.

"Rest assured, there'll be an opportunity, you and Trunks will have that opportunity!" Han Shuo solemnly vowed and once again instructed, "Look after Trunks well, don't let him suffer any more harm!"

Holding back the tears that had almost flowed out, Gilbert's voice was choked with emotions as he nodded in assent. Holding a bucket of clean water, he helped Trunks clean up the stench off his wounds. Gilbert couldn't help shouting out in sobs, "Damn it, how could you be so careless, you fool..."

To Trunks, the pain had already numbed his senses. However, when he saw the dark dragon expressing his feelings of anger to the point of crying and Han Shuo forcefully repressing his anger which caused him to appear sinister and terrifying, something warm slowly merged with the demonic yuan energy that Han Shuo had transferred into his body, nourishing his injured body.

"You, what do you want? We, we are not afraid of you. It's best if you consider it clearly!" Seeing Han Shuo approach steadily with a gloomy expression after Trunks' injury had stabilized, Asa shouted, appearing fierce while being cowardly at heart.

Not wasting any words, Han Shuo suddenly transformed into a blood-

colored streak, charging into the center of these people like lightning and casting out punches and kicks. The sounds of bones breaking echoed through the mountain cave, making one's scalp tingle.

In such a narrow area, Han Shuo's demonic arts fully displayed its advantages. As the frenzied, violent attacks fell down, there was simply no one who was capable of withstanding his assault. The strongest people here were swordmaster Trulla and lightning archmage Asa, who were simply no threat to the current Han Shuo.

In just a few minutes, the fifteen experts of the three great powers inside the mountain cave that held Trunks captive not only had their bones broken but also their tendons cut. Such an injury to the swordsmen and knights who cultivated fighting aura meant that they had thoroughly become useless. To the mages like Asa, Han Shuo cut off their tongues in addition to those injuries, hence they'd never be able to cast any magic ever again.

"I won't kill you. When Trunks recovers, he will slowly skin you alive. Only in this way can the damage he'd suffered be compensated." Looking at the mass of meat laying paralyzed on the ground, as well as Asa constantly spitting out blood due to his tongue being cut off, Han Shuo calmly pronounced their fate.

With his tendons snapped and bones broken, Asa couldn't even let out a tragic howl, his eyes filled with despair and regret. He regretted not having killed Trunks earlier, regretted not throwing everything to the wind to kill Han Shuo the first time Han Shuo had come to the Valley of Sunshine.

Dark dragon Gilbert's choked voice gradually returned to normal in light of the perpetrators suffering. Trunks' weakened body also slowly recovered some strength. With the support of the dark dragon and Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy, he could even stand up with some difficulty.

Trunks looked at Asa's miserable state, suddenly letting out a crazy laughter. His owl-like laughter was filled with endless resentment and unspeakable satisfaction.

As Trunks madly laughed like a devil, the pain and pressure from the

last few days seemed to be released along with his laughter. He stared steadfastly at Asa as he laughed to his heart's content, his eyes filled with a bone-deep resentment which enveloped Asa like an ice cold prison, causing him to feel a chill that penetrated to his bones.

Asa understood that this time in Trunks' hands, the suffering he'd have to bear would be much more extreme. Asa who had released his anger as much as he liked on Trunks' body had no doubts that once Trunks recovered his strength, Trunks would torture him to his death. With his completely handicapped body and cut off tongue, Asa's heart was filled with only despair. Unfortunately for him, he couldn't even beg for death in his current situation and could only wait for the incoming, endless suffering.

After a long time, Trunks' wild laughter eventually subsided. He'd laughed to the point that tears were flowing. After his emotions calmed, Trunks remained silent for a little before speaking in a much lower tone, "Bryan, this time it was Laureton, Florida and Adam Menlo allying, otherwise I would have definitely escaped!"

Having reached the ranks of great swordmaster, within the Valley of Sunshine, only the three times berserk Laureton was able to fight evenly with him. It was due to this confidence that Trunks dared to act without fear. Unfortunately, he had underestimated the despicableness and shamelessness of others and had been captured alive in an ambush.

"Say no more, I already know. None of them shall escape your revenge, I promise!" Han Shuo took in a deep breath and calmly promised Trunks.

"Bryan, I could never have expected Laureton to make a move so quickly! Just the night before, Laureton was still drinking and chatting with me. Ha, I was truly too naïve to actually overlook him!" Trunks' smile was self-mocking, but his voice was filled with hatred towards Laureton.

"Laureton... Laureton..." Han Shuo mumbled twice, his eyes gradually becoming cold.

"Master, Trunks' body is still very bad, he shouldn't stay too long in this place, we should leave immediately!" Dark dragon Gilbert wiped the tear

stains from the corners of his eyes. Not caring for the filthiness and foul stench from Trunks' body, he supported Trunks onto his body,

Han Shuo calmly nodded in agreement. The bone demon blocking the cave entrance suddenly walked out, with a few zombie warriors following close behind. At Han Shuo's order, they picked up all of the bodies from the ground.

During this process, Han Shuo commanded the bone demon to provide a dozen bones. Each zombie warrior made use of the bones' sharpness to pierce these people's legs like piercing grilled fish, heightening their pain. "Let's go!" Han Shuo exclaimed, following up with an incantation. The undead creatures in the depths of the passage disappeared, causing the passage to appear wider.



# Chapter 403: Gargoyle Swarm

At the same time when the Rebirth Pill helped Trunks reach the level of great swordmaster, it also helped him reform his body, causing his meridians to be more durable than a normal person's. It was precisely because of this that Han Shuo was able to use the demonic yuan energy to help him recover after they returned to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's base.

As expected, when Han Shuo brought the severely injured Trunks back to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's base, the mercenaries had the urge to almost immediately fight to the death against the three powers when they understood the situation. Some mercenaries even charged out in their fury and were only hauled back by Gilbert under Han Shuo's instructions.

Gilbert clearly had some standing within the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. Although the mercenaries were unwilling when they were unyieldingly hauled back by Gilbert, they still yielded to Gilbert's might.

This is to be expected. A mercenary band is also a place where the strong are worshipped. The person with the harder fist would have more persuasiveness. Within the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, even the strength of Trunks was below dark dragon Gilbert. As Gilbert has been in the Soul Destroyer mercenary band for so long, the other mercenaries have long since understood his fearfulness and difficulty to work with. At times, there was no difference between his orders and Trunks'.

While Gilbert was suppressing the impulsive mercenaries, Han Shuo immediately headed toward the inner dwelling without hesitation. He instructed Gilbert without lifting his head, "Use cruel methods to torture those people for me. However, do keep them alive. When Trunks recovers, Trunks will end them himself."

After speaking, Han Shuo already brought Trunks to the interior of the dwelling, leaving behind Asa and the rest whose legs have been pierced like skewers by the bone spears.

As Grant and the rest looked at Asa and the rest who had their tendons cut, their bones broken from head to toe, they still felt unresolved hatred in their hearts. Once Han Shuo left, they followed Gilbert to each choose a victim, bringing them to the dark and damp prison area. There was an entire set of torture tools there!

Bringing Trunks into a bright stone room, Han Shuo sat cross-legged behind Trunks. His palms were placed on Trunks' back, slowly sending strands of demonic yuan energy into Trunks' body, gradually mending Trunks' damaged body.

The reason why demonic yuan energy was more mystical than fighting aura was that apart from possessing enormous killing power, it could also possess more wonderful uses through practiced manipulation. Aiding the injured in recovering was one of these uses of demonic yuan energy.

Trunks' current situation was that the tendons on his limbs were all snapped. However, Trunks' fighting aura still existed and once Trunks' tendons healed, it wouldn't affect his strength. To a swordsman, tendons snapping signified that a person had become a cripple. Even stronger swordsmen would not be of any threat, hence Asa and the rest didn't do more than was required.

Regardless of priests or alchemists in the Profound Continent, their attainments in the treatment of the body and meridians would still be beneath Han Shuo. Hence, Han Shuo had a solution to an unsolvable problem to most people. Trunks' body which had been reformed by the Rebirth pill was easily cleansed of disorder by the circulation of Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy.

As it treated the injuries, the demonic yuan energy became like gentle flowing water, wrapping around all the broken meridians. Han Shuo's consciousness pried into Trunks' body, slowly reattaching the broken meridians and then activated the surplus energy from the Rebirth pill to gather around the broken meridians.

Trunks' body was much stronger than an ordinary person's, but it was still far from Han Shuo's. Hence, when Han Shuo treated Trunks' injuries,

he didn't use up much demonic yuan energy. He only needed to get familiar with the precision of meridians and to proficiently set things right.

As time passed silently, Han Shuo who was seated behind Trunks didn't need to focus that attentively as Trunks' condition became better. The meridians only needed to be slowly nourished by Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy. Hence, Han Shuo was able to divert his demonic yuan energy to other matters.

The disappearance of Trunks and the experts of the three powers from the cave in the mountain was discovered by the next wave of people. The three powers were all flustered, not knowing what had happened. Laureton, Florida and Adam Menlo had once again got together anxiously to investigate deeper.

However, no matter how they guessed, they couldn't figure out how the extremely hidden cave was exposed. In the end, the three powers inevitably believed after deliberating that there was a spy within their men, inwardly thinking who among their men could be the culprit.

Without a doubt, the three experts understood that Trunks was rescued and it should be related to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. The three powers who originally hesitated in taking action due to self-interest and all kinds of scruples now knew that there was no turning back. Laureton and the two others were experienced people, deciding together to immediately attack the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

As matters stand, wanting to destroy the Soul Destroyer mercenary band while not incurring any losses by capturing Trunks clearly wouldn't work. Although the three powers who have fought which each other for so long knew that this time around they would again incur more losses, they couldn't care too much about it anymore.

At their orders, the Cairo mercenary band, Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, House of Menlo and another five or six smaller mercenary bands driven by profits rapidly gathered more than six thousand people who brazenly departed for the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

They had no choice but to stop when they reached the location of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. The various leaders gathered together and started to discuss how to attack the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

The terrain of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band was extremely special. It was on a protruding wall under a precipice, like a piece of rock hanging halfway up the mountain. This location was just a sheet of whiteness when seen from below, totally concealed by fog. There was only one route that led from the precipice above.

However, if one tries to enter from above, people from the Soul Destroyer mercenary band would naturally discover it. Hence, attacking from above was an incredibly painful affair. It was certain that the losses of the few powers would far exceed their expectations.

As the proverb goes, it was easier to ascend a mountain then descend from it. This saying similarly applied to battling on such a terrain. Sieging a location was always extremely difficult. That was because the process of climbing up the city walls was truly too painful.

However, while climbing up a city's walls, although it was extremely disadvantageous when facing the attacks from above, it was still possible to raise your head and clearly face the sky and use your weapon to block incoming attacks. However, in this location, when descending from the precipice, it would be tough to deal with attacks from below and might even be impossible to see the situation underneath.

Firstly it was because of the fog, secondly, they had to be more cautious while descending as a slip would cause them to fall to their deaths. For Trunks to find such a place to be the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's base, it was an extremely wise decision. This location was hard to attack and if anyone tried to enter, they had to pay an unimaginable price.

Right at this moment, although Laureton and the rest had captured Trunks alive, they didn't dare to rashly attack the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. However, after Trunks had been rescued, they had no other choice but to face this special terrain. Even the method of entering had caused them to debate for a long time.

The three of them were all the astute type and understood that the one who descended first would definitely suffer the most losses. They naturally didn't want to be the first to descend. However, the others also weren't fools. None of the powers were willing to lead such a suicidal attack. Hence when they really had to attack, the delegation suddenly halted.

As they discussed, none of them were willing to let their subordinates be the first to descend. When he recalled that the Soul Destroyer mercenary band were not in the least inferior to them and that this was an easily guarded terrain, Laureton had a headache, not knowing what to do.

"How about we would just keep watch over this precipice. They can't always stay within their base. Otherwise, food and water would definitely become a problem. Once they emerge from their base, we can easily kill them with our strength. We would face cruel attacks if we descend. However, it would similarly be difficult for them to ascend. We can hound them to death by blocking up this position." Florida had a darkened expression as he proposed this malicious plan.

Everyone knew that this plan was useful. However, this would cause the battle to become a long war of attrition. No one could guess how much provision the Soul Destroyer mercenary band had and if they truly wasted their time here, they were unsure if there would be problems at their own bases.

"All of you also know that that fellow Gilbert is a dark dragon. Furthermore, the Soul

Destroyer mercenary band also has many mages that can use floating magic. If they depart and use spatial rings to transport provisions, there's no knowing how much time we would waste. I don't think this plan would work." Adam Menlo thought for a while, before suddenly voicing his opposition.

"In that case, what do you think we should do?" When Florida saw that his idea was overruled, his expression became more unsightly as he asked Adam Menlo.

Staying silent for a while, Adam Menlo seemed to be making up his

mind. He raised his head to look at Laureton and Florida, saying, "Our House still has a batch of tamed flying creatures. Adding them to the current flying creatures present, they are able to carry three hundred people at one time. If these three hundred men are the experts from our three powers, if they utilize large-scale killing spells when they reach, they should definitely be able to hold for a short while. After that, the flying creatures will repeatedly shuttle our men down. In this way, I feel that we wouldn't need to undergo the process of slowly descending."

Hearing his words, everyone was overjoyed. Florida was equally excited as he smiled and said, "Old thing, you obviously have such a good method, why didn't you mention it earlier?"

Adam Menlo's expression darkened as his eyes twitched, thinking inwardly. Those are what is guarding my base and I originally intended to use them to deal with you all in the end. If not for us really no having other means, why would I bring them out? Of course, Adam Menlo naturally didn't say these words aloud, only appearing calm and silent.

"Hey, with this method, every issue can be solved. If we are able to annihilate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, the contribution of your House of Menlo is the biggest. Come, come, let us carefully discuss how many experts each power would send." Laureton laughed refreshingly as he shouted at the leaders of the various powers.

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After a whole day and night, Han Shuo who had brought Trunks into the interior of the mountain finally exited the cave. Gilbert, Grant and the rest quickly hurried over when they heard the news. Once Gilbert saw Han Shuo, he hurriedly inquired, "Master, how is Trunks?"

"Don't worry, after resting for a month, Trunks would be able to be as before!" Han Shuo consoled Gilbert. His expression darkened soon after as he said, "The three powers and other small mercenary bands are already in the vicinity and are currently discussing how to attack us. They have six thousand people, we must deal with them cautiously."

"We have a thousand and seven hundred people here. Rely on the

terrain advantage, they can forget about easily attacking us. Hmph, Leader had been tormented by them till such a state. We must make them pay the price. Whoever dares to descend will die by our hands.” Grant and Trunks were friends for many years and had even worked together in the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. He was unable to restrain his anger and shouted loudly.

Han Shuo could totally understand Grant’s anger. However, he still shared what he heard, “The House of Menlo is dispatching their secret flying creatures. These creatures can carry three hundred men down each time. If there are tens of mages within this three hundred, large-scale killing spells would cause an enormous obstruction to us.

During that time, these flying creatures can bring another three hundred people down. At that time, the advantages of this location would no longer exist. Hence, we absolutely cannot lower our guard and must have the proper preparation. Otherwise, we would definitely lose this battle.”

Hearing what Han Shuo said, Grant was shocked and suddenly calmed down. He knew that if it was truly as Han Shuo described, the one thousand and seven hundred people in the Soul Destroyer mercenary band simply had no way of resisting the attack of six thousand people.

“What should we do then?” Grant somewhat anxiously inquired.

“Master, Lania and I will transform into our true forms and exterminate them from the sky.” dark dragon Gilbert shouted viciously, prepared for a massacre.

“If it was only three hundred ordinary swordsmen, Lania and yourself transforming into your true forms would be enough. However, there are many mages within these three hundred experts. The two of you definitely wouldn’t be able to resist the attacks of so many experts. Furthermore, their goal is only to descend here. How many people can you and Lania prevent from coming down? Although this is an idea, it doesn’t cover all grounds!” Han Shuo looked at the eager dark dragon Gilbert, calming stating the facts.

“What should we do then?” This time it was the hydra Lania who asked,

the coquettish Lania and the wanton Gilbert were truly a match made in heaven. When the two lascivious races bonded, their turbulent feelings caused even Han Shuo to be stupefied.

“Yea. Master, what do you think we should do?” Gilbert had a puzzled expression as he bitterly asked Han Shuo.

“We’ll follow your suggestion, with Lania and yourself intercepting them in the air. In addition, I will summon many gargoyles to help you. When they are about to land, the archers below will fire constantly. As long as the first wave of the strongest experts is killed, it would be hard for them to win this battle.” Han Shuo sneered as he replied Gilbert.

## Part 2

Laureton, Florida and Adam Menlo simply had no idea that their every move was under Han Shuo’s surveillance. They were still under the impression that their attack would be extremely unexpected and at least the first wave of flying magical creatures would be able to easily descend and cause huge problems for the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. They would then be able to unceasingly transport experts down, settling the battle in one go.

Unfortunately, they would never have guessed that Han Shuo was able to know their every intention and was able to calmly put in place preventive measures to attack their “hidden” descend head-on. With a large number of gargoyles, Han Shuo had confidence in dealing a disastrous setback to the first wave of experts.

Once most of the experts in the first wave were killed, not only would it have a great impact on their morale, the next wave of experts would also be afraid to descend on the flying magical creatures. With the advantageous terrain, Han Shuo believed that the three powers wouldn’t achieve what they wanted this time around.

The twelve mystical demons scrutinized every action of the three powers. Han Shuo methodically instructed Grant and the rest to gather the mercenaries that were good at shooting, distributing all the various bows and arrows. Even the spears and javelins were all brought out, in



preparation to face the first wave of experts on the flying magical creatures.

As time passed silently, Laureton and the rest had discussed for a long time. Finally, they finally determined the three hundred experts in the first wave and they would be protecting tens of valuable mages. The first wave could be described as the concentration of the strongest experts in the few powers, with the weakest swordsmen which were included in the first wave also reaching the rank of senior swordsmen.

The dead of night was able to conceal their movements. At night, the fog would also become denser, hence the operation was expectedly arranged to be a night mission.

As the full moon slowly rose into the sky and shined gentle moonlight, the lofty precipice was shrouded in white mist. More than two hundred harpies, frost eagles, griffins, pegasus and various flying magical creatures were formed into teams. They were gathered from the House of Menlo under Adam Menlo's orders.

The three hundred experts picked out from the various powers were ready and waiting for these flying magical beasts to appear. At the instructions of the heads of the three powers, all of them mounted the tamed magical creatures. The leaders Adam Menlo and Florida were also among them.

Florida himself was a mage and didn't require any flying magical creature mount. Adam Menlo rode his super rank golden-winged roc, which had finally recovered after he had spent a huge amount of resources on it. However, the feathers on the golden-winged roc were very sparse, making it look a little miserable.

The golden-winged roc was in such miserable circumstances due to protecting Adam Menlo. It was also because of Adam Menlo's endless hatred toward Han Shuo that he made a move on Trunks.

Although Laureton could reach thrice berserk and his strength was higher than both Adam Menlo and Florida, he still was unable to fly.

Furthermore, they needed someone to control and arrange matters for

the majority left behind. Hence Laureton rationally stayed behind to take charge, instead of joining the first wave of attack.

Under the hazy moonlight, the flying magical creatures spread their wings, forming a screen in the sky which obstructed the moonlight. Lifting his head as he gazed at the ascending magical creatures, Laureton was actually somewhat uneasy.

Actually, ever since Trunks had suddenly be miraculously rescued, Laureton had an uneasy feeling. This was because, no matter how he saw it, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band should have sunk into frenetic circumstances after they lost their leader Trunks. He was clear about dark dragon Gilbert's strength, but as he had been in contact with Gilbert before, Laureton knew that Gilbert was purely a subordinate and definitely wouldn't be able to come up with any meticulous plans!

The reason why Laureton waited for so long was that he firmly believed that the Soul Destroyer mercenary band would leave their natural stronghold and attack. At that time, they would be able to easily annihilate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's experts. However, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's ability to stay calm surpassed his expectations. Not only did they not exit their natural stronghold, they even recalled all their experts in the surroundings.

When the news of Trunks' disappearance had spread, Laureton was truly surprised. After much contemplation, he gradually felt that there was another hidden hand within the Soul Destroyer mercenary band controlling the ground. It was precisely because of this hidden existence that the Soul Destroyer mercenary band were able to stabilize and slowly start to organize their resistance.

"I must be thinking too much. Currently, it has reached an important period of time within Ossen City. That fellow shouldn't have come." Laureton rubbed his head as he muttered to himself.

"Leader, it would be absolutely safe this time around. The person you are worried about wouldn't appear. I've received news yesterday that he is definitely still within Ossen City. It is impossible that he would show up in

the Valley of Sunshine. Don't worry, we will definitely be able to eradicate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band." Harris understood what Laureton was worried about. The reason why Laureton had chosen to act this time around was precisely because he was sure that Han Shuo was too busy to worry about the matters of the Valley of Sunshine. Otherwise, Laureton might still be hesitating!

"I hope that is the case. Although Trunks was frightening, he still isn't my primary concern. Only that fellow would be the most troublesome opponent. Ah, it's a pity. Trunks and that fellow are true men. If not for Trunks' Soul Destroyer mercenary band becoming the biggest threat to our mercenary band, perhaps I could still be friends with them." Laureton sighed as he said to Harris.

"This is their choice. When they first arrived in the Valley of Sunshine, Leader had already tossed them an olive branch, only for them to reject it. Now that things have reached this point, Leader can't be blamed to have acted ruthlessly. This is all due to their ambition to seize the power in our hands." Harris knitted his brows as he reassured Laureton.

"Forget it, let's drop the conversation. However, I feel that something's not right. I hope that Florida and Adam Menlo wouldn't disappoint me this time." Laureton's bald head was illuminated by the moonlight. This meant that Adam Menlo's flying magical creatures no longer concealed the moonlight and had already entered the foggy area.

"Everyone be careful. Although they are unable to notice us, we still need to be attentive and be cautious of any changes!" Adam Menlo said to the surrounding people while on his super rank golden-winged roc.

"Leader, be at ease. We know what needs to be done." The people from the House of Menlo smiled as they responded, grasping the magical staffs in their hands tightly, prepared to deal with any possible changes.

A short distance away from Adam Menlo's flying troop, Florida's eyes sparkled as he carefully watched for any potential anomalies. He then softly whispered to his trusted aides, as though discussing details of the operation later.

As the wave of people passed through the dense fog, they reached an area where the fog was thinner. In a few hundred meters, they would have entered the territory of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. A huge indistinct shadow gradually appeared from within the thin fog. Transforming into a dark dragon, Gilbert's lantern-like eyes stared at the three hundred intruders. Without saying a word, a dragon breath which was mixed with a fishy smell was shot out.

Having evolved into a rank two magical creature, the toxins in Gilbert's breath was even more frightening. In such a humid environment, the strength of the toxins was enhanced substantially. More than ten swordsmen and mages who rode on harpies were the first to be sprayed head-on by Gilbert's breath.

An extremely stifling feeling was suddenly felt on their chests as if they were suddenly being crushed by a mountain. Apart from the harpies who were also poisonous magical creatures, the humans were all dizzy with blood flowing from their nose and mouth. Besides the toxins, the force of the dragon breath was also equally terrifying. The harpies shrilled loudly as they swayed, throwing off more than ten people in the process.

"Dark dragon! It's that dark dragon!" Terrified shouts could suddenly be heard. Some people have clearly spotted Gilbert.

"Hey, all of you dare to come to my territory, die for me!" Gilbert's imposing voice resounded through the sky. With a swing of his neck, a raging fireball was shot out, burning down more than ten magical creatures and humans who had scattered.

"Attack, it's just a dark dragon, there's nothing to be afraid of!" Adam Menlo who had just arrived suddenly shouted aloud, the wings of the golden-winged roc underneath him suddenly set off a hurricane, covering an area of ten meters, directing Gilbert's fireball to the side.

Riding the golden-winged roc, Adam Menlo who held a pike which sparkled in silver radiance charged toward Gilbert like lightning. On the other side, a few mages who had steadied themselves interweaved magic spells and continuously shooting them toward Gilbert.

If it was only Adam Menlo, Gilbert wasn't afraid. However, just as Han Shuo described, the first wave of attack which gathered the strongest experts from the three powers was definitely not something Gilbert could deal with himself. Several magic spells of different types suddenly flew over and Gilbert had no choice but to dodge the attacks and hide within the dense fog.

"Hmph, with just a dark dragon, what can you achieve!" Adam Menlo loudly ridiculed, waving his hand and said, "Our whereabouts are exposed, we need to quickly head to that place. We must not delay and give them the chance to prepare."

"Charge. After tonight, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band would forever disappear from the Valley of Sunshine!" Florida similarly shouted coldly, utilizing floating magic to take the lead toward Adam Menlo's location. "Huhu... Huhu..." strange noises suddenly appeared from all directions.

"That's weird, what's that sound!" A mercenary said what was on everyone's mind as everyone looked around puzzledly, not knowing what was that queer sound.

Out of a sudden, a dense crowd of creatures enveloped them like a dark cloud as dense as a swarm of locusts. They saw thousands upon thousands of gargoyles that were arranged in orderly lines rapidly approaching the area.

Gargoyles aren't formidable undead creatures, their individual fighting strength was lower than any flying magical creature from the House of Menlo.

However, gargoyles usually appeared in groups!

There would definitely not be just one or two gargoyles appearing. This time around, with his greatly improved mental energy, Han Shuo had summoned more than four thousand gargoyles at once, which seriously seemed like a dense dark cloud.

Any living creature at scale would be extremely terrifying. Even for mosquitoes and ants, once they were at scale, they would also be the

nightmare of stronger creatures. For gargoyles who individually had an extraordinary attack, once they were at scale, they would naturally be more terrifying. When the surrounding gargoyles seemed to fill up the entire space, the first wave of experts who had thought that their sneak attack wouldn't be detected were all momentarily stunned.

“Light mages, purify these filthy existences for me!” Florida was only distracted for two seconds and was the first to shout out orders when the gargoyles were getting closer.

After he shouted, Florida himself started to act, rapidly retrieving his magic staff and reciting a magic spell. A ring condensed from light elements suddenly flew toward the gargoyle swarm. The ring immediately turned thirty gargoyles into asses when it charged into the gargoyle swarm.

There were another seven light mages within this group of experts. They were unwilling to fall behind, all of them unleashing the light magic they were proficient at when they saw Florida making his move. As each light magic spell entered the gargoyle swarm, they really caused huge damage to the group of gargoyles.

However, the strongest Florida was only a light archmage. The stronger of the rest were only adept mages while the weaker ones were only novice mages. There was a limit to the strength of the light magic they could unleash and a loss of two hundred gargoyles was simply negligible when compared to their total number of four thousand.

“Idiots! Undead creatures do fear light magic, but other elements of magic were also useful. Why are all of you staring blankly over there, act quickly!” When Adam Menlo saw that the remaining mages merely watched when the light mages acted, he cursed them exasperatedly.

Being scolded by Adam Menlo, these people suddenly reacted, the mages started chanting different spells one after another. Wind blades, lightning and fire serpents whistled as they flew from every direction toward the gargoyles, suddenly causing the deaths of another four to five hundred.

However, at this moment, the gargoyles had finally charged into their

ranks. Groups of gargoyles scattered, clawing and biting specifically at these mages. The magical creatures under them also spared no effort in battling the gargoyle swarm.

Suddenly, magnificent rays of light radiated in the whole sky as a dark shadow flew about, accompanied by mournful cries from time to time as one person after another fell from the towering height, their bodies torn and their bones crushed.

“Wakaka, I’m here again. I want to see how do you all beat me this time around!” dark dragon Gilbert shouted arrogantly once again, his enormous body extending out.

By dark dragon Gilbert’s side, hydra Lania was like an enormous octopus, charging together with dark dragon Gilbert towards the experts who were attacked by the gargoyle swarm.

“Florida, we meet again!” Han Shuo’s voice suddenly sounded. Within another wave of gargoyles, Han Shuo had a dark expression as he walked on the air toward Florida.

Behind Han Shuo, the numerous gargoyles whistled and danced violently, as an enormous undead flying creature slowly appeared from within the gargoyle swarm. The majestic little skeleton raised his three-meter long bone spear as he rode on the bone demon, closely following behind Han Shuo.

# Chapter 404: I learned it from you

When the first gargoyle appeared, Florida already knew that the fiend had arrived. However, this battle had no turning back. Hence, Florida attacked without regard, attempting to first decrease the number of undead creatures as much as possible and forcefully charging to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band's base and fight them to the death.

Countless gargoyles surrounded Han Shuo, accompanying Han Shuo as he headed toward Florida. At this moment, Florida was frightened but the ire in his heart also couldn't be contained, unwaveringly staring at Han Shuo with a hostile gaze.

Florida had no reason not to hate him!

From the day Han Shuo arrived at the Valley of Sunshine, it seemed to have cemented Florida's ill fortune. Firstly, Han Shuo snatched away Phoebe who Florida fancied. Soon after, he had grouped together with Florida's arch-enemy Trunks. He also embarrassed Florida time and time again, even seriously injuring him in public.

Besides that, Han Shuo had even wrecked their meticulously planned ambush, violently killing his beloved grandfather, causing his relationship with the Church of Light to unprecedentedly worsen.

Before Han Shuo came to the Valley of Sunshine, everything within the Valley of Sunshine operated as Florida fancied. Drawing support from the Church of Light, Florida had complete confidence in replacing the Cairo mercenary band and become the true master of the Valley of Sunshine and control the enormous resources of the Valley of Sunshine.

Based on his plan, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band would have the rights to control the Valley of Sunshine, while Butcher Gustav assisted in the shadows. He would be able to nibble away at the various powers within the Valley of Sunshine and possess everything in the Valley of Sunshine at that time.

Unfortunately, Han Shuo's appearance caused the situation to keep regressing, developing in a completely different trajectory from what he



imagined. When Han Shuo left, he still left behind the cancerous Soul Destroyer mercenary band, nibbling at his hopes and expectations little by little.

“My greatest mistake is precisely that I didn’t risk everything to kill you in the beginning!” Giving Han Shuo a death stare, Florida gnashed his teeth as he spoke, his voice filled with bitter resentment and hatred.

Han Shuo suddenly laughed, his laughter extremely bright and clear, as if his laughter became a huge winding dragon that soared into the skies. Not just the immediate area, even Laureton and the rest below were able to hear it clearly.

“Florida, I truly feel pity for you. You naively believed that with your grandfather’s support, you would be able to act as you wished in the Valley of Sunshine. On one hand, you despicably seized the Rainbow Sickie mercenary band, and on another, you collaborated with the most merciless bandit in the shadows. You really think that you are above the law!

Heh, what a pity, what a pity. There’s not only you who is smart and it’s not your turn to call the shots. Your grandfather wasn’t able to protect you your whole life. Now that that old bastard Ferguson is dead, you no longer have any cards to play. Ha, why am I saying so much nonsense to you? In any case, you will die soon!” Han Shuo smiled as he mocked Florida.

When he heard Han Shuo’s mocking, Florida’s expression became extremely downcast as if someone had stepped on him with a filthy shoe. He glared hatefully at the gradually approaching Han Shuo, taking a deep breath and said, “Today, only one of us will survive!”

“Of course it is you who will die!” Han Shuo shouted coldly, suddenly speeding up his steps toward Florida. He was like a streak of lightning that cut across the sky, charging towards Florida at great speed.

At the same time, the other thousands of gargoyles behind Han Shuo suddenly scattered into different troops, swarming like locusts toward the experts that were being attacked by the previous group of gargoyles.

The little skeleton who rode on the flying bone demon stood majestically

on a flat portion of the bone demon's back. With his Purple Demon Eye sparkling, he sized up the battlefield. Pointing his three-meter long bone spear toward Adam Menlo, the wings of the bone demon flapped once, directly gliding toward Adam Menlo.

The harpies, frost eagles, pegasus, griffins, wyverns and various types of magical creatures had all been tamed by the House of Menlo at high costs. These flying magical beasts were each able to face a few gargoyles at once. Furthermore, they were either carrying a high ranked swordsman or a mage. In theory, they shouldn't be at much of a disadvantage.

Unfortunately, the reality wasn't as such. Although a magical creature and the expert riding it should be able to handle tens of gargoyles, when a swarm of gargoyles suddenly charged over, the dense aura was able to shake their confidence. The strong rotting stench was hard to bear, causing more trouble than they expected.

There were simply too many gargoyles. When tens of gargoyles attacked a magical creature together, even creatures like harpies and griffins were unable to withstand it. Furthermore, there were also Gilbert and hydra Lania, two tyrannical super rank magical creatures stirring up trouble. In just a few moments, many experts had either been killed by the gargoyles or the magical creature they rode had been beat to death, causing them to also fall into the endless abyss.

Within the layers of gargoyles, the little skeleton held its three-meter long bone spear. The little skeleton and the bone demon were both immune to ordinary spells. As it rode the bone demon, it was incomparably awe-inspiring. While flying toward Adam Menlo, a harpy brandished its sharp claw toward the little skeleton. Before it could even near the little skeleton, it was pierced through by the little skeleton's three-meter long bone spear.

After the petite little skeleton had pierced through the several meter long harpy, the powerful spear didn't pause and instead followed through to kill the fire mage as well. The little skeleton used the bone spear easily lift up the huge and heavy harpy. With a mysterious tremble of his finger bone, an enormous amount of death qi violently flowed through the bone

spear into the harpy's body. The harpy suddenly exploded wildly above his head.

Chunks of the harpy's flesh mixed with rich death qi scattered like heavy rocks. Whoever was hit by the flesh of the harpy and was infected by even the tiniest amount of death qi would ice cold and uncomfortable from head to toe, causing their movements to become stiff.

As the little skeleton headed toward Adam Menlo, it had merely got rid of a harpy effortlessly along the way. Suddenly, everyone understood the terror of this undead creature. As they dealt with the countless gargoyles that covered the sky, they were still extremely well coordinated, opening a path for the little skeleton directly toward Adam Menlo.

As Adam Menlo closely watched dark dragon Gilbert, the super rank golden-winged roc under him was able to proficiently manipulate wind magic, sending out waves of wind blades in all directions without much movement from its wings. All the gargoyles that were attempting to approach Adam Menlo were killed one after another by the golden-winged roc's wind blades.

Facing a golden-winged roc which was a super rank magical creature of the highest level, the swarms of gargoyles were clearly unable to achieve much. Even with most of its feathers missing. The defensive ability of the golden-winged roc body was still much stronger than ordinary magical creatures.

It was exactly because of this that Han Shuo didn't waste many gargoyles in attacking Adam Menlo, merely asking Gilbert to impede him. Having evolved and becoming a rank two magical creature, Gilbert could be said to be evenly matched with the golden-winged roc that Han Shuo had previously severely injured.

All kinds of toxins and raging flames were shot out, mixing with Lania's reckless attacks. These created a large hindrance to Adam Menlo and the golden-winged roc, causing Adam Menlo to be pestered beyond his endurance.

However, the golden-winged roc was a super rank magical creature and

Adam Menlo himself was a sky rider. With the two of them combined together, their strengths were amplified. Hence, Gilbert and Lania were unable to get an advantage.

Just as Gilbert was shouting arrogantly at Adam Menlo as he annoyed him, the little skeleton appeared on its bone demon. When the little skeleton reached the area, his Purple Demon Eye shone as it made peculiar gestures toward Gilbert.

The little skeleton first used the bone spear to point at Gilbert before pointing toward the others who were desperately resisting the gargoyles. Soon after, at Gilbert's amazement, the little skeleton then pointed his bone spear at Adam Menlo, before using his other hand to point toward himself.

After he finished gesturing, the little skeleton's Purple Demon Eye sparkled as he looked straight at Gilbert. Gilbert's lantern-like eyes stared foolishly at the little skeleton. While Lania was still obstructing Adam Menlo and the golden-winged roc, Gilbert finally asked cautiously, "Are you saying that you want me to attack the others and leave this fellow to you?"

The little skeleton's Purple Demon Eye brightened, casually nodding toward Gilbert, implying, "That's right. Get a move on, don't obstruct me anymore!"

Dark dragon Gilbert was extremely flabbergasted, attentively watching the little skeleton and the undead creature he rode, somewhat stunned for a moment.

"Dammit, you heartless creature, you still aren't coming to help me?" By the side, Lania was desperately fending off Adam Menlo's attacks. When she suddenly saw that Gilbert who was originally fighting side by side with her actually staring blankly at the side, she couldn't help but scold him hastily.

Dark dragon Gilbert quickly came to his senses, looking at the little skeleton once again, he saw the little skeleton raising the three-meter-long bone spear and arrogantly charged toward Adam Menlo. When the three-

meter-long bone spear pointed at Adam Menlo, an incomparably huge amount of death qi rippled in all directions.

It was only at this moment that Gilbert truly felt that the seemingly small body of the little skeleton contained such a frightening mystical power! Gilbert suddenly understood that although he had evolved into a rank two magical creature, the little skeleton was actually more terrifying than him, so much so that the little skeleton possessed enough strength to kill Gilbert himself.

“Lania, let’s go. We’ll go and kill others rather than torment this old thing!” Having understood the little skeleton’s message, Gilbert suddenly shouted loudly toward Lania.

“You idiot! Are you crazy? Didn’t master instruct the two of us to impede this old thing. Are you seeking to be punished? Why aren’t you coming over to help me!” As Lania spoke, her body gradually became hidden and soon after an enormous column of water charged toward Adam Menlo.

“There is someone who offered to deal with him, let’s not stay and hinder him any longer, let’s leave!” dark dragon Gilbert replied loudly, “You coquettish lady, hurry up and come with me!” Lania who had used the column of water to conceal her body gradually revealed herself. When she saw the little skeleton who was riding the flying bone demon over, Lania suddenly felt a feeling of being between laughter and tears rise within her heart. She then mocked Gilbert, saying, “Stupid dragon, this little skeleton is the volunteer you mentioned?”

Just as Lania finished her sentence, the little skeleton’s Purple Demon Eye suddenly lit up with glaring purple light. The three meter long bone spear suddenly transmitted a surge of death qi, causing a feeling of desolation to spread in all directions.

Lania naturally felt the tremendous aura and was incomparably surprised as she watched the little skeleton fly over. She immediately became silent, and with Gilbert’s repeated urging, Lania no longer hesitated, her heart filled with countless doubts as she hurriedly avoided the approaching little skeleton and bone demon, flying to Gilbert’s side.

“What, what is with this little skeleton? Why do I feel a terrifying strength from him?” When Lania reached Gilbert’s side, she could no longer suppress the puzzlement in her heart, frantically asking Gilbert.

## Part 2

“Don’t ask me, I don’t know either. I only know that he is Master’s first undead creature. However, what I would never be able to understand is, how does a little skeleton have the same frightening aura as a bone dragon!” Gilbert blinked his lantern-sized eyes as he explained to Lania.

Hearing Gilbert’s explanation, Lania was dumbfounded. She couldn’t help but cast her line of sight toward Gilbert’s master.

In an area fifty meters away, Han Shuo had a ruthless and gloomy expression as he manipulated the Demonslayer Edge which was dripping fresh blood, setting out to massacre all the enemies around him.

Florida was holed up within layers of protection by his Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, unceasingly casting various light magic spells to purify the surrounding frantically charging gargoyles. The gargoyles were annihilated one after another by his light magic.

As a light mage, Florida was the largest threat to these undead creatures within the group. As he was also the leader of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, his subordinates all surrounded him, doing their utmost to protect him.

Florida, who was being protected by the crowd, consumed all his energy to cast light magic spells in succession, purifying all the gargoyles in their immediate area into dust. The low-rank gargoyles were as frail as zombie warriors, being eliminated one after another by the light archmage’s light magic.

As the battle raged on in the air, it was only Florida’s area that didn’t have many gargoyles breaking through. Based on the situation, this area ought to be the area where the elites of the three powers felt the most comfortable.

However, the reality was that the area Florida was in suffered the most

casualties. The number of magical creatures and elites killed far exceeded the number that was besieged by gargoyles in other areas.

Simply because Han Shuo was here!

As he wielded the Demonslayer Edge, Han Shuo stared at Florida like a blood-soaked demon god. Han Shuo's current strength far exceeded Florida's. If not for the valiant mercenaries from the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band who sacrificed their lives to resist Han Shuo, Florida would have long since died by Han Shuo's hand.

Despite the sacrifices of the mercenaries and the layers of protection, Florida's leg was still pierced through, resulting in a bloody hole. If not for a swordmaster by his side reacting in time, Florida might have suffered even heavier injuries.

In just a moment of effort, the Demonslayer Edge had killed five harpies, three griffins, two frost eagles and thirteen experts of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. The drops of scarlet blood that rolled off the Demonslayer Edge symbolized the experts Florida depended on to still be alive until now.

"Heh, how long more can you hide for!" Han Shuo smiled ruthlessly, tossing a pegasus' corpse downwards as he ridiculed Florida.

"Le, leader, what should we do, should we retreat?" by Florida's side, the swordmaster who had saved Florida's life looked at the fiend-like Han Shuo, his lips trembling as he asked Florida.

"We still have a chance. Don't you see that the number of gargoyles in the sky decreasing? Gargoyles are after all just low ranked undead creatures. Under the attack of so many spells, they are simply unable to obstruct our progress!" Florida who was hidden in the crowd inspected the surroundings and replied encouragingly. "But we are only left with a hundred people!" The swordmaster clearly feared Florida but still stated the facts.

"We must obtain victory. Otherwise, the three powers would no longer have the chance to hold the greatest power in the Valley of Sunshine!" Florida was flustered and exasperated as he bellowed in rage.

How could he not know that two-thirds of the experts from the three powers have already died? However, he understood that at this moment, they could only persist and fight on. Otherwise, the huge number of casualties would have been in vain.

Swish, swish, swish!

A large amount of arrows suddenly shot out from the Soul Destroyer mercenary band in the distance. The arrow rain was locked onto the invading magical creatures and in just a moment, more than ten magical creatures who were nearing the area were suddenly riddled with holes like a hornet's nest.

"Everyone retreat!" A roar that resounded across the whole area suddenly sounded from a remote place, the sound originating from Cairo mercenary band's Laureton.

Laureton's bald head was incomparably shiny and his expression extremely unsightly. A mage stood by his side, casting Sky's Eye and describing the battle in the sky to Laureton.

Although Laureton had yet to participate in the battle, there were already other experts from the Cairo mercenary band that had entered the battle in the skies. Seeing many of his trusted brothers dying tragically, Laureton knew that the so-called sneak-attack had completely failed. Laureton had no choice but to berserk and call for a retreat so as to prevent the losses from increasing.

As Laureton's roar resounded through the sky, Florida and Adam Menlo who were above naturally heard it. Without waiting for them to move, the surviving experts of the Cairo mercenary band immediately descended without saying a single word.

While Adam Menlo was forced to repeatedly fall back by the three-meter-long bone spear wielding little skeleton, the sullen and depressed feeling in his heart was the strongest in his entire life. He was unable to understand how the little skeleton before him would have such a rich and strong aura of death.

The little skeleton's bone spear carried a terrifying corrosive death qi,



every attack causing incomparable suffering to Adam Menlo. If not for the golden-winged roc helping him to fend off the attacks and receiving many wounds in the process, the little skeleton might have already pierced through Adam Menlo's body.

"Wh, what exactly are you?" Adam Menlo asked repeated. He could sense that the little skeleton possessed intelligence. Unfortunately, the little skeleton was unable to answer him and instead wielded his bone spear repeatedly, causing Adam Menlo to retreat little by little.

"Ma, master, I can't hold on!" After the golden-winged roc helped Adam Menlo withstand a few strikes, it had eventually reached its limits and gently called to Adam Menlo.

At the very same moment, Laureton's loud shouts could be heard from below. Adam Menlo could only stare blankly for a moment. When he realized that the people from the Cairo mercenary band retreating in an attempt to break away from the battlefield, he suddenly felt a powerless feeling of despair rise in his heart. "Let's go. We'll, we'll retreat too!" When Adam Menlo gave the order, he truly felt like crying. Having brought out the hidden cards of the House of Menlo, Adam Menlo originally thought that they would be able to effortlessly eliminate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. Who would have known that the jinx would appear once again, simply using a swarm of gargoyles that filled the sky to turn around the situation and even causing huge losses?

Although this wave of attackers only had three hundred people, these were the true elites of the three powers, the foundation they depended on. Each one of them was an expert that could face ten people alone. But who would have thought that in the end, they would suffer such a fate.

A shrill cry could suddenly be heard from the golden-winged roc. The golden-winged roc rolled in pain while saying, "Master, master, there's something happening within my body. I can't, I can't take it anymore!"

A clear popping sound could suddenly be heard from within the golden-winged roc's body. The golden-winged roc's huge body could be seen withering slowly as fresh blood sprayed out like fine rain.

Intense corrosive death qi which converged within the rich killing intent suddenly exploded violently within the golden-winged roc, causing the interior of the golden-winged roc to rapidly shatter and the aura of life to gradually leave the golden-winged roc.

In the distance, Han Shuo who was preparing to finish Florida off suddenly detected an extremely familiar aura. Turning toward the aura, he suddenly discovered the changes within the golden-winged roc's body, sensing the familiar sinister killing intent within. Han Shuo was shocked as he looked at the little skeleton whose Purple Demon Eye sparkled in bright light as he closely watched the golden-winged roc. Only Han Shuo knew that the intense death qi within the golden-winged roc was bound into a ball by the demonic magic's Hidden Explosion Technique. He had inserted the concealed explosive death qi when the bone spear pierced through the golden-winged roc's body, suddenly detonating it when it was unprepared, causing the golden-winged roc's innards to suddenly explode!

Han Shuo had already known previously that the little skeleton knew some demonic magic. However, he had never expected that the little skeleton had become so sinister. For an undead creature to use such malicious methods, this made Han Shuo to truly feel extremely stunned, causing him to sigh.

"This fellow is truly becoming more and more vicious, able to control such a vicious method. I truly don't know how he does it!" Han Shuo repeatedly lamented in his heart.

"Father, I learned all of these from you. I've inherited part of your intelligence!" The little skeleton suddenly transmitted a message, as though he knew of Han Shuo's puzzlement and wanted to give Han Shuo an explanation.

Han Shuo was stunned, staring blankly on the spot. Am I that sinister and malicious? Han Shuo laughed bitterly as he thought to himself.

"Strike him hard while he's down! I learned this from Father as well!" The little skeleton transmitted another message over. As Han Shuo watched in astonishment, the little skeleton rode the bone skeleton and

suddenly flew toward Adam Menlo.

Adam Menlo who was sent rolling repeatedly due to the inner explosion of the golden-winged roc wasn't able to even stand still at this moment, simply unable to construct an effective defense.

Right at this moment, the little skeleton's bone spear shot over once again. This time around, there was no longer the golden-winged roc helping him to withstand it. By the time Adam Menlo could react, the sharp pain from the bone spear had already spread through his whole body. He lowered his head, discovering a huge hole in his chest.

The three meter long bone spear which had seized his life flew in a loop after it pierced through his body, returning to the little skeleton's hand once again. The little skeleton's sparkling Purple Demon Eye looked on as Adam Menlo gradually lost consciousness before turning around to leave.

"Father, did I do the right thing?" After the little skeleton killed Adam Menlo, he sent a message to Han Shuo once again to seek confirmation.

At this point, Han Shuo was thoroughly speechless!

# Chapter 405: Unable to escape

Not only did the little skeleton have intelligence, it was also a little sinister and ruthless. This really caused Han Shuo to feel conflicted.

However, what Han Shuo could be sure of was that the current the little skeleton would be able to survive better in the netherworld. In that realm full of slaughter and invasion, the little skeleton was strong enough to let him feel reassured.

With the head of the House of Menlo dead, the willpower that Florida had just barely maintained finally collapsed. Florida no longer dared to continue staying in the air, desperately yelling for his men to retreat and flew towards Laureton.

“Hehe, you are still thinking of escaping!” Han Shuo’s cold laugh suddenly arose. Issuing an order, dark dragon Gilbert, hydra Lania and the little skeleton all abruptly gathered by Han Shuo’s side and fought their way toward Florida.

There were still around twenty experts of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band surrounding Florida. Once Florida met up with Laureton, killing him would become extremely difficult. This time, Han Shuo was resolute in killing Florida, so as to avoid leaving endless trouble for Trunks.

Before, when Han Shuo alone headed towards Florida with murderous intent, the experts that surrounded Florida disregarded everything to attack Han Shuo. Although Han Shuo had killed a number of experts along the way, he was still unable to finish off Florida like he’d wanted to.

However, with the addition of two super rank magical creatures and the little skeleton, the experts surrounding Florida were unable to threaten them. Han Shuo only needed to keep his eyes on Florida. The rest were naturally disposed of by the little skeleton and the others.

Rain of fire, ice cones, wind blades, lightning and other spells were recklessly aimed at Han Shuo and the others. Because of this shower of magic, the dim sky suddenly became colorful, as though a group of beautiful fireworks was glamorously blooming open.

Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy circulated, a thin cicada wing-like protective layer surrounded his body. On the outer surface, a large bone shield with bone thorns savagely poking out formed. Most of the spells were blocked by the bone shield. Gilbert and Lania made use of this opportunity to release attacks of toxins and torrential rain.

Bearing the murky protective layer, Han Shuo flashed through the crowd. After continuously shifting a few times, he had already arrived in front of Florida.

A dense burst of bone spears suddenly shot out explosively from Han Shuo. The group of people who were defending against Gilbert and Lania's attacks became even more flustered. At this time, the Demonslayer Edge in Han Shuo's hands soundlessly disappeared again and gradually closing in from a hidden angle.

The little skeleton, who was riding the bone demon, had unexpectedly arrived behind Florida's group. It imposingly raised up its three-meter-long bone lance and thrusting it toward Florida and the others who have just reacted. The rich death qi carried a coldness and desolation that did not exist in this world.

"Be-behind!" Florida's group of people reacted relatively swiftly. Once they felt the violent wind from behind, they realized the danger behind them.

When the little skeleton killed Adam Menlo earlier, as Han Shuo did not fiercely attack Florida's group as he was watching attentively in surprise, they also had the time to see the whole process. The little skeleton who was able to kill Adam Menlo who was riding the golden-winged roc was definitely as dangerous to Florida as Han Shuo himself. Hence he immediately shouted loudly once he saw the little skeleton attacking from behind them.

With the current state of the situation, it was clear that the number of people assisting Florida wasn't enough. With Gilbert and Lania attacking from the sides, the overbearing Han Shuo attacked from the front and suddenly there was an otherworldly powerhouse appearing behind them.

If they were focused on one side, they wouldn't be able to resist another. Facing the waves of simultaneous attacks, Florida suddenly felt an intense unease within his heart. He looked at Han Shuo who was sneering as he killed his way over, suddenly realizing that Han Shuo's weapon had disappeared. Florida was immediately terror-stricken when he came to this realization.

Unfortunately, his realization was still too late. The group of experts that had been distributing their efforts to deal with the three creatures was momentarily too busy to attend to Florida. When they heard a sharp cry, they realized that there was a bad turn of events.

Florida, who was exerting himself to support his defensive the light and lightning spells to their peaks, was still unable to stop the Demonslayer Edge. His lightning and light magic barrier shattered into tiny glass-like specks. The Demonslayer Edge blasted through Florida's barrier and pierced through his neck, leaving behind a bloody hole.

The hatred in Florida's eyes gradually rescinded. Without the support of mental energy, Florida's body fell sharply. A leader of the four big powers in the Valley of Sunshine had eventually died by Han Shuo's hand.

When the experts from the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band who had been tightly surrounding Florida saw Han Shuo seizing the chance to kill Florida, a feeling of despair and helplessness arose in their hearts. At this moment, the attacks of the little skeleton, Gilbert and the others fell like torrential rain, immediately taking another ten lives.

After Florida died, the first wave of experts no longer had a leader. The remaining tens of experts desperately started to retreat but continued to be killed by Han Shuo's group. Before they could reach Laureton, another twenty odd people had died.

Of the three hundred experts and the many flying magical creatures that had participated in the battle, only nineteen people and eleven magical beasts had returned to Laureton's area alive. Adam Menlo and Florida of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band would both disappear forever from the power struggle within the Valley of Sunshine.

“Ha. Laureton, it’s been a while!” Chasing after the enemy mercenaries, Han Shuo arrogantly stood in the sky, as he mockingly greeted Laureton.

On both sides of Han Shuo were the two super rank magical creatures and the little skeleton. Several hundred gargoyles were like guards as they quietly flapped their wings behind Han Shuo. Having calculated their altitude, Han Shuo wasn’t afraid of arrows being shot from below.

Laureton raised his head to stare at the sky. Seeing Han Shuo looking at him derisively, all sorts of feelings suddenly appeared in his heart. The corpses of Florida and Adam Menlo were laid out by Laureton’s side. With the other two leaders of the three powers dead, Laureton ought to be happy. But as he looked at Han Shuo, Laureton only felt increasingly flustered.

“Yes, we have not seen each other for a while. I should have expected that you had arrived long ago. Apart from you, Trunks simply didn’t have any other cards!” Laureton sighed before taking a deep breath. He then looked at Han Shuo and said, “As matters stand, I don’t have any other things to say. That’s right. It was indeed me that kidnapped Trunks, but I don’t regret it!”

With the current situation within the Valley of Sunshine, if Laureton didn’t act to deal with Trunks, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band would replace the Cairo mercenary band’s position in the Valley of Sunshine sooner or later. Naturally, he had to think of his subordinates, thus what he did was understandable.

“Indeed, there is nothing much to say. From today onwards, Cairo Mercenary band will be my mortal enemy. Laureton, try your best.” Han Shuo smiled as he looked at Laureton. He took one last glance at Florida and Adam Menlo’s corpses and then headed back towards the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

The first wave of attacks from these powers had resulted in a devastating price. Not only did this lose their most capable elites, even Florida and Adam Menlo were killed. In such a situation, the group that had formed out of benefits would be powerless against the Soul Destroyer

mercenary band.

Humans were always selfish. With Florida and Adam Menlo dead, Han Shuo was almost certain that the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo would immediately break out into chaos, especially Florida's Rainbow Sickle mercenary band which would definitely fall into a period of civil strife or break apart.

In that case, the group's threat to the Soul Destroyer mercenary band will decrease substantially. Han Shuo only needed to observe as they collapsed. Hence, he left carefreely.

Things indeed developed as Han Shuo had predicted. After Han Shuo left, the people from the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo immediately sank into strife.

In particular, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band had immediately split into a few smaller groups. Only a small portion strived for revenge. The remaining majority advocated leaving this place as soon as possible. The House of Menlo was slightly better off since Adam Menlo was after all, their senior. As the majority of the authority within the House of Menlo were in the hands of relatives, most were yelling sorrowfully about first taking revenge for Adam Menlo before deciding on other matters.

The sudden quarrels disrupted Laureton's thoughts. Looking at the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band, which was already prepared to leave, and the frightened leaders of the small powers, Laureton suddenly had a helpless feeling.

So many flying magical creatures had been killed. Wanting to rely on flying magical creatures to enter the Soul Destroyer mercenary band was completely impossible. With the existence of spatial rings, trying to starve the Soul Destroyer mercenary band to death with a siege was also impossible. The only way was to attack head-on. However, this method would come at a large cost which they simply couldn't afford.

At this moment, Laureton had no confidence in victory. As he looked at the people of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo arguing endlessly, he suddenly felt somewhat helpless.



“Chief, should we make use of this opportunity to eliminate the two groups?” While Laureton was feeling vexed, Harris suddenly approached and lowered his voice as he made a vicious suggestion.

Glancing at Harris before looking in the direction that Han Shuo had left, he smiled bitterly and said, “That fellow definitely wishes for us to do so. If we were to fight with those other two parties, it would be following his wishes. Once all three groups depleted their power and energy, the master of the Valley of Sunshine would really be the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

Harris was stunned for a moment. He processed Laureton’s words for a while before nodding and saying, “Chief is still more far-sighted. In any case, with Florida and Adam Menlo’s deaths, we have two fewer enemies. The current Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and House of Menlo are no longer enemies to fear.”

“That is also true. However, if we are unable to eliminate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band now, their reputation will increase greatly. In the future, other than our Cairo mercenary band, there will no longer be any powers that can shake their position. I’m unsure if this is fortune or misfortune!” Laureton replied painfully.

Just as Laureton and Harris were discussing quietly, some of the leaders of the smaller mercenary bands had walked over together. One of them gloomily looked at Laureton and said, “Chief Laureton, now that the situation has become like this, I think we no longer have the opportunity to destroy the Soul Destroyer mercenary band.

If the Cairo mercenary band wants us to spearhead the attack and essentially throw our lives away, I apologize. We are unwilling to exchange the price of our brothers’ lives for the benefits that you are giving us. Based on the current situation, I feel that we should just disperse!”

“I agree. That place is too hard to attack. Without the assistance of flying magical creatures, we simply have no chance of winning at all.” a leader of another small mercenary band shouted.

It seemed that there weren’t just one or two of them who had such

thoughts. All of them who had walked over together probably already planned to leave.

A bunch of short-sighted fellows! Laureton cursed them inwardly. After being silent for a moment, he said, "Consider this carefully. If we are unable to eliminate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band now, everyone that participated in this attack will all suffer a calamity. Our Cairo mercenary band has sufficient strength and aren't afraid of Trunks' revenge. As for you guys, it might become a troublesome matter."

"Chief Laureton need not to remind us of that. We've naturally also thought of it." That person replied.

"Then do as you'd like. In any case, I've already reminded you guys. When the time comes where Trunks seeks you all out for revenge, don't come and find me!" Laureton coldly snorted and disdained upon continuing to talk to them. These people looked at each other, simultaneously bidding their farewells before leading their members to leave. The majority of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band had lost their faith in Laureton once Florida died. They had already left without even notifying him.

Of the six thousand people that had come to attack the Soul Destroyer mercenary band, only around three thousand were still alive. If they wanted to attack the base of the Soul Destroyer mercenary band without flying magical creatures, it wouldn't be just a problem of the number of casualties. Instead, the question would be if they would be able to eliminate the Soul Destroyer mercenary band after suffering heavy casualties!

# Chapter 406: Three Great Enchantments

When Han Shuo returned to the Soul Destroyer Mercenary Band, he discovered that with the support of Grant, Trunks was sitting in the middle of the practice arena and was currently raising his head and staring into the vast white sky.

Trunks was still very weak. Although his wounds had been treated, it would be impossible for him to recover without ten to fifteen days of rest. The most severe injuries were his severed hand and feet tendons. Roughly a month would be needed for them to reattach and regain their original durability.

It was very clear that Trunks was worried about the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. However, as his tendons were severed, he could only sit here weakly, similar to a disabled person, unable to move his hands and feet.

Luckily his eyes had gradually recovered its light. As he gazed into the sky, he had a thoughtful expression, indicating that although he suffered heavy injuries, he still had a strong mentality.

“Why have you come out here. It is best if you sincerely stay indoors and recuperate for this period of time. Don’t worry, the invaders have already retreated in heavy defeat. In the short term, Laureton would definitely be powerless to deal with us.” Han Shuo descended by Trunks’ side and berated.

“It’s ok, I’m feeling better now. Hehe. I’m not willing to hide inside and bitterly wait for others to bring me information during the Soul Destroyer mercenary band’s most dangerous period of time.” Trunks smiled as he replied. Pausing for a moment, he knitted his brows and asked, “Bryan, is Florida dead?”

Han Shuo replied while nodding, “That’s right. I know you wanted to personally kill him, but there are immense benefits for us in killing him now. With his death, the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band would fall into disunity. The number of our enemies would also decrease greatly. Hence, I

didn't let him get away.”

Trunks sighed and said ruefully, “Hai, not killing personally can be considered regretfully but his early demise is indeed beneficial to us. If I had got rid of him previously, all these disorderly matters wouldn't have happened. It seems that I am to blame for all of these matters.”

“Besides Florida, Adam Menlo died as well. The two of them were the pillars of the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band and the House of Menlo respectively. Their deaths have caused great repercussions for the two powers. Currently, there are still three thousand people in the surroundings, including the people under Laureton. However, I believe they would be departing shortly.” Han Shuo narrated the details of the battle to Trunks.

“Don't need to worry about the remaining matters here. I know you have many matters to deal with. Leave Laureton to me. I'll send Laureton packing.” Trunks replied.

“It's just one Laureton, I can remove him in passing. It wouldn't take up too much of my time.” Han Shuo looked at Trunks in astonishment. “Based on his current injuries, he definitely won't fight with you in the near future.” Han Shuo was somewhat worried.

“Bryan, the Valley of Sunshine has its own rules. If I want to convince others, I should not completely rely on your strength. Only if I openly get rid of Laureton and the Cairo mercenary band would I be able to successfully hold power in the Valley of Sunshine and win the respect of others.” Trunks who still had a weak complexion said resolutely.

Han Shuo was stunned, hesitating a moment before saying, “But, your injuries...”

“Hehe, don't need to worry. It's not like I would immediately deal with Laureton. As you said, based on Laureton's personality, he definitely won't dare to attack this place without absolute certainty. Now that the flying magical creatures of the House of Menlo have also been killed by you, they definitely wouldn't dare to attack in the near future.

We still have Gilbert here. As time passes, they would surely give up. Be

rest assured. After experiencing the pain previously, I would no longer be complacent. I have the confidence in eradicating Laureton and the Cairo mercenary band!" Trunks looked extremely confident. Having experienced the ruthless torture previously, there seemed to be a change in Trunks' body.

When Han Shuo heard what Trunks said, he looked at Trunks deeply and hesitated for a while before smiling and said, "Since you are so insistent about it, I would no longer interfere with the matters of the Valley of Sunshine. However, if you face any difficulties, you must inform me as quickly as possible!"

"Don't worry. The Soul Destroyer mercenary band isn't solely mine. I know what needs to be done!" Trunks smiled as he replied.

"Gilbert, you stay here. Before Trunks recovers, look after him properly for me!" Han Shuo looked at Gilbert and instructed.

"Understood, honorable master." Gilbert acknowledged Han Shuo's instructions.

Trunks actually wanted to rely on his own strength. To firmly wield power within the Valley of Sunshine, he indeed couldn't rely on others for everything and could only utilize the strength he had to get rid of the strongest power in the Valley of Sunshine, the Cairo mercenary band. Only then can Trunks truly obtain everyone's respect.

For him to have such a realization and train of thought, Han Shuo was surprised and at the same time, full of admiration. This proved that Trunks was truly a talent. Furthermore, Han Shuo could see the changes in Trunks ever since he had rescued Trunks. He realized that Trunks had become stronger and more ruthless, no longer as careless and benevolent.

The previous lesson was really too cruel. Trunks had to go through torment more painful than death. There would no longer be any situations too difficult for him from now on. Han Shuo precisely noticed this and suddenly understood why Trunks asked Han Shuo to leave Laureton to him. Apart from using Laureton to test his methods, he also wanted to use Laureton to polish his martial technique.

Currently, only Laureton was able to deal with Trunks within the entire Valley of Sunshine. If Han Shuo killed Laureton now, Trunks would lose the most suitable opponent. Not only would he lose much pleasure, he would also lose a turning point in making a breakthrough. It was also only through Laureton that Trunks would be able to improve once again.

Having understood Trunks' intention, Han Shuo didn't insist on his own thoughts and truly let go of matters within the Valley of Sunshine. He then said his goodbyes to Trunks and Gilbert within the same day, returning to the Cemetery of Death from the Valley of Sunshine.

Returning to the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo followed his original purpose and headed down to explore.

The reason why he returned to Cemetery of Death was due to Wolf's information. Were it not for Gilbert suddenly requesting for emergency assistance, Han Shuo would have already long since explored the third layer of the Cemetery of Death. Now that he had returned, Han Shuo immediately headed below the Cemetery of Death.

Having had the previous experiences, Han Shuo's exploration seemed to be a walk in the park. Han Shuo instilled his mental energy into the first two layers, easily breaking through the enchantments and headed for the passageway that led to the third layer. Han Shuo only stopped when he sensed the existence of an enchantment.

Taking a deep breath, Han Shuo slowly condensed his mental energy to probe the area where the enchantment was.

Bang...

Han Shuo's mental energy had just touched the area when his mind was suddenly jolted as a large force suddenly rushed forward, like countless small snakes forcing their way into Han Shuo's mind. This caused Han Shuo to feel an endless tingling pain.

Fortunately, Han Shuo had prior experience, hastily holding his breath in rapt attention, directing stronger mental energy into the enchantment, attempting to break through the enchantment like the previous two occasions. The skeletal staff in his hand shone brightly in tri-colored light.

Peng!

Han Shuo had suddenly struck out, yet the enchantment had not been broken and Han Shuo himself was repelled. Right when Han Shuo was becoming extremely frightened, the countless snake-like energy that barged into Han Shuo's mind suddenly became orderly from its original chaos, forming lines of bright magic symbols.

As Han Shuo had delved into necromancy magic for a long time, when those magic symbols appeared in his mind, he was extremely surprised. Soon after, the tri-colored light from the skeletal staff in his hand suddenly became brighter as three strands of demonic light climbed along Han Shuo's arm and slowly entered his body.

The tri-colored light from the skeletal staff traveled up Han Shuo's arm, directly flowing into Han Shuo's mind, coming together with the countless magical symbols and arranging into paragraphs of incantations that Han Shuo could understand, as well as paragraphs of information.

Han Shuo stared blankly for a moment before quickly coming to himself, hastily memorizing the information that had appeared in his mind. The paragraphs of incantations and information were rapidly imprinted into his mind. The entire process didn't persist for too long. With the degree of development of his brain, Han Shuo very quickly remembered the information within his mind.

"Before becoming a sacred magus necromancer, the next enchantment cannot be opened. It contains the secret for a necromancer to become God..."

"The skeletal staff possesses three basic abilities. Apart from the first ability of doubling the might of spells, the other two abilities require additional incantations. The incantations specifically are..."

"Enchantment of Fear, Enchantment of Weakness and Enchantment of Age. The incantations and way of applying these enchantments are..."

The magic symbols swiveled around Han Shuo's mind, finally forming three pieces of information. The first was that only a sacred magus can enter the next layer. Secondly, the incantations for rejuvenation and

entering the netherworld and lastly, the three long lost enchantments of necromancers.

The next layer actually had the secret for a necromancer to become God!

Han Shuo was extremely surprised as he looked ahead toward the pathway blocked by a single enchantment. He was shocked by the information within his mind and was lost in thought for a long time. There were too many thoughts appearing in his mind.

Han Shuo only slowly suppressed his chaotic state of mind after a long time. The first piece of information still didn't mean much to him, but the second and third piece of information was of great use at the present time.

Of the three mysterious abilities of the skeletal staff, the ability to double the power of spells didn't need a supporting incantation, but the rejuvenation ability and the ability for the soul to freely enter the netherworld were not as simple to bring about. For example, for the soul to travel back and forth from the netherworld, it required the support of many complicated incantations as well as a precise understanding of your own soul.

For the rejuvenation ability to succeed, it needed to utilize the energy contained within the skeletal staff. This energy wasn't something everyone could endure and only those that have been approved by the skeletal staff would be able to transform themselves through the energy contained within the skeletal staff.

Previously, Wolf obviously fulfilled this condition. According to Wolf, all the disciples of the Calamity Church seemed to fulfill the condition to be reformed by the skeletal staff. All the old fellows within the Calamity Church who had lived for countless years could make use of this energy to return to their youth.

Enchantment of Fear, Enchantment of Weakness and Enchantment of Age are three of the ancient necromancers' large-scale magic enchantments. Enemies who were shrouded by the Enchantment of Fear would have dread forming in their hearts, their ability to judge and their willpower would be influenced by the Enchantment of Fear and drop



substantially. The Enchantment of Weakness, on the other hand, would cause enemies to lose the strength of their bodies, causing their fighting strength to decrease greatly.

The most fearsome was definitely the Enchantment of Age. However, the Enchantment of Age could only be used by a sacred magus necromancer. Necromancers who reach the rank of sacred magus would already have an extremely exquisite understanding of the soul. By utilizing an enormous amount of mental energy to deploy the Enchantment of Age, any living creature that enters the enchantment would age faster.

If the living creature stayed within the Enchantment of Age for over a fixed amount of time, the living creature would die of old age immediately. This was an extremely malicious spell which reduced the origin vitality of a living creature's soul. No matter how strong an opponent was, if they were not as accomplished in understanding the soul, they would be helpless within the Enchantment of Age.

Han Shuo was able to immediately practice the Enchantment of Fear and Enchantment of Weakness. Using these two enchantments in tandem would also create a layering effect. Using these enchantments together with a necromancer's undead army would simply be a nightmare to any enemy.

Perhaps it was precisely because combining these two enchantments with the undead army was really too formidable that during the glorious era of necromancers, they would be eliminated from all the magician associations within the continent. From that moment on, the three enchantments disappeared forever from the world.

The reason why the Enchantment of Age could only be practiced by a sacred magus necromancer was perhaps due to the frightening power of the Enchantment of Age which caused it to be unable to overlay with the other two enchantments.

No matter how strong a living creature was, once it entered the Enchantment of Age and didn't exit immediately, its body would rapidly age. Even if it immediately left the Enchantment of Age, a part of its body

would still be affected and would never recover.

However, Han Shuo's skeletal staff was able to let victims of the Enchantment of Age rejuvenate. Combining both the Enchantment of Age and the skeletal staff, everything could be considered to be in control. He would be able to send his own men into the enchantment to intercept the enemy. And when the enemy has retreated or died, Han Shuo can use the skeletal staff to rejuvenate the youth lost by his own people within the Enchantment of Age.

The practice method as well as the full incantations of the three great enchantments that were the secret behind necromancers ruling the continent were completely engraved into Han Shuo's mind at this moment.

TL note: I'm still not very satisfied with the names of the 3 enchantments. Will probably change them when I come up with a better name. Do leave comments with your suggestions!

# Chapter 407: Bigwigs

When Han Shuo obtained the information that he couldn't enter the next level before becoming a sacred magus necromancer, he didn't force matters and withdrew along his original path.

Numerous magical spells and practice methods had been imprinted on Han Shuo's mind. However, if he wanted to succeed in practicing all of them, it wasn't an easy thing to do. Hence, Han Shuo didn't stay in the Cemetery of Death any longer and instead returned to his mansion in Ossen City through the teleportation array.

Having left Ossen City for a few days, Han Shuo sought out Steward Kallas once he returned to find out what has been happening in Ossen City.

King Uhtred has already made known his stance in the last few days. He had steeled his heart to help Lawrence ascend the throne. The entire Lancelot Empire was momentarily in shock, unable to understand why Uhtred made this decision.

When the Dark Mantle Organization, King Uhtred's hand in the shadows, suddenly having closer relations with Lawrence, many already guessed that they were also leaning toward Lawrence. The Empire's legendary figure sacred swordmaster Karel also no longer sat on the fence, finally announcing officially that he supported Lawrence to be the next king.

With King Uhtred's help, Lawrence's trusted aides gradually started to grasp power within the empire. His foster father and uncle Boris received important positions, becoming influential ministers within the empire. Everyone could make out Uhtred's intentions.

In this period of time, the other princes and the powers under them visited the palace more often. Duke Ashburn and Prince Charles even visited the palace a few times a day, attempting to rely on their own abilities to change His Majesty's decision.

There were also some stubborn conservative ministers who allied and

petitioned Uhtred to change his mind. They believed that as an illegitimate child, Lawrence simply wasn't fit for the honor of being at the apex of power in the Lancelot Empire. These people were old officials and their old-fashioned noble traditions caused them to be unable to accept the matter. They felt that this was blasphemy towards the royal family of the Lancelot Empire.

King Uther's queen and his favored concubines had also joined the opposing side one after another in order to get an answer from him. In a short time, Ossen City descended into chaos. Yet at this time, Uhtred's illness suddenly relapsed and he fell into a coma, even showing signs of being able to hold on.

When the princes saw such a situation happen, they followed King Uhtred orders overtly, but secretly started to assemble their forces in preparation for purging the incoming powers. Within the seemingly tranquil Ossen City, many unfamiliar faces started to appear as a storm was slowly brewing.

Once King Uhtred died, the long-anticipated storm would inevitably break out with a bang. At that time, it would be difficult to say if it would engulf the entire Lancelot Empire. At this moment, the commander of the Southern border, Firenze suddenly returned to Ossen City. This baleful star would cause the already chaotic Ossen City to be filled with even more variables.

As he listened to Steward Kallas's description, Han Shuo was stunned. He really didn't anticipate that in just a few days, Ossen City would actually experience such drastic changes. It seems that ever since King Uhtred knew that his days were numbered, his swift and decisive actions played a huge role.

In the few days where Han Shuo was away, Phoebe had come to look for him three times while Lawrence came twice. Emily and some of the nobles in Ossen City had also come to visit him. When Kallas finished his report, Han Shuo thought for a moment before immediately heading for Lawrence's residence.

Lawrence was currently the focus of all of Ossen City. In the cruel contest for the throne, Lawrence could not fail. Only with Lawrence's ascension could Han Shuo's interests be maintained and even progress to the next level.

After hurrying into Lawrence's residence, he was informed by the steward that Lawrence was currently in a secret discussion with others. However, the steward clearly knew of the unusual relationship between Han Shuo and Lawrence. When he saw Han Shuo arrive, he immediately went to report. After a while, the steward returned and respectfully led Han Shuo to Lawrence's secret meeting.

Han Shuo saw many acquaintances within Lawrence's secret room, including Lawrence's adoptive father, Eevee, Uncle Boris, Phoebe, Emily, Betteridge Family's Old Hahn and ten other unfamiliar nobles who seemed to also be supporting Lawrence.

When Han Shuo arrived, Lawrence immediately stood up and smiled as he went up to him and said "Where did you run off to. Why have you only arrived now?"

Lawrence had also gone to the palace many times in recent days. When Uhtred met with him alone, he repeatedly urged Lawrence to keep Han Shuo firmly by his side and that Han Shuo was the key to his future.

Although Uhtred did not divulge astrologer Grace's evaluation of Han Shuo, Lawrence was an extremely smart person. He already figured out what was going on from the attitudes of the people around him and understood that Han Shuo would be his life's benefactor.

It was precisely because of this that as soon as Han Shuo walked inside, Lawrence was still the first to stand up and personally welcomed Han Shuo inside in an extremely amiable manner. This came as a slight surprise to some of his supporters who weren't familiar with Han Shuo.

"Nothing much. I had some stuff to settle so I went out for a while. Wow! There are so many people!" Han Shuo casually fobbed Lawrence off. He couldn't help but exclaim when he saw the surrounding people.

"Ha. Bryan, you are really amazing. In such a short period of time, you

have become a Marquis. I indeed didn't evaluate you wrongly." Lawrence's uncle Boris laughed as he greeted Han Shuo.

Originally, Lawrence had arranged for Han Shuo to hold a post within Boris's Northern Army in order to let Han Shuo gain military merit. Boris himself was only just a Count. Who would have thought that Han Shuo had risen up the ranks in such a short time? Based on their current authority, Han Shuo had clearly surpassed him.

However, while in the Northern Army, Boris was extremely friendly toward Han Shuo as he knew of Han Shuo's prospective growth. Their relationship in private was also pretty good. Hence when he saw Han Shuo coming in, he immediately greeted him amicably.

"Hehe. Lord Boris over-praises me!" Han Shuo smiled as he bowed to Boris.

Sitting next to Boris were Emily and Phoebe. The two of them were extremely close to each other, constantly whispering softly. Only after Han Shuo came in did their bright eyes stay fixed on him. Seated beside Emily was old Hahn, hence she turned her head after glancing at Han Shuo so as to avoid arousing suspicion.

However, Phoebe seemed to still harbor some residual anger as she couldn't resist glaring at Han Shuo a few more times. Her beautiful big eyes revealed an angry overtone, seeming to rebuke him for his mysterious disappearance.

"Young man, not bad. I still haven't had the time to thank you for saving me previously! Haha. I've told you that when you have time, come over and have some fun. I will definitely entertain you well. I didn't expect that till now you still haven't visited. What's the matter? Could it be that you look down on my Betteridge family?" Old Hahn smiled as he greeted Han Shuo before pretending to be angry as he spoke.

I've already gone to the Betteridge Family and even snatched your daughter-in-law. Han Shuo said inwardly as he kept a wronged expression on his face. He innocently spread his arms and explained, "You are also aware that I have always been at Brettel City and only got back recently.

There are too many matters to handle. Ha, I will definitely visit the next time I have time!”

“Okay then. I was just joking with you. I know that you are now a very busy person. Looking at you, I truly feel somewhat amazed. You saved my life the last time we met, but at that time, you were still an unknown. Who would have thought that in just a few years you have already become a formidable figure within the Empire? Awesome!” Old Hahn smiled with emotion.

As Old Hahn was talking, Lawrence had already brought Han Shuo to his side and pointed at the chair next to him, indicating for Han Shuo to sit. Only then did he introduce the strangers around him to Han Shuo. “Hehe, I won’t introduce these people as you already know them anyway. However, you are perhaps unfamiliar with these people, but in the future, we will all be on the same side. This is the current Lord of Valen City...”

Each time Lawrence introduced someone, Han Shuo would nod in respect. These people were either lord of their cities or either a Count or a Marquis. They all are top characters among the nobles. With Lawrence’s introduction, Han Shuo slowly understood the powers under his control.

Three Counts and two Marquis. They were all powerful figures within Ossen City and were all middle-aged. They were either in charge of a big Family, held key positions under King Uhtred or had military power. It seemed like only the people of their age would not stubbornly hold onto the idea that an illegitimate child could not obtain the throne.

As Lawrence introduced them, the nobles would nod amicably toward Han Shuo. Currently, Han Shuo had the authority over Brettel City and was favored by the king. His status as a Marquis was similar to their own status. In addition, they were now in the same faction. It would be odd if they were unfriendly toward Han Shuo!

When Lawrence finished the introductions, Han Shuo was more or less familiar with Lawrence’s current strength. These Marquises and Counts were people that held true power. In addition, he had the support of the Betteridge Family and the Dark Mantle. Furthermore, there were still a few

experts that surpassed worldly powers that supported him. In this case, Lawrence truly possessed the means to oppose Eldest Prince Charles.

It seemed like that Uhtred's swift and decisive actions had indeed brought about the greatest benefit to Lawrence. It caused Lawrence's power to rise greatly while also convincing more nobles to support him, allowing Lawrence to possess the qualifications to go against Charles and vie for the throne.

After Lawrence introduced the nobles that Han Shuo were not familiar with, he paused for a while before continuing, "We were just discussing a few matters. Let me summarize them for you. Currently, we should use our forces to their maximum potential and let the talents under us acquire power while my father is still alive.

On the other hand, based on our current foundation, we still need to obtain stronger support in preparation for Charles and others' desperate actions. The empire's authority is basically in the hands of the nobles. Even though my royal father clearly supports me, if those nobles support Charles, they would still collaborate with Charles to resist me when my royal father dies. This matter is extremely hard to solve.

Ah. The most important issue is my identity. Those stubborn fellows clearly would not choose me but they hold too much power in their hands that without them making mistakes, my father has no means whatsoever to reduce the authority in their hands. This really is a headache-inducing problem."

Han Shuo didn't say a word after he sat down, only listening to Lawrence's descriptions. When Lawrence finished talking, Han Shuo understood that the situation was not as ideal as he had imagined. It seemed like even though they had Uhtred's support, Charles' prior advantage was too huge. Lawrence would never be able to peacefully ascend the throne

"Your Highness, Duke Ashburn has an enormous influence within the empire. The bigwigs he has made friends with include the majority of nobles. With him supporting the eldest Prince, they would be extremely



hard to deal with. Currently, His Majesty is able to suppress him but if he dies, Duke Ashburn would surely oppose with all his strength. The power in his hands is enough to alter the entire situation. This is really difficult to manage!" A Count named Talric said to Lawrence.

"That's right. Once His Majesty meets his demise, no one can control Duke Ashburn. This is truly hard to handle!" Lawrence's foster father, Eevee said while frowning.

"Hehe, you all neglected the person that just got to Ossen City. If Lawrence can obtain this person's support, I think the situation would be totally different!" Old Hahn suddenly chuckled and said.

When they heard those words, everyone was moved but they sighed soon after. Boris replied, "That unreasonable madman is indeed no ordinary person but he doesn't even listen to His Majesty's orders. Who would be able to convince him?"

Lawrence was distracted for a moment, before looking fervently at Han Shuo. However, when he saw Emily and Phoebe, he hurriedly retracted his gaze.

Han Shuo realized simply from Lawrence's expression that he knew of the relationship between Fanny and the madman Firenze. He cannot help but sigh inwardly. He knew that Lawrence definitely had a goal when Lawrence painstakingly made friends with himself. Lawrence had actually started to rope him in so long ago. It seems that of all the princes, Lawrence had planned the furthest ahead.

# Chapter 408: Fanny's deep emotions

Han Shuo did not express his opinion on what they discussed next, merely thinking about the madman Firenze's arrival in Ossen City and the effect it would cause on him.

Based on what Han Shuo had promised Fanny, he knew that since Firenze had reached Ossen City, he would definitely meet Firenze in the near future. The matter of Han Shuo already having Phoebe and Emily by his side would be exposed sooner or later. He wasn't sure what great reaction Fanny would have once she found out!

It was the same for Phoebe, who had just accepted Emily yet still had residual anger. If she found out about Fanny as well, she might insist on bringing out a cage. Unfortunately, since things have reached such a situation, there was no way he could conceal it any longer.

"Bryan, Bryan!" Lawrence suddenly shouted twice.

Han Shuo suddenly came to his senses. He looked astonished at Lawrence and asked, "What's up?"

"What do you think we should do next, Charles is our main opponent. Do you have any ideas?" Lawrence looked brightly at Han Shuo as he sought Han Shuo's opinion.

Han Shuo was currently feeling troubled and simply did not seriously listen to their discussion. He shook his head in response and said, "I don't have any good ideas."

When Lawrence heard Han Shuo's reply and saw that he had a vexed expression, he understood that Han Shuo was perhaps occupied by some other thoughts. He nodded without asking further, continuing to discuss with the other nobles instead.

After a short while, they finished their discussion. The nobles left in succession, including Emily and Old Hahn, only leaving Phoebe, Lawrence and Han Shuo in the room.

"Bryan, thank you for introducing Mister Crowley to me, allowing me to

have such a strong grand magus by my side!” After the rest had left, Lawrence thanked Han Shuo sincerely.

Han Shuo was stunned for a moment before responding and said, “That Crowley has joined you?”

“Yes, Mister Crowley said that he followed your advice and decided to join me.” Lawrence smiled as he explained.

“That’s good. Lawrence, I have some matters to speak with Phoebe, we’ll be leaving first!” Han Shuo pondered for a moment before saying to Lawrence.

“Alright then, you two can leave first.” Lawrence smiled as he got up to send them off.

Phoebe pouted, appearing to still be angry at Han Shuo. Under Lawrence’s gaze, she got into her own carriage. Han Shuo hesitated for a moment but on second thought, since many people knew of his relationship with Phoebe, he got on soon after.

Based on the current situation, his relationship with the three women would perhaps no longer able to be concealed. Han Shuo seriously considered for a moment, deciding to just confess to the three women. Of the three women, Emily was the only one who wouldn’t mind it too much. Besides, Emily faintly knew of some information through the Dark Mantle, hence Han Shuo wasn’t worried about her.

However, both Phoebe and Fanny were huge problems. He was unable to conceal it further even if he wanted to and it would be worse if they found out by themselves. Reaching this situation, Han Shuo really had no other ideas and resigned to his fate and tell them the truth.

Within the elegant horse carriage, Han Shuo had a reserved expression as he remained silent. Phoebe’s anger toward Han Shuo had yet to diminish, pouting and also not saying a word. In a moment, the atmosphere within the carriage was somewhat tense.

After a short while, Han Shuo took a deep breath, turning his head to look at Phoebe and said in a low voice, “Phoebe, apart from you and Emily,

I still have another woman!”

Phoebe’s eyebrows raised, her eyes overflowing with disbelief. There were signs of rage coming from her delicate body as she clenched her teeth and unwaveringly stared at Han Shuo before saying sharply, “You, what did you say?!”

“Apart from Emily and yourself, I still have another woman. Her name is Fanny, she was previously my teacher. She’s also the first woman I liked.” Han Shuo sounded downcast, sighing when he finished.

“What, what is the meaning of this? Why are you telling me this?” Phoebe couldn’t contain her rage. She already found it hard to accept Emily. Now, Han Shuo suddenly said that there is another woman. Phoebe’s mind buzzed as she felt a sharp pain penetrating her heart.

“She is a teacher at my academy and took care of me from the start...” Han Shuo described his relationship with Fanny. He then sighed as he gazed at Phoebe and said, “Sorry, I shouldn’t have deceived you. That was because I didn’t want you to be happy. That was what had happened. I’m saying so much to you not because I want you to forgive me but to let you know that as a matter of fact, I’m truly a bad person like you said and am even the extremely bad kind.”

“Leave, leave immediately, I don’t want to ever see you again!” Phoebe cried incessantly, suddenly crying out sharply to the point of losing her voice.

When Han Shuo saw Phoebe losing control of her emotions, he suddenly felt an extremely strong grievance. He knew that it would be useless to say anything at this moment and thus simply nodded before opening the carriage’s window and flew out.

Han Shuo knew since a long time ago that Phoebe was a headstrong person. Such an independent woman would not easily forgive him for deceiving her. Perhaps it was precisely because Phoebe had strong feelings for him, hence she was so hurt by what Han Shuo said today.

Han Shuo suddenly understood the pain of the woman he loved dearly. The anguish he felt didn’t seem any less than what Phoebe was feeling.

Han Shuo himself had an extreme pain in his heart. Carrying that intense pain in his heart, Han Shuo made his way toward Babylon Academy of Magic and Force.

When Han Shuo reached Fanny's laboratory, it just happened to be after lunchtime. Ever since Han Shuo visited a few days ago, Fanny felt extremely content and was very cheerful the past few days.

When she opened the laboratory' door intending to first rest for a while, she suddenly saw Han Shuo who was seated on a chair within the room. The current Han Shuo seemed absent-minded and looked somewhat pale. He sat gloomily without saying a word, as though he had an extremely heavy load on his mind.

With a glance, Fanny suddenly realized that the current Han Shuo was completely different from the past. Previously, Han Shuo always had a strong fighting spirit or was frivolous and improper. He had never been as downcast and absent-minded as he was today.

"Bryan, what happened to you? Are you ill?" Fanny was flustered, hurrying to Han Shuo's side, raising a hand to feel his forehead.

Hearing Fanny's voice, Han Shuo was startled. When he saw Fanny filled with concern for himself, the pain in his heart increased. He stared blankly for a while, perhaps wanting to feel more of Fanny's gentle feelings as he simply stared deeply at Fanny as he carefully appreciated the temperature of Fanny's warm hand.

"What's wrong, why are you saying anything. What's going on?" When Fanny saw Han Shuo not saying a word and simply staring blankly at herself, she felt more frenetic, impatiently questioning Han Shuo as her worry was displayed on her face.

"Fanny, I've let you down!" Han Shuo who was staring blankly at Fanny didn't know if this tenderness would still exist after he spoke. However, he knew that he was unable to hide, finally sighed and said to Fanny.

"You aren't ill right? What nonsense are you saying?" Fanny beamed as she pulled back her hand from Han Shuo's forehead, looking tenderly at Han Shuo's eyes as she replied.

Han Shuo didn't dare to look straight at Fanny's eyes and guiltily lowered his head. He suddenly remembered that he had not had physical relations with Fanny. In that case, as long as he told Fanny the truth, it wouldn't cause much harm to Fanny.

Toward his loved ones, Han Shuo had never been a heartless person. The reason why Han Shuo had concealed this matter for such a long time, apart from enjoying the wonderful feeling of having multiple women, it was because he didn't want to heartlessly cause them pain.

However, Han Shuo only suddenly realized at this moment that his actions of hiding the truth would indeed not cause them pain in the short term, but such actions would cause them a lifetime of anguish.

This was precisely why Han Shuo decided to sincerely explain the truth to both parties. However, the guilty Han Shuo didn't dare face Fanny's gentle feelings. Under Fanny's impatient inquiry, Han Shuo used the same downcast voice to explain, "Apart from you, I still have two other women. I've let you down!"

Fanny's hand which was tenderly caressing Han Shuo's hair suddenly stopped. Han Shuo instinctively raised his head to look, suddenly realizing that Fanny had frozen in position, her tender eyes filled with helplessness and pain. Her rosy lips paled, constantly squirmed as if she wanted to say something yet was unable to make up any sound.

Two streams of tears flowed down her smooth cheeks, sliding down her neck. After a very long time, Fanny's dimmed eyes focused on Han Shuo. She had a bleak expression, sounding forlorn as she said softly, "Bryan, are you telling me this because you want to break off our relationship?"

Han Shuo froze, unable to understand Fanny's response. He had thought that Fanny should be furious like Phoebe was, chasing him away regardless of everything. He did not think that in this moment, Fanny actually had such a grim and frightened expression like a helpless blossoming flower bud.

An intense feeling of self-blame suddenly rushed into Han Shuo's heart. Han Shuo's eyes reddened as he pulled Fanny into his embrace,

choking with emotion as he said, "Sorry, it's all my fault. Sorry..."

"Bryan, I, I've already known long ago regarding the matters between Miss Phoebe and yourself." Fanny faintly spoke, before exerting all her strength to embrace Han Shuo tightly, as though afraid that Han Shuo would depart from her side.

Han Shuo had a lifeless expression, subconsciously hugging Fanny tightly without knowing the reason why. His mind was filled with questions. She actually knew. How did she find out?

"You are the dazzling new star of the Empire. Information about you is spread everywhere. Among them naturally includes matters regarding Miss Phoebe and yourself. It's funny that you still deceive yourself and assume that I'm unaware. The first time I heard that information, I didn't believe it. However, slowly through my own understanding, I finally believed the information. I'm truly a weak woman. I should have always maintained a distance from you from the start and not fall for your enticement. However, in the days where you aren't around, my mind is completely filled with your image, forever impossible to get rid of.

Sorry, I'm unable to do it!

Even though I'm fully aware that you already have Miss Phoebe, I'm still unable to leave you. Once I imagine that we would no longer interact, I would feel suffocated. You would never be able to understand this feeling. I'm useless. I'm unable to walk away from your vortex of emotions and instead can't help but sink deeper..." Fanny muttered as she mocked herself while in Han Shuo's bosom, her voice full of helplessness and misery.

Her narration from the bottom of her heart ruthlessly tore apart Han Shuo's opinionated guise. Han Shuo felt dizzy from an incomparably intense happiness. Even though this happiness contained a hint of extreme agony, even though this happiness made Han Shuo's lips dry up and his eyes redden, causing his firm heart to weaken...

"I know, Phoebe is a good woman. Have you come here after deciding to leave me?" Fanny murmured in sorrow, her tone filled with agony and

desolation. Her tears were like a pearl necklace that had snapped, pearl after pearl dripping on Han Shuo's shoulder.

"No!" Han Shuo bellowed, before continuing to say, "I will never leave you. Never! I said so much just to request your forgiveness. I have never thought of leaving you! Sorry, it's all my fault, it's all my fault..."

Fanny's delicate body trembled slightly as she suddenly stood up, teardrops still hanging from her eyes that indescribably anticipated, gazing toward Han Shuo's face. Her voice trembled and was filled with disbelief as she said softly, "Bryan, are, are you saying the truth?"

Repeatedly nodding his head, Han Shuo had never been as serious as he was now, his voice choking with emotion as he guaranteed, "So long as you don't leave me, I will never be the one to let go and leave you. I promise!" "But I only recognized the fact that I can never leave you after two years of torment and suffering. I don't mind that you are with Miss Phoebe and other women. However, would Miss Phoebe care about my existence?" Fanny said bitterly.

"I don't know. However, I would give her and myself some time. Perhaps, she would finally make a good decision. However, regardless of her decision, it would not change my feelings for you. It definitely won't!" Han Shuo said resolutely.

Fanny's eyes were filled with surprise and happiness that couldn't be contained. She took the initiative to hug Han Shuo tightly again, standing on tiptoe to ardently kiss Han Shuo. Her hands had brazenly slipped into Han Shuo's clothes, caressing Han Shuo's strong body while trying to help Han Shuo undress.



# Chapter 409: Refusal

It was unclear what Fanny's thoughts were as for the first time, she was so spontaneous and so passionate. Both her kisses and actions were incomparably bold and unrestrained.

At this moment, Han Shuo was unexpectedly the passive receiver. Fanny's previous words contained a sea of deep emotions, brought about an enormous shock to Han Shuo, causing him to feel extremely guilty toward Fanny.

When the two of them kissed, Han Shuo who had always been the aggressor in the past instead wasn't that overbearing.

"Oh... Bryan..." Fanny's loveable appearance was bright red and contained shyness as she moaned softly. Han Shuo's outer clothing had unconsciously been taken off by Fanny.

Han Shuo's naked upper body was extremely robust, each inch of muscle seemed to be brimming with explosive force. When Fanny became out of breath, her fragrant lips left Han Shuo's as she took deep breaths. As she gazed at Han Shuo's chiseled body, her eyes were brimming with dense amorous feelings.

"Do... Do me now..." There was a mouse-like squeak. Fanny blushed as she buried her head in Han Shuo's chest, inhaling the rich manly scent from Han Shuo's body. She simply felt that her heart was in a mess and was able to clearly hear her own heart beating.

"We can't!" Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he refused.

Fanny lost her head out of fear, suddenly lifting her head to stare at Han Shuo. Her blushing expression was clearly filled with sorrow and puzzlement, her eyes brimming with doubt and panic.

"Umm... Teacher Gene is coming over and it's presently daytime. You still need to go teach a class later! How about, at night?" Han Shuo smiled bitterly, scratching his head as he spoke softly to Fanny.

Hearing Han Shuo's explanation, Fanny suddenly came to her senses,

her face still red as she hurriedly dressed Han Shuo and said anxiously, "That's right, that's right. In that case, you should leave first, we'll talk about it another day."

Right at this moment, Gene's footsteps had already neared till the point that Fanny herself could hear them.

Fanny became even more hurried as she had harbored ulterior motives, desperately urging Han Shuo to make haste and leave. Han Shuo smiled bitterly and nodded while draping his shirt over his shoulders, departing Fanny's laboratory before Gene had reached.

As he headed back to his residence, Han Shuo felt ineffably moved by Fanny's deep emotions. He had never expected that Fanny had actually been struggling bitterly for so long because of him. Also, even though Fanny knew about his matters, she still didn't want to leave him. Her strong feelings caused Han Shuo to feel that he was unable to return the favor to her.

Just as Han Shuo reached his residence, Steward Kallas hurriedly rushed over, having a grave expression as he said, "Lord Marquis, Grand Duke Ashburn and Eldest Prince Charles request a meeting. They have already been waiting for some time."

"What are they here for?" Han Shuo was startled and knitted his brows in puzzlement.

"I don't know," Kallas replied respectfully.

With his heart filled with suspicion, Han Shuo walked toward the hall used for receiving esteemed guests. With a glance, he saw Eldest Prince Charles who he last saw in the Northern Rose Garden. It was actually the first time he was meeting Duke Ashburn who was by Charles's side. When he looked at Duke Ashburn, Han Shuo immediately knew that he was a crafty old fox and definitely not a person easy to deal with.

The two of them had a relaxed expression as they sipped tea within the hall, actually not bringing a single attendant with them. Once Han Shuo heard Steward Kallas' report, he immediately sent out a mystic demon to observe the surroundings of the mansion. Only then did he notice that

there were two luxurious horse carriages stopped by the front gate and a squadron of knights keeping watch by their side.

Han Shuo who was vexed due to Fanny and Phoebe's matters had been deep in thought on the journey back and had neglected the surrounding situation. Only after he instructed the mystic demon to circle around the estate did he realize the different situations within the mansion.

As this was the capital, Ossen City, Ashburn and Eldest Prince Charles who had openly come to visit Han Shuo were naturally unafraid that Han Shuo would suddenly rise in revolt. Hence they boldly left the squadron of knights outside, not bringing a single expert along for protection. On the surface, the two of them still seemed to have quite the presence.

When he saw Han Shuo enter, Ashburn glanced at Charles before standing. He smiled and nodded toward Han Shuo before saying, "Marquis Bryan has such a well-known reputation. Seeing you today, it is indeed well-deserved. An outstanding male like Marquis Bryan is truly rare within our Lancelot Empire. Haha."

Han Shuo wasn't in a good mood. Having heard many occasions where old fox Ashburn and Charles threw their weight around, he didn't have a good impression of the two of them. He replied while faking a smile, "Lord Duke is over-praising me. In front of Lord Duke, no one else is fit to be famed for a well-known reputation.

"Greetings Eldest Prince." Han Shuo then bowed toward Eldest Prince Charles in accordance to etiquette.

"Hehe, be at ease. Previously there were some misunderstandings with Marquis Bryan. I've come this time precisely because I wish to our prior misunderstandings." Eldest Prince Charles looked at Han Shuo amiably, his friendly manner as different as night and day from the previous time at the Rose Garden.

"Your Highness is too courteous. We never had any misunderstandings. The way you say it makes me worry about what had happened." Han Shuo was stunned, before replying Charles while having an expression that he was unable to make head or tail of the situation.

Coughing softly, Duke Ashburn smiled and said, "Previously we had Cameron to assist with some matters. I didn't expect that Mister Cameron actually became a competitor to Miss Phoebe's business. Cameron truly deserves to die, actually using Charles' title to intimidate people, audaciously finding trouble with Miss Phoebe.

Hehe, at the start, we didn't know of this matter. However, I suppose that Marquis Bryan would perhaps misunderstand that we had prompted Cameron to act that way. Hence, we have specially come to clarify the matter with Marquis Bryan. We hope that Marquis Bryan wouldn't misunderstand us due to that matter. Honestly speaking, Charles and I have always extremely admired you and wish to be friends with you."

Misunderstanding? There was simply no misunderstanding. Without your instructions, why would Cameron dare to use his connection with you to intimidate Phoebe?

Han Shuo sneered inwardly. He already understood their goal from Ashburn and Charles' tone. He was certain that this was because of his status in Uhtred's heart. This caused the two of them to realize his importance. This was why they would deign and deliberately want to make friends with him.

"Hehe, that must be a misunderstanding. That matter had happened so long ago that I almost forgot about it. There's nothing much to discuss." Han Shuo squinted his eyes, playing down the issue. Shortly after, he smiled as he looked at Ashburn and Charles while asking, "May I know, are there any other matters causing Lord Duke and His Highness to visit?"

"The development of Brettel City has been the most inspirational news in recent days. The city lord of Seamist City which neighbors Brettel City, Kairov, has extremely close relations with me. Hehe, if Brettel City and Seamist City are able to work closely together, the development in all areas would be even faster.

My visit today is precisely to discuss with Marquis Bryan the aid that Seamist City can provide Brettel City, such as manpower and resources that Brettel City needs urgently." Eldest Prince Charles smiled as he

looked at Han Shuo, slowly explaining his proposal.

Seamist City City Lord Kairov was a member of the Haug Family, his sister Kalina was Eldest Prince Charles' wife. His relationship with Charles was naturally extremely intimate. The distance between Seamist City and Brettel City isn't very far. If Seamist City was able to provide some effective help, it would naturally be extremely beneficial to Brettel City's development. This was something Han Shuo was aware of.

"In that case, what does Brettel City have to invest on their part?" Han Shuo remained calm and collected as he inquired.

"There's no need for any investment. As long as I'm able to gain Marquis Bryan's friendship, I would be satisfied." Charles's scorching gaze was fixed on Han Shuo as he replied.

Grand Duke Ashburn smiled as he looked at Han Shuo. He pondered for a moment before saying, "Marquis Bryan, to be frank, I admire you greatly. If you don't mind, we can discuss in depth on the possibility of many collaborations. The power and benefit we are able to provide you far surpasses what others can give you. As long as you work together with us, power, wealth, women are all easily obtained."

Han Shuo chuckled as he looked at the two of them, firmly shaking his head under their expectant gazes and said, "I'm sorry, I'm a person who cherishes old friendships and also know to return the favor of others. Both of you should understand what I mean!"

Hearing Han Shuo's response, Eldest Prince Charles' expression sank. Just as he wanted to speak out, Ashburn glared at him. Soon after, Ashburn smiled and said, "So that is the case. I understand. Since that is the case, we'll take our leave. We apologize for brazenly disturbing. Hope you can forgive us."

After he was stared at by Ashburn, Charles did not suddenly forget himself. Merely, his calm gaze toward Han Shuo had an added resentment, as if angry at Han Shuo's rejection and failing to appreciate his kindness.

"In that case, I won't see you out." Han Shuo looked astonishedly at Grand Duke Ashburn. He didn't expect that Ashburn would actually be

that direct, not dragging on the situation the slightest once he understood that there was no hope.

“Marquis Bryan, do take care of yourself!” Before Charles left, he suddenly turned back to look at Han Shuo, implying a hidden intention within his words.

“I thank Eldest Prince for his reminder, I will be careful.” Han Shuo expression suddenly turned cold, replying sarcastically.

Han Shuo could clearly hear the threat within Charles’ tone. He knew that after today, there was no chance of being friends with Charles and Ashburn and could only be enemies till one side is dead.

# Chapter 410: Sudden changes within Ossen City

Han Shuo knew that Charles definitely wouldn't let him off. However, Han Shuo didn't expect that Charles's retaliation would come so quickly and that violently.

That same night, Han Shuo who was studying the method of connecting to the netherworld suddenly felt through his consciousness several formidable auras that were gradually heading for his mansion from afar.

Han Shuo was suddenly roused from his contemplation, immediately sending out twelve mystic demons, spreading out in twelve directions with the mansion as the center, like a spider web.

A five hundred strong knight troop, including two hundred Temple knights from the Church of Light headed for Han Shuo's mansion from four directions. The Church of Light's light grand magus Kosse, a few other unfamiliar experts from the Church of Light as well as formidable deathsworn under Ashburn were separately leading troops as they encircled the mansion.

There was no moonlight that night. In the pitch-black curtain of night, they did not conceal themselves, simply heading openly toward Han Shuo's mansion. Han Shuo was able to see the killing intent within the eyes of these knights.

Han Shuo was alarmed, hurriedly exiting his hidden room. The scene he saw through the twelve mystic demons simply exceeded Han Shuo's imagination. No matter how large the influence Ashburn and Charles had, how would they dare to be so unbridled in the capital of Lancelot Empire, Ossen City?

The area Han Shuo was living in was surrounded by wealthy and respectable people and were all influential characters within the Empire. Even though it was a moonless night, such a large movement would definitely be unable to be concealed. Furthermore, Ossen City was the

Dark Mantle's headquarters. Ashburn was after all not King Uhtred. On what basis is he so unbridled?

A series of misgivings rushed into Han Shuo's mind. He only felt that Ashburn must be insane. Such a crazy movement definitely shouldn't be something that old fox dares to do. Unfortunately, with the appearance of Kosse and the presence of other members of his dukedom already proved that this operation is indeed incited by Ashburn.

While Han Shuo was still at a loss, a nearby mansion suddenly ignited in flames which reached the sky. A mystic demon just happened to see the situation in that direction and observed a group of knights charge in and kill everyone they see. In the blink of an eye, blood dyed the ground red and not even one servant was let off.

Han Shuo vaguely recalled that the mansion should be Count Talric's. Talric was inclined toward Lawrence. Han Shuo even saw him in the morning and found out through Lawrence's introduction that his mansion wasn't far from his own. He didn't expect that Talric's mansion would already be in its current state.

A thought flashed in Han Shuo's mind, in sudden realization. Since Ashburn dared to act so brazenly and disregard King Uhtred's authority, there are only two possibilities. Either Ashburn knew that the situation was far from good and preemptively revolted.

The other possibility was that King Uhtred had already died. In that case, Ashburn would no longer be restricted by anyone. Hence he would dare to freely act, eradicating the people who were detrimental to him at the fastest speed and swiftly take Ossen City under his control.

However, if Ashburn wanted to revolt, he should have acted from the day King Uhtred made known that he would support Lawrence and definitely wouldn't look on unfeelingly as Uhtred delegated power bit by bit toward Lawrence. It seems that the first possibility was much smaller and that King Uhtred's sudden demise was instead the most plausible.

With this suspicion, he only kept two mystic demons within his mansion, spreading the other ten mystic demons further away. Among



them, one mystic demon directly headed in the direction of the royal palace.

Through the mystic demons, Han Shuo discovered even more troops being mobilized in the pitch-black night. There were other regions who were similarly engaged in cruel slaughter. These included nobles who supported Lawrence as well as powers under the Second and Third Prince.

All of a sudden, huge clouds of smoke rose from the entire inner Ossen City. Ashburn and Eldest Prince Charles had without a doubt already launched their operation of massacring the influences that opposed them to officially start on this moonless night. Any powers that opposed Ashburn and Charles were fated to meet with death or injuries tonight.

Coming to this realization, Han Shuo rapidly headed for Steward Kallas' room. Steward Kallas was quite old and hence didn't sleep deeply. Furthermore, Han Shuo deliberately made louder footsteps when he headed over. Hence, Kallas immediately woke up.

"Lord Marquis, what's going on?" Kallas had never seen Han Shuo that impatient. He nimbly sat up and immediately inquired. "Don't bring anything along, immediately wake up all the servants. All of you are to leave the mansion and flee for your lives. Duke Ashburn has revolted. A regiment of knights is currently heading for this location. Once they arrive, everyone here will be killed. Hurry, leave this place immediately!" Han Shuo rapidly explained the situation. Once he finished explaining, he didn't wait for a response and hurriedly left the mansion, immediately heading for the Boozt Merchant Guild where Phoebe was.

This mansion was bestowed to Han Shuo by Uhtred. However, Han Shuo clearly didn't take it as a real home. There wasn't anyone here that Han Shuo truly cared about. Han Shuo also had a habit of keeping valuables within his spatial ring. At this moment, there weren't any person or item that was worth. Hence, he immediately left after warning Kallas.

There weren't many people who knew of Han Shuo and Fanny's relationship. Furthermore, Fanny and Lawrence didn't have any interactions. On top of that, Fanny's father was Firenze. As the Lord of the

Southern border, Firenze was one of the few people that Ashburn worried about. Han Shuo simply didn't need to worry about Fanny's safety.

Emily was within the Dark Mantle Headquarters. Within the entire Ossen City, the defenses of the Dark Mantle Headquarters was the most secure. There were countless teleportation arrays within that linked to every major city within the empire. Even if Ashburn had overwhelming methods, he also wouldn't be able to breach the Dark Mantle Headquarters in a short period of time. Wanting to capture the higher ranking people of the Dark Mantle was even more impossible.

Hence, Han Shuo was similarly not worried about Emily.

However, Phoebe was close to Lawrence and the Boozt Merchant Guild had repeatedly foiled Grand Duke Ashburn's matters. Hence, they were the most likely to be attacked.

As the Grand Duke of the empire, the power Ashburn wielded was second to King Uhtred. Even Phoebe's master sacred swordmaster Karel would similarly not be taken seriously by Ashburn. With the full support of the Church of Light, the number of experts Ashburn controlled was surely even greater. It was almost impossible for sacred swordmaster Karel to depend on his own strength to kill Ashburn.

Han Shuo traveled as fast as lightning, directly heading for the Boozt Merchant Guild. Along the way, he discovered through his mystic demons, even more, changes happening within Ossen City. Many mansions were reduced to ruins in an extremely short period of time. A few small mansions were subjected to a number of large-scale killing spells and were razed to the ground within a few breaths.

Ashburn's vicious actions were extremely resolute. As long as it was a hostile power, regardless of whether they were servants or guests, he didn't let a single person off. Many of the nobles' mansions were involved in the cruel massacre. During this course of events, the army he controlled headed for the city gates, probably intending to seize control of all the city gates.

The teleportation arrays within Ossen City had been seized by Ashburn

a long time ago. Layers upon layers of troops firmly surrounded the magic arrays. No one would be able to leave Ossen City through the magic arrays. It seems that Ashburn and Charles had planned to thoroughly seize control of the entire Ossen City, disposing of all their enemies within.

The mystic demon that headed for the royal palace heard wails even before it neared. Troops that were under Eldest Prince Charles had already seized control of the royal palace. The mystic demon simply made a pass around the palace and discovered that King Uhtred had indeed died and some rebels were already killed on the spot.

From these signs, Han Shuo suddenly realized that King Uhtred's sudden demise was perhaps related to Eldest Prince Charles. Otherwise, the royal palace wouldn't be sealed off, not allowing any news to be spread. The other princes were unfortunately kept in the dark, simply unaware of the king's passing.

Within Ashburn's mansion, Ashburn and Eldest Prince Charles were seated together with many supporting nobles who had darkened expressions. As they directed officers to seize important positions, they read out names of nobles one after another, sending their subordinates to go and eradicate them.

A mystic demon stayed in the vicinity and was able to clearly listen to the conversation between Ashburn, Charles and the others. Han Shuo finally understood that tonight's incidents were indeed Ashburn and Charles fiercely striking back.

Out of a sudden, a mystic demon who had reached Boozt Merchant Guild ahead of time saw from afar a squadron of soldiers currently killing people unfeelingly. The merchants and guards of the Boozt Merchant Guild died tragically one after another under the arrows of these soldiers. However, it was fortunate that these people had just begun at the front of the building and clearly haven't penetrated into the interior. Han Shuo reckoned that Phoebe was still fine for the time being.

However, Han Shuo was still extremely worried, activating the Art of

Demonic Ninth Heavens to its peak, heading for the Boozt Merchant Guild with the speed of a meteor. He constantly prayed inwardly that nothing would happen to Phoebe. If anything happened to Phoebe, even though Han Shuo had previously promised Uhtred, he would ignore that promise and skin Charles alive.

# Chapter 411: Chopping their hands off

Smoke rose everywhere from within the Boozt Merchant Guild. The soldiers under Ashburn's command charged in, killing everyone they see. The guards within the guild simply didn't have the chance to retaliate with most of them being killed or injured in an instant.

Phoebe who was distraught from Han Shuo's words held divine weapon Starry Sky and led the guards within the guild to do their utmost in resisting. However, the situation was clearly far from good.

The soldiers that attacked Boozt Merchant Guild included some experts that supported Charles. There was also a Temple Knight from the Church of Light who held a silver spear and did not put anyone in his eyes. Every strike of his spear would inevitably lead to the death of a guard.

There were also a few mages that continuously released spells. The Boozt Merchant Guild's buildings caught fire in succession. The stocked up grains and goods burned within the large fire. Some servants were burning all over as they exited their rooms, only to face a rain of arrows that was shot over. Those innocent servants were all shot dead.

In an extremely short time, Boozt Merchant Guild fell into the enemy's hands under the unyielding attack. Only Phoebe and a group of loyal guards were hurriedly retreating toward the back gate. During the time, the guards by Phoebe's side were being killed in succession.

"Miss Phoebe, you won't be able to escape today!" Space archmage Aubrey smiled deviously as he gazed at Phoebe and said unhurriedly.

Previously, it was precisely space archmage Aubrey and Cameron that had come to Boozt Merchant Guild to coerce Phoebe. Unfortunately, they just so happen to run into Han Shuo. In the end, Aubrey and Cameron were both inflicted by Han Shuo's poison of fire and ice, causing him to suffer from icy cold and scorching heat for the next few days.

Aubrey naturally realized that it was Han Shuo's doing. However, he knew that Han Shuo wasn't someone he could provoke. Hence, he could only swallow this suffering and hide the thought of revenge in his heart.

Having come to the Boozt Merchant Guild again today, Aubrey had a Temple Knight from the Church of Light as well as many other mage experts with him. He was completely confident that in successfully accomplishing what he didn't complete previously, to capture Phoebe and use her to threaten sacred swordmaster Karel, causing Karel to not dare to act recklessly.

Behind Aubrey was a squadron of hundred soldiers as well as the Temple Knight who had the pattern of an olive branch on his chest. The fleeing Phoebe only had thirty guards with her. Even though Phoebe herself was a great swordmaster, there was no way she could prevail over these opponents.

As Aubrey spoke, he had already released a Spatial Rend, sending a shining sharp blade over. The guards beside Phoebe suddenly lost large chunks of flesh as the Spatial Rend took away a part of their body into a different space.

"Bang!" Phoebe who was withdrawing suddenly felt an invisible wall striking her back, her whole body actually shot forward a few steps.

"Aubrey, you still dare to appear at my Boozt Merchant Guild? Are you all crazy? You actually dare to disregard everything and kill so many servants and guards?" Phoebe clearly didn't know that King Uhtred had died and just like Han Shuo at the beginning, her heart filled with extreme appall. She had never imagined that Ashburn would dare to be so brazen.

"Haha, we aren't insane. After tonight, Ossen City and Lancelot Empire would both belong to His Highness Charles. Tonight, every hostile power would be eliminated." Aubrey laughed savagely before replying.

"Less superfluous words. Capture this woman as quickly as possible. We still have other matters to handle." the Temple Knight suddenly spoke.

Hearing the Temple Knight speak, Aubrey embarrassedly stopped laughing, nodding as he replied, "Lord Crespo, this woman is a great swordmaster. We will need to work together to capture her alive."

"Make your move then!" The Temple Knight named Crespo didn't say any useless words, raising his silver spear and headed toward Phoebe.

As he brandished the silver spear, a milky-white brilliance burst out from the spear point. A holy aura gradually spread from Crespo's body. His silver armor suddenly burst into bright light, causing Crespo's aura to rise tremendously.

Phoebe was startled, slightly retreating even before Crespo approached. Soon after, she brandished the divine weapon "Starry Sky", suddenly launching a huge Cross Slash which reached Crespo in a flash.

Crespo snorted softly, lifting up his spear toward the middle of the arriving huge Cross Slash. The Cross Slash suddenly rose into the sky, slashing a tree branch the thickness of a bowl into two.

"Merely a recently advanced great swordmaster, you should just wait obediently to be captured." Crespo said coldly, his body turning into a string of afterimages due to his high speed. The spear in his hand suddenly appeared to become several hundred as they stabbed toward Phoebe.

A ring of starry radiance suddenly burst out from the divine weapon "Starry Sky". The specks of starlight proliferated outward, forming many Cross Slashes. They carried a terrifying force as they exploded all of a sudden. As the several hundred blurry silver spears were suddenly broken into dust, the explosive force spread out, causing Crespo to groan and hastily fall back a few steps.

"Good, very good. You are actually able to borrow the power of the divine weapon to unleash Karel's Cross Slash to attack. No wonder that old fellow Karel thinks so highly of you!" Crespo retreated a few steps, seven to eight small holes appearing at the shoulder area of his silver armor, his expression cold as he spoke.

"Who would have expected that the Church of Light's Temple Knight would actually become the dog of the Eldest Prince. Is this something your religious organization that transcended worldly power should be doing?" Phoebe similarly mocked him, her face filled with disdain.

"Miss, hurry up and leave, we'll bring up the rear." the head guard of Boozt Merchant Guild impatiently begged Phoebe.

Phoebe shook her head and said helplessly, "There's no way to escape!"

Phoebe's side didn't have any formidable mages. Facing troops who possessed warhorses and were coordinating with mages and archers, escape wasn't a sensible choice because the speed of mages who could fly greatly surpassed them.

"Aubrey, ask your men to act together. After we take down this woman, we still have to handle other matters. Don't waste too much time." Crespo shot a glance at Aubrey, frowning as he said coldly.

Aubrey nodded his head in agreement as he replied, "Alright then, we'll act together."

After nodding toward Aubrey, Crespo raised his spear once again and headed toward Phoebe. With a simple swivel of his spear, a burst of silver light suddenly shot out. At the same moment, Aubrey starting chanting an incantation, a space type magic shackles caused the surrounding space to fluctuate as it shot toward Phoebe.

The magi beside Aubrey chanted incantations one after another. Magic barriers of every major descended toward Phoebe. The archers from a distance away had also arrived, all of them drawing their bows and aiming toward Phoebe.

Bang...

As Phoebe's strike obstructed Crespo's silver light, she suddenly felt a strong force and couldn't help but fall back a couple of steps. These two steps caused Phoebe to fall into the path of the space magic shackles. All kinds of formless energy suddenly rushed forth, causing Phoebe to feel like she was being entangled within a myriad of ropes, unable to move the slightest.

"Bring her away. With Phoebe in our hands, that old bastard Karel will definitely know his place!" Aubrey laughed heartily in pride as he instructed a few knights behind him.

"Heh heh, this woman is really beautiful. Tsk tsk, her skin is extremely smooth. I have never seen a woman with such delicate skin." A knight



who came over had a lecherous smile, attempting to stroke Phoebe's face as he used a rope to tie her up.

As Phoebe who couldn't move and could speak saw the rough hand approaching her face, her eyes were filled with intense panic and ire. She uncontrollably thought of Han Shuo in this vulnerable moment, thinking, "How good will it be if you scoundrel is able to come and rescue me. As long as you appear, I might even forgive you. I don't want anyone apart from you to touch me..."

When a woman was frightened, vulnerable and helpless, the first person she would think of would definitely be her man. Phoebe was no exception. When she saw the knight's hand about to caress her face, as she lost her head out of fear, Phoebe called out for Han Shuo in her heart.

Swish!

Just as the rough hand was about to touch Phoebe's face, a noise suddenly sounded. Soon after, the knight was suddenly howling miserably. That coarse hand was chopped off at the wrist, dripping with blood as it fell by Phoebe's feet.

"Who is that!" Crespo suddenly shouted loudly, on guard as he looked around in all directions. The silver spear in his hand flashed intermittently with silver light.

Swish!

In the moonless night, a strand of black light flashed past, The knight who had his hand chopped off howled mournfully once again. Everyone took a look, realizing that the knight's other hand had also been chopped off.

"Capture Phoebe, hurry!" Aubrey suddenly came to his senses, hastily instructed the knights who were still distracted.

The few of them immediately started to move, planning to first tie Phoebe up with the thick rope in their hands.

Swish, swish, swish!

The strand of black light appeared repeatedly, resembling black thread that weaved the curtain of night. The knights that attempted to approach Phoebe had their extended hands chopped off one after another. In a flash, more hands actually appeared by Phoebe's feet.

Phoebe was shackled by magic and couldn't move, but her eyes didn't miss anything that occurred around her. She suddenly felt an intense happiness fill her heart. Without even needing to think, Phoebe knew that Han Shuo had arrived. With the current crisis resolved, Phoebe momentarily forgot Han Shuo's bad points, only remembering that Han Shuo had assisted her time and time again.

"Bryan... Damn it, why have you only arrived now..." Phoebe shouted loudly in her heart. Her eyes were brimming with happiness and serenity. She was no longer worried about the surrounding danger as if with the existence of that strand of black light, there would no longer be any danger to her.

"Come out, you cowardly sneak attacker!" Crespo suddenly shouted loudly as he charged toward Phoebe.

"That person, that person has arrived!" Aubrey suddenly recovered from his shock and shouted to Crespo.

Crespo was distracted momentarily, before quickly coming to his senses and shouting at once, "That's impossible. That fellow is powerless to defend himself, he shouldn't be able to appear here that quickly!"

"According to who?" A chilling voice suddenly came from afar. As the voice sounded, a shadow already stood by Phoebe's side.

Han Shuo glanced at Crespo, his left hand gently pressing on Phoebe's back and suddenly erupted in violent energy. A string of crackling sounds rang in Phoebe's surroundings. Several barriers and Aubrey's shackles suddenly broke into many pieces.

Phoebe who was previously shackled and unable to move suddenly felt that she was able to move her whole body. Prior to Han Shuo's arrival, Phoebe was continuously calling out for him in her heart, even thinking to herself that if Han Shuo saved her once again, she would forgive his

fickleness. However, when Han Shuo really appeared and Phoebe's danger was removed, she once again brooded over the previous matter, feeling that she shouldn't forgive him that easily. Hence, she snorted softly but didn't say anything.

"Heh heh, you even dare to touch my woman. Courting death!" After Han Shuo broke Phoebe's shackles with a strike, he menacingly gazed at the people in front of him and said coldly.

"Bah! Who is your woman? You fickle scoundrel!" Phoebe was happy yet ashamed and couldn't help but hatefully glare at Han Shuo, panting in rage as she said, "I still haven't forgiven you for that matter. Please refrain from talking rubbish!"

"Of course Miss Phoebe is my woman. If you aren't my woman, why would I travel all the way to the north of the city to save you?" Han Shuo grinned as he replied Phoebe.

"It's really you. How is that possible, how did you manage to escape from Lord Kosse's grasp?" Crespo's expression changed, looking at Han Shuo in shock as he spoke.

"Kosse? Ha, in several fights, it seemed that the one who is always fleeing is that fellow?" Han Shuo said calmly to Crespo. As he spoke, Han Shuo had already taken out the skeletal staff, his expression gradually became colder.

"It is different this time. Apart from Lord Kosse, there's also Lord Blount. How did you manage to escape?" Crespo was at a loss, retreating in fear.

Han Shuo's evil reputation was currently extremely well-known in the Church of Light. Red Archbishop Kosse was repeatedly defeated by him. Han Shuo's strength was also gradually acknowledged by the people within the Church of Light. Crespo still had self-awareness, knowing that with his strength, he definitely wasn't Han Shuo's match. The notion of retreating had appeared in his heart.

"Every single one of you will not leave here alive!" Han Shuo pronounced their fate, the skeletal staff beginning to summon undead creatures.

Red Archbishop Kosse who wielded the 'Revelation' divine artifact wasn't here and there weren't any light mages who could quickly purify undead creatures present. Han Shuo had complete confidence in swiftly killing all of them.

# Chapter 412: Sacred Knight

Under the summons of the skeletal staff, waves of undead creatures densely filled Han Shuo's surroundings. Han Shuo held Phoebe in one hand and the skeletal staff in the other, rapidly reciting incantations.

"Retreat!" Crespo decisively gave the order, taking the lead in withdrawing.

When Aubrey who was in charge of the current operation saw Han Shuo suddenly appearing by Phoebe's side, he immediately knew that they had failed once again. When groups of undead creatures gradually appeared, Aubrey had also thought of withdrawing. Crespo's call for retreat matched his intentions and he similarly started to escape toward the rear.

"Want to run? It's too late!" Han Shuo released Phoebe's hand which he had been holding firmly and suddenly flew toward Aubrey. He held the skeletal staff in his left hand as before, while the Demonslayer Edge shot out from his right palm.

Aubrey had already suffered great losses to Han Shuo previously. Once he saw Han Shuo directly charging toward him, his expression changed at once. He hastily shouted at the archers on the surrounding roofs, "Shoot him to death!"

A rain of arrows shot toward Han Shuo, the power and speed of the arrows indicating that the strength of these archers was out of the ordinary. However, even before the arrow rain could reach Han Shuo, Han Shuo's skeletal staff shook, causing several towering bone shields to appear in all directions, blocking off the entire arrow rain.

Han Shuo's speed exceeded Aubrey's imagination. When Aubrey turned his head to take a look, the cold and vicious Han Shuo was actually only a short distance away from him.

"Be careful!" Crespo suddenly shouted loudly, the silver spear in his hand thrust like a drill at high speed toward Han Shuo. Han Shuo turned his head to glance at Crespo before raising his right hand. The Demonslayer Edge turned into a flash of black light and stabbed toward

the spear point with a swish.

“Clang!”

A magnificent radiance blossomed. Crespo only felt an enormous force rush into his body through the spear, rushing from his arm into his five viscera and six bowels, causing severe wounds to his divine body in a flash. He couldn't help but spit out a mouthful of blood, his complexion pale as he continued to retreat.

“Dong!” Crespo's silver spear had actually been split into two as it fell on the stone floor.

The excessive might of the Demonslayer Edge didn't decrease as it continued like a shadow toward Crespo's chest. Even before Crespo could stand firmly, there was merely a “puu” sound as the Demonslayer Edge penetrated Crespo's silver armor and cut open a large hole in his chest.

As a piercing pain spread from his chest, Crespo's pale face was filled with despair as he looked in a daze at the hole in his chest. With a last “How is that possible”, he collapsed loudly soon after.

Aubrey was terror-stricken, reckless escaping into the distance, no longer caring about the lives of the others.

Crespo was the main assistance for this operation. He was a sky rider and after joining the Church of Light's Temple Knights, because of his pious belief toward the God of Light, he had received additional divine protection and was much stronger than an ordinary sky rider.

The silver spear and his bright silver armor were both items that only high-ranking Temple Knights possessed. They were both extremely high-quality items in the eyes of all blacksmiths within the continent. The spear and armor both contained divine energy. Who would have thought that under the attack of that weapon, they were broken apart like paper mache, causing Aubrey to tremble in fear.

Aubrey who was fleeing with all his might clearly didn't realize that Han Shuo's speed far exceeded his own. Even before Aubrey could leave Boozt Merchant Guild's area of influence, a cold shout was heard behind him.

Aubrey was overwhelmed with shock, disregarding everything to start using the teleportation spell which he was yet to be proficient in.

As a space archmage, Aubrey's comprehension of space magic could only be considered a drop in the ocean. He was unable to freely teleport short distances unlike space grand magi like Emma.

However, Aubrey had no other choice as matters stand. He knew in his heart that he absolutely wasn't a match for Han Shuo. Since he had no hope of escaping through speed, he could only brave death and use that yet to be mastered spatial magic.

When people are in dire straits they would always burst forth with some latent potential. Aubrey who usually needed two seconds to cast a magic spell only used one second to cast the unmastered spell. Before Han Shuo neared Aubrey, he suddenly felt violent spatial fluctuations from Aubrey's surroundings.

The space suddenly shattered like a mirror. Aubrey was aghast and howled miserably. His body seemed to be within the broken space, split into several fragments. When the space returned to normal, Aubrey had disappeared without a trace. Han Shuo stood unmoving, apprehensive about the space magic. The effect of recklessly using unfamiliar magic would sometimes be much more powerful than standard space magic. Aubrey was clearly in such a situation. When Han Shuo saw Aubrey's body split in tandem with the space around him, he assumed that there must have been a problem with the spell and hence Aubrey had thrown away his life with it.

If Han Shuo had suddenly entered that region before it returned to normal, he would very possibly be affected by the spell and unable to escape. On the off chance that he ends up in an alternate space, Han Shuo would really feel like crying.

Aubrey's status was unknown, but Han Shuo felt that most likely he was dead. Without wasting any more time, Han Shuo immediately headed to Phoebe's side, holding onto Phoebe again and said hastily, "We should leave first. I reckon that Lawrence's location would be the most

dangerous!”

Phoebe was startled yet happy, startled when she heard Han Shuo describe Lawrence’s danger. She knew that Lawrence was the most crucial person. For Ashburn to dare to attack her so brazenly, Lawrence was probably in deep trouble as well.

If Lawrence was killed, Eldest Prince Charles and Duke Ashburn would truly be able to control the situation. If that happens, the only remaining option for Han Shuo and herself would be to escape.

Her happiness stemmed from the fact that Han Shuo clearly knew that Lawrence was in greater danger, but he still prioritized her rescue. This clearly proved that her importance to Han Shuo was above all else. Even though Lawrence’s survival would bring Han Shuo greater power and benefits, Han Shuo had still come to save her first in such an important situation. Phoebe was truly touched by this.

“What about them?” Phoebe immediately agreed but inquired about the guards and the few merchants from the Boozt Merchant Guild beside her.

“Let them flee by themselves. Don’t worry, the remaining enemies are confronting my undead creatures. They simply have no chance to attack them again.” Han Shuo hastily instructed.

“Miss, you two should leave first. We know what to do.” The guard leader hurried said to Phoebe.

Phoebe hesitated for a moment before nodding and saying, “Alright then. All of you take care too. Quickly leave this place.”

Han Shuo no longer said any superfluous words, holding Phoebe by the waist and directly flying toward Lawrence’s mansion.

“Bastard, how could you do that in public?” As Phoebe was grabbed by the waist, she smelt Han Shuo’s familiar smell. Her tender and beautiful face was red from blushing as she resentfully chided him.

“What’s your concern? In any case, all of them know that you are my woman.” Han Shuo casually replied, clearly not at all embarrassed.



“You, you still dare to say that. I haven’t forgiven you!” Phoebe hatefully rolled her eyes at Han Shuo, her residual anger yet to fade.

“We’ll talk about this later. Don’t talk anymore, we need to quickly find Lawrence. If Lawrence has indeed died, I will immediately bring you away from Ossen City and return at the fastest speed to my Brettel City.” Han Shuo replied.

“Bryan, it seems like you don’t care about Lawrence’s life or death. Is that true?” Phoebe looked astonishedly at Han Shuo with some uncertainty.

“No. I’m merely being realistic and stating the facts. If I didn’t care about Lawrence’s fate, I wouldn’t be going to save him now. Alright, no more talking!” Han Shuo casually replied before suddenly increasing his speed, heading toward Lawrence’s mansion like a streak of lightning.

Ever since Han Shuo knew that Lawrence had purposely made friends with him with ulterior motives, he had no longer treated Lawrence as a true friend. Lawrence who thought deeply and planned everything carefully had only been acting for his own interests. Han Shuo understood this and didn’t feel any resentment toward Lawrence’s actions.

However, it was also impossible for Han Shuo to not have any ill-feelings! Merely, Han Shuo’s interests were firmly tied to Lawrence. Only if Lawrence ascended the throne would Han Shuo be able to obtain the most benefits. Although this relationship which was purely based on benefits was firm, it wouldn’t involve too much personal feelings.

It can only be said that Han Shuo going to Lawrence’s aid was entirely for his own interests and not because of personal relations between them. Hence, Han Shuo didn’t have much feelings regarding Lawrence’s life or death. That was why he had an apathetic expression when talking about Lawrence’s situation.

Soaring flames could be seen from afar even before they reached Lawrence’s mansion, illuminating the moonless night. The fire from Lawrence’s mansion was really too conspicuous.

There were also mansions of other nobles in the surroundings of

Lawrence's mansion. However, these mansions were untouched, the gates firmly shut without a single person emerging to take a look, as though they had suddenly become blind and deaf, ignoring the sound of activity coming from Lawrence's mansion. All of them seemed to have sunk into the deepest sleep.

As Han Shuo glanced at the strangely silent mansions, the mystic demons had made a loop at a high altitude, suddenly realizing that the people within these seemingly silent mansions were similarly losing their head out of fear. However, at the strict orders of their owners, no one dared to make a sound and no one was curious enough to exit the mansion to take a look.

This was the best example of the hypocrisy of the world. The nobles within these mansions were not Lawrence's closest allies. Most of them had yet to indicate which side they supported and hence luckily escaped a calamity. The older nobles all knew what they were doing, realizing that the only people within the entire Lancelot Empire who dared to attack Lawrence's residence were Ashburn and Eldest Prince Charles. They were not people these nobles could contend against and thus, being a bystander was the most sensible decision.

"Rumble..."

A huge bang could be heard from within Lawrence's mansion. From afar, Han Shuo saw many tall buildings collapse loudly. Within the dark sky, two gold figures were extremely gaudy as they soared uninhibitedly over several buildings. Gold light would frequently flash out and would result in the collapse of another building.

Slender gorges would appear after the flashes of gold light. The magic barriers surrounding Lawrence's entire residence was constantly being destroyed and many servants were killed in succession, their corpses lying in disarray.

Several knights dressed in brown, silver and grey armors, as well as several white, red and black robed magi, surrounded Lawrence's mansion from all directions. These people included experts under Ashburn, experts

under Eldest Prince Charles as well as experts dispatched by the Church of Light.

When Han Shuo and Phoebe almost reached that area, a mystic demon had finally approached in advance, suddenly detecting the two figures that were constantly soaring uninhibitedly. One of them was actually sacred swordmaster Karel, while the other was a golden-haired elder who donned gold knight armor.

The golden-haired elder held a gold pike and there was a symbol of an angel on the chest plate of his gold armor. The angel design was extremely lifelike, its wings appearing to be continuously flapping.

The angel engraved on the Temple Knight's chest was a symbol that he had been blessed by the God of Light. Every Temple Knight that possesses the angel engravement had frightening strength comparable to sacred knights. If the Temple Knight was also personally a sacred knight, his strength would be even more terrifying.

However, these kind of Temple Knights were extremely rare within the Church of Light. They would definitely not leave the Temple of Light under normal situations. It is said that only when evil heretics that blaspheme the God of Light appear would these rarely seen Temple Knights leave the Temple of Light, delivering punishment on these heretics on behalf of the God of Light.

Han Shuo had never expected to actually see one within the Lancelot Empire and was thoroughly shocked. As strands of gold light flowed from the gold pike in the Temple Knight's hand, a matchless sacred aura proliferated, giving Han Shuo an extremely indisposed feeling.

Only sacred knights and sacred swordmasters possessed gold fighting aura. For this Temple Knight to be able to unleash gold fighting aura, it proved that he was a sacred knight. In the event such a formidable existence obtains the blessing of the God of Light, his frightful personal strength will become shocking. Han Shuo merely took a look and already secretly started worrying for sacred swordmaster Karel.

With so many experts besieging Lawrence's mansion, Han Shuo

naturally wouldn't charge in stupidly. He hurriedly summoned the earth zombie to create a tunnel leading to the center of Lawrence's mansion before bringing Phoebe along and entered the tunnel.

# Chapter 413: Hiding underground

Seeing a large hole appearing from the earth, Phoebe was filled with questions, her eyes gleaming as she looked at the earth zombie that had created the passageway.

As the earth zombie headed forward, even the most exquisite pangolins didn't have his remarkable ability to split the earth. The earth in front of him automatically pulled back and scattered, splitting open a continuously extending passage at a speed visible to the naked eye, allowing him to travel effortlessly.

"What, what kind of earth magic is this?" Phoebe who followed behind Han Shuo closely had watched for a while and was unable to suppress her curiosity, her astonishment written all over her face as she looked at Han Shuo.

"It's not related to magic." Han Shuo replied. He knitted his brows to consider for a moment before reluctantly explaining, "As a matter of fact, this is somewhat similar to the martial technique I practice. It's an existence that is neither within the realm of fighting aura nor magic."

Phoebe's jaw dropped, her lips opened wide in surprise. She stared blankly at Han Shuo as she said, "Apart from those two women, it seems like there are many other things that you are hiding from me!"

"There isn't! It is just that this matter is hard to explain. The martial technique I practice is totally different from the schools of magic and fighting aura and there are also some complexities. Hence, you might not understand even if I explained it to you." Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he replied, tightly grasping Phoebe's hand.

Phoebe rolled her eyes in anger at Han Shuo, thinking inwardly that she definitely had to watch him closely in the future. This fellow has been extremely lecherous all along and simply can't resist enticement. Once he comes across gorgeous women he would always be unable to resist and have devious thoughts. If things continued this way, there's no knowing how much emotional debt he would cause!

“Alright, we have reached. Be more focused, don’t let your thoughts wander!” While Phoebe was pondering silently, Han Shuo suddenly said seriously as he looked toward the slope.

The earth zombie stood in place without moving as it waited for Han Shuo and Phoebe to approach. He then turned around to send Han Shuo a message, “Father, should I immediately create an opening to the surface?”

Unknowingly, the little skeleton, earth, wood, fire and water zombies have all gotten used to addressing Han Shuo as their father. Han Shuo was extremely uncomfortable at the start but had unexpectedly slowly gotten used to it. As the calls of “Father” entered his heart, it actually gave Han Shuo a feeling of novelty.

It was as if these five undead creatures that Han Shuo had refined had truly become his flesh and blood, actually causing Han Shuo to feel unwilling to part with them. If Han Shuo didn’t communicate with the five zombies for a period of time, he would have a faint longing and worry for them, afraid that they would encounter an accident in the netherworld.

“Let’s wait awhile.” Han Shuo replied before turning to Phoebe and said, “The exit is right above us. We are currently right below Lawrence and the rest. We shouldn’t hastily head up immediately, so as to avoid Lawrence and the rest attacking us recklessly without understanding the situation. You should stay here temporarily, I’ll see if I can give your master a hand.”

“My master, how is my master?” Although Han Shuo was able to observe the situation outside through the mystical demons, Phoebe naturally didn’t have such an ability. Upon hearing Han Shuo’s comment, she was puzzled and questioned further.

“He met with some trouble.” Han Shuo explained.

“How is that possible? My master is a sacred swordmaster. How could he encounter any trouble?” Phoebe had a blind confidence in Karel, smiling lightly as she asked Han Shuo, her expression not showing any nervousness.

“Your master is currently battling with a Temple Knight from the Church of Light. He is a sacred knight from the Church of Light, apart

from the fighting aura he has, the sacred knight has also obtained the blessing of God.” Han Shuo had an imposing expression as he explained to Phoebe.

Phoebe’s expression suddenly changed. She clearly knew some information of the Church of Light and hastily cried out, “How is that possible, my master once mentioned that the number of such strong Temple Knights could be counted with one hand. Why has he left the Temple of Light?”

“I don’t know either!” Han Shuo replied, creasing his brows as he thought in his heart. Could it be because of me?

“Act quickly then, I don’t want my master to be harmed. Although I know my master’s strength, there have always been stories about these formidable Temple Knights from the Church of Light spreading through the continent. These stories all describe the power of such a character, hence I can’t help but feel worried about my master.” Phoebe’s expression was filled with impatience due to her worry for her master.

Han Shuo nodded and withdrew with the earth zombie.

Above them, sacred swordmaster Karel and the Church of Light’s sacred knight were battling nonstop, causing buildings to collapse one after another. There were many deep gorges in the earth where sword light had passed by. Enormous power proliferated from both of them, causing everyone in the surroundings to frantically keep their distance so as to avoid being affected by the shockwaves.

Han Shuo was able to observe the battle above him clearly through two mystical demons. Han Shuo who remained underground wandered through the passages that the earth zombie constantly established, constantly lingering at the sacred knight’s landing areas in preparation of mounting a sneak attack when the opportunity presents itself.

The golden-haired elder who wielded the golden pike looked like a moving block of gold from afar. The golden armor on his body was incomparably firm while brilliant golden light shone as he brandished his pike, extremely dazzling in the dark night. Karel’s expression was heavy as

his white hair fluttered, launching a Cross Slash everytime he extended his longsword.

Karel was clearly going all out in this battle, with every Cross Slash larger and containing much more power than when he was sparring with Han Shuo. These Cross Slashes were like revolving sickles, bursting apart rocks and collapsing buildings in their paths, destroying every single obstruction.

The sacred knight was serene, singing a song of faith toward the God of Light. Under the blessing of God, his armor was as hard as diamonds. Every thrust also glittered in golden light, interweaved with a bizarre sacred aura as it exploded every approaching Cross Slash into specks.

The battle between two peak experts caused Lawrence's mansion to appear as if it encountered landslides and cracks on the earth. None of the numerous experts in the surroundings dared to approach, afraid that they would be suddenly torn apart by fighting aura.

During this process, even more soldiers and knights had headed here from afar, surrounding Lawrence's mansion with layers of encirclement. The circumstances for Lawrence's side was becoming more and more unfavorable.

The terrifying battle between the two experts above caused Han Shuo to be extremely mind-blown. Han Shuo could clearly see every movement made through two mystical demons. At this moment, he suddenly realized that Karel had indeed not used his full strength previously. Otherwise, he would definitely have been defeated.

While the two experts were battling, Han Shuo borrowed the earth zombie's powers to rapidly shuttle through the earth, attempting to suddenly launch a fatal attack toward the sacred knight. Han Shuo faintly felt that the sacred knight's target was perhaps himself. Although taking advantage of someone else's attack to mount a sneak attack was somewhat contemptible, Han Shuo wasn't able to care so much about that.

Under the actions of the earth zombie, there were already criss-crossed



tunnels underground. While Han Shuo observed the battle with the help of the mystical demon, he also constantly traveled around, ready at any moment for a lapse in concentration from the sacred knight to suddenly appear from underground to give him a painful lesson.

“Karel, I feel you should bravely withdraw. You simply won’t be able to control the current situation by yourself. As your friend for many years, I truly cannot bear to see you have such an ending.

As long as you abandon Lawrence, I, Dempus, can promise that you will be able to peacefully enjoy your later years and all your disciples apart from Lawrence will be safe and sound.” A grey-haired old magus past his prime suddenly sighed from afar. His voice didn’t seem very loud but still resonated through every corner of Lawrence’s mansion.

Han Shuo who had been constantly staring at the sacred knight’s steps naturally also heard the old magus Dempus’ words and couldn’t resist sending one of the mystical demons to watch this old magus.

Clang!

A lump of dazzling golden light blossomed from the location of the voice, standing out like glaring sunlight in the pitch-black night sky. However, the light disappeared in a flash.

“Dempus you old bastard, you clearly know of astrologer Grace’s prophecy. Yet you actually dare to disregard the future of Lancelot Empire. You will be a sinner of the Lancelot Empire for all eternity, do you know that?” Karel who landed after an exchange with the sacred knight glowered at Dempus and berated furiously.

“To the God of Light, the insignificant astrologer is merely unorthodox sorcery. Karel, you are an amazing opponent. It is a pity that you have been led astray yet obstinately unwilling to change your ways. Those who go against the God of Light will definitely not have a good ending!” The sacred knight landed on a dilapidated roof and sighed.

Han Shuo was currently right underneath the sacred knight. However, the sacred knight wasn’t locked in battle with Karel at this moment. If Han Shuo was to mount a sneak attack at this moment, he would

definitely not obtain the desired result and would very likely be wounded by the sacred knight. Hence Han Shuo didn't act rashly.

"Karel, I know that Lawrence is your disciple. However, he is just an illegitimate child. Such a person definitely can't be Lancelot Empire's new king, it's better if you renounce him. I'm feeling somewhat impatient. If you still don't come to your senses, I'll have no choice but to act personally." The old magus said grudgingly.

In the distance, Lawrence's expression was extremely unsightly, his eyes having an ominous glint as he looked at the old magus who addressed him as a bastard as if itching to charge forward and rip that old magus into pieces.

"You dare?" Karel shouted indignantly, raising his longsword and charged toward the old magus.

"You won't be able to make it!" The sacred knight who stood on another roof smiled as he exclaimed, brandishing his gold pike and obstructed Karel once again. Brilliant golden light started to shoot out once again.

"Since you insist on defending that bastard, in that case, I have to regretfully tell you, old friend, I won't delay any longer." The old magus in the distance grudgingly said, taking out an earthen yellow magic staff that was embedded with many gems from his spatial ring.

Rich earth element suddenly erupted from deep within the earth, rushing from all directions toward the old magus. He had yet to chant any incantations, yet had such a strong absorption of magic elements. This caused Han Shuo's expression to change abruptly.

Dempus? Earth sacred magus Dempus Geier? Han Shuo suddenly came to his senses as he hesitated for a moment. He then immediately gave an order to the earth zombie, rapidly heading in the direction of earth sacred magus Dempus.

Although the sacred knight was similarly extremely threatening, if the sacred magus Dempus could casually release earth magic, perhaps a large-scale killing magic would be enough to completely decimate Lawrence's group of people.

Earth magic in the hands of a sacred magus would perhaps cause several mysterious restrictions to the earth. Han Shuo was worried that this person's presence would affect the earth zombie's power underground and hence hastily abandoned the constantly watched sacred knight and rushed toward the direction of Dempus Geier.

"The boundless power of the earth..." Dempus Geier chanted solemnly as he held his magic staff.

As the rich earth element erupted underground, it gradually caused slight tremors to form. Han Shuo who was currently underground was able to clearly feel the sudden increase of energy within the earth. Han Shuo cautiously concealed his aura completely and continued flying toward Dempus without coming into contact with any soil.

As the earth element was everywhere underground, Han Shuo was afraid that coming into contact with the earth will cause Dempus who was focusing his attention on releasing earth magic to notice. As the darling of the earth, the earth zombie was identical to the power of the earth. He could be seen as the vast earth and thus Han Shuo wasn't the slightest worried that the earth zombie would be discovered.

"Father, there's a change happening to the earth. My current strength is unable to prevent this change, but I'm able to change its direction. Should I change its direction?" As Han Shuo was charging toward Dempus, the earth zombie suddenly sent a message.

Han Shuo was stunned for a moment before hastily inquiring, "What do you mean?"

"The power contained within the earth will form an enormous earthquake. There will be many tears in the earth. I can't prevent that situation from happening, but I am able to change the location of the earthquake, altering where it appears!" The earth zombie earnestly replied.

Han Shuo only stared blankly for a few seconds but soon after replied estastically, "Very good, alter the location of this earthquake and place it at that old fellow's surroundings. Precisely where the most people have

gathered!”

Han Shuo was overjoyed at the unexpected good news as he instructed the earth zombie. He held onto the Demonslayer Edge, already reaching the area under earth sacred magus Dempus. He then unfeelingly condensed demonic yuan energy as he stabbed upwards with his entire body.

# Chapter 414: Hatred

“... With my willpower as a guide, Shatter Earth!” Earth sacred magus Dempus finally completed the long and tedious incantation.

Sacred magus Dempus' grey eyebrows suddenly creased. He sensed that the direction of the flow of the earth element underground seemed to be somewhat uncontrollable. This was a situation that had never appeared in ten years, causing him to be under the impression that due to his age, did he recite a syllable of the incantation wrongly?

Just as Dempus was somewhat muddle-headed, he suddenly felt a soaring killing intent from underneath his feet. The killing intent was not concealed the slightest. When he had just sensed it, the killing intent had already torn through the solid ground, piercing toward him like an all-conquering sharp sword.

Earth sacred magus Dempus was terrified and no longer had the time to set the out of control 'Shatter Earth' right. All his attention was on the danger that suddenly arrived. The soaring killing intent that tore apart the solid ground appeared blood red in color as it stabbed toward his sole.

Warning bells sounded in Dempus' head, suddenly jumping off the ground in panic and utilizing the levitation skill to fly into the sky. He hastily cast the 'Earth Armor' spell at the same time, causing rich earth element to frantically converge from all directions onto his body.

A greyish-brown armor was condensed from the dense earth element, covering earth sacred magus Dempus' body in a flash. He also released a tenfold gravity magic, only enveloping the area under his feet. Han Shuo who was charging upwards at lightning speed suddenly felt the pressure increase tenfold just as the Demonslayer Edge was about to stab into the sole of Dempus. His rocketing speed was unknowingly delayed. Han Shuo made a prompt decision, frantically pouring demonic yuan energy into the Demonslayer Edge while his body suddenly fell.

The Demonslayer Edge infused with demonic yuan energy suddenly burst out in a myriad of blood-colored light, no longer being affected by

gravity after hovering in the air for a moment. With the blood-colored light chopping upward, the Demonslayer Edge exploded toward earth sacred magus Dempus.

Dempus was dumbstruck. He no longer had the time to cast another spell, using his entire strength to smash downward with his magic staff without the slightest hesitation. The interior of his magic staff had similarly rich in earth element, becoming as hard as diamond.

There was a sharp screech as the two weapons collided. Dempus's magic staff was shattered into pieces by the Demonslayer Edge. The Demonslayer Edge which was like an arrow at the end of its flight, but still persisted in bombarding Dempus, enveloping Dempus who was covered in earth armor, discharging the last of its energy into Dempus' body.

Dempus' earth armor didn't have any marks but strands of cold aura from the Demonslayer Edge had penetrated the physical defenses of the earth armor and directly enter Dempus' frail body. Earth sacred magus Dempus shivered, his eyebrows suddenly freezing.

It was only at this moment that some experts that were by Dempus' side had come to their senses. Many spells and weapons shot toward the Demonslayer Edge in a flash. The Demonslayer Edge snaked around like a python, avoid a majority of the attacks before suddenly entering the ground and disappearing.

Rumble...

At the same moment, the rumbling sounds of an earthquake could suddenly be heard from under their feet. These knights and soldiers started losing their balance and swaying around. Out of a sudden, numerous earth spikes appeared from the ground, killing some soldiers and knights who were unable to dodge in time.

Accompanying the fierce rumbling sound, the earth suddenly split open with many gorges, with the bottomless gorges swallowing tens of lives.

Momentarily, the area with Dempus at the center had become the main area affected by the 'Shatter Earth' spell. As the rumbling continued, people were constantly killed by the astonishing might of the earth magic.

Dempus could sense the scattered cold aura within his body, feeling his body turn cold like winter. His limbs suddenly became somewhat stiff and numb. He was so cold that he emitted cold air all over, with signs of freezing already appearing on his hair and eyebrows.

Dempus clearly realized the abnormal movement under his feet but at this moment, his limbs were frozen from the cold aura and he was unable to suppress the anomaly under his feet. He could only shiver as he watched the huge number of casualties caused by his earth magic.

“Lord Magus, what-what is going on?” a Temple Knight from the Church of Light who was being pulled up from a gorge by a White Priest looked furiously at Dempus who floating in the air and reproached. “Kaka, kaka...” Dempus panicked, attempting to explain that all these weren’t his fault, but he was only able to let out some trembling sounds.

“Is Lord Magus too old, to have actually made a mistake with such a crucial spell. Do you know how many experts we lost because of your error?” Another White Priest of the Church of Light said, similarly looking furious.

Sacred swordmaster Karel who was charging over hurriedly from afar suddenly sensed something odd from Dempus’ location. Karel was filled with doubts. He sent a few Cross Slashes to force the sacred knight to retreat before looking into the distance at Dempus’ location. He suddenly came to a realization, abandoning the sacred knight to turn around and fly toward Lawrence’s location.

The survivors by Dempus’ side were in a flurry to pick up the pieces, not having the time to care about Han Shuo who had gone underground once again. They rescued their comrades who were still hanging onto the gorges as well as help those who were only injured by the earth spikes to treat their wounds.

Han Shuo rapidly distanced himself from Dempus’ area after he attacked as the Demonslayer Edge returned to his hand. Han Shuo had unknowingly arrived underneath the Church of Light’s sacred knight. He calmly observed the sacred knight through a mystical demon. Han Shuo

realized that the sacred knight was looking at Dempus in puzzlement, his brows wrinkled as though he was contemplating something.

Han Shuo held his breath in rapt attention, not in a hurry to act. He merely paid attention to the change in the sacred knight's expression through the mystical demons, looking for the most opportune moment to strike a fatal blow to the sacred knight. The sacred knight was looking at Dempus in puzzlement when he suddenly seemed to have understood something. His expression changed from puzzlement to anxiety, vibrating the golden pike in his hand and hurried toward Dempus, appearing to want to help Dempus disperse the cold aura within his body.

Han Shuo, who had been waiting for the opportune moment, suddenly unleashing the same skill, once again using the Demonslayer Edge's all-conquering sharpness to split apart the ground and stab toward the sole of the sacred knight's left leg that had not moved.

A tremendous killing intent that couldn't be masked caused the sacred knight's expression to change drastically. Soon after, he suddenly retracted his right foot that had taken a step forward. A mixture of divine energy and fighting aura suddenly shot out from his right sole. Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge had just pierced the ground when the torrent of energy rushed violently toward him.

Rumble...

The sacred knight stamped his right foot. A large ball of golden light suddenly entered the ground with his foot at its center, suddenly creating a round hole.

Han Shuo totally didn't foresee that the sacred knight would react so quickly. The Demonslayer Edge had yet to pierce his left foot when the terrifying force that erupted from his right foot arrived. The soft ground suddenly became as heavy as a mountain under the strength of his stamp, becoming so firm that it stopped Han Shuo's sneak attack while underground.

"Hehe, Marquis Bryan, I knew it was you!" The sacred knight laughed heartily, suddenly piercing his golden pike which was trembling with



golden light into the hole under his foot. In a moment, needle-like fighting aura punctured the ground, violently shooting toward Han Shuo at high speed. The strands of golden fighting aura contained divine energy which Han Shuo loathed and were so quick that Han Shuo was unable to dodge, appearing in front of Han Shuo in a flash.

As he cursed in his heart, Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge condensed a black screen from demonic yuan energy, resisting the penetration of the strands of fighting aura. His body hurriedly formed a protective shield, forming a second layer of defense against the attack of the golden strands.

The black screen condensed in a hurry broke like an eggshell when encountering the fifty-seventh strand of golden light. The remaining strands of golden light struck Han Shuo like golden lightning. Han Shuo only felt like his body was being pierced continuously by steel needles. His tenacious body was unable to withstand it, suddenly spitting out a mouthful of blood.

As the protective shield dulled, Han Shuo appeared as if he was struck by tens of arrows, his body suddenly having many additional finger sized holes. Even his forehead had three wounds, causing Han Shuo's handsome face to be ruined and to look extremely terrifying.

"Brat, I knew long ago that you harbor malicious intentions and have been waiting for your sneak attack. Hehe, you are still too inexperienced!" The sacred knight's laughter could be heard from above. He raised his pike, intending to attack Han Shuo again.

This was the greatest defeat Han Shuo had suffered since he started cultivating. He cursed the ancestors of the sacred knight in his heart, realizing that his plan to mount a sneak attack had been seen through long ago and had instead ended up worse off. He resisted the urge to charge out and go all out against the sacred knight. Han Shuo didn't wait for the sacred knight's next wave of attacks, making a prompt decision to return along his original path.

Having trained till his current level, as long as Han Shuo's consciousness didn't scatter and the demonic infant wasn't destroyed, he would still be

able to recover no matter the degree of injury to his physical body. Hence, Han Shuo wasn't worried about his disfigured face. As there were too many opposing experts, Han Shuo knew that forcing his way out was useless. Even though he felt extremely unwilling in his heart, he had no choice but to retreat.

The earth zombie who had just wrecked earth sacred magus Dempus' 'Shatter Earth' spell suddenly felt the boundless wrath and resentment in Han Shuo's heart. The earth zombie disobeyed Han Shuo's instructions for the first time and actually stubbornly emerging from within the ground. All of a sudden, thousands of earth spikes rose from the ground.

The ground became like a continuous sea of trees rising indefinitely. When the sacred knight was looking unstable, the naive earth zombie had already disregarded everything and charged toward the sacred knight. As he charged, lumps of earth flew up and adhered to the earth zombie's body.

In an extremely short time, the earth zombie was covered in numerous clumps of soil, forming a ten-meter tall clay man. His original naive look could no longer be seen, as though he had merged with the earth as he ferociously walked toward the sacred knight who was somewhat in a daze.

"No!" Han Shuo who was deep underground suddenly screamed his lungs out, flying into the sky once again in spite of his body being drenched in blood from his injuries and charging anxiously toward the sacred knight.

However, even before Han Shuo could reach the sacred knight, his golden pike had suddenly shot out a glaring golden light, with the pike stabbing into the middle of the sole of the ten meter tall clay man the earth zombie had transformed into, causing a torrent of energy to suddenly erupt and charge into the earth zombie's body.

The earth zombie's body that was formed from soil suddenly shot out gold light after the golden light from the sacred knight entered its body. Soon after, the earth on his body started falling piece by piece. The earth zombie who had returned to its original size was struck by a beam of

golden light, suddenly flying backward. A large chunk of his naturally formed armor had sunk in at the chest.

Han Shuo's eyes turned red. He had never been as angry as he was at this moment. The little skeleton and the other zombies in the other plane all transmitted strong messages of wanting to come to this plane and join strengths with Han Shuo to savagely retaliate against the enemy who dared to harm Han Shuo and the earth zombie.

Han Shuo didn't lose his rationality, forcefully obstructing the strong desire of the little skeleton and the rest. When he saw the earth zombie actually struggling in an attempt to charge toward that sacred knight once again for revenge once he landed on the ground, Han Shuo choked with emotion as he shouted, "Idiot!"

Soon after, Han Shuo ignored the earth zombie's stubborn desire, chanting at the fastest speed in his life and forcefully sent this naive earth zombie back to the netherworld.

"Stupid undead creature, truly courting death!" The sacred knight laughed as he looked at Han Shuo, pointing his pike toward Han Shuo and said, "My target this time is you. Your strength is pretty good, no wonder you are able to force Kosse to retreat twice! However, your good luck ends here!"

Han Shuo had never hated someone the way he did now. Until now, Han Shuo's attitude toward the Church of Light had always been to ignore them, only adopting measures to counterattack. It was only when the earth zombie was injured because of him that Han Shuo was truly determined to oppose the Church of Light till one party is eliminated.

Staring at the sacred knight who had a relaxed expression, Han Shuo breathed violently, ignoring the blood flowing from his wounds. Blood flowed out from the wounds on the bridge of his nose and his left cheek due to his stirred up emotions, causing him to look like a demon that had walked out from the depths of hell.

"I'll remember you. For every day I live, the Church of Light will never have another day of peace!" Han Shuo unhurriedly declared word by word

before turning around and flying toward Karel with the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens.

Lancelot Empire's space sacred magus Sabakas had unknowingly appeared and was currently drawing a teleportation array under Lawrence's feet. Apart from Sabakas who was concentrating on drawing the magic array, everyone else had their eyes fixed on Han Shuo.

Tears constantly fell from Phoebe's eyes, but she was forcefully restrained by Karel, preventing her from attempting to fly to Han Shuo's side.

# Chapter 415: Miraculous speed of recovery

When the sacred knight who had injured Han Shuo saw Han Shuo turn around to fly toward Lawrence, he hesitated for a moment but did not pursue and attack.

Apart from sacred swordmaster Karel, there was also space sacred magus in the direction Han Shuo flew in. With two sacred ranked experts there and earth sacred magus Dempus yet to recover, the sacred knight clearly felt some apprehension.

With the sacred knight not daring to act blindly, the experts from the Church of Light as well as under Ashburn and Prince Charles naturally wouldn't foolishly charge forward to their deaths. Hence, they all looked on helplessly as Han Shuo shouted vicious words before flying rapidly toward Lawrence's side.

As of now, Lawrence's residence had been thoroughly wrecked by the fight between the two sacred ranked experts and the 'Shatter Earth' spell. All that could be seen were collapsed buildings and desolation.

The servants, workers and maids in Lawrence's residence had long since been massacred. Currently there were merely less than ten trusted aides by Lawrence's side. In contrast, even after the losses to the 'Shatter Earth' spell, the enemy still had almost four hundred experts with astonishing strength from various professions. The sounds of iron hoofs could be heard gradually approaching, seeming that there were still reinforcement troops heading over.

Earth sacred magus Dempus lightly exhaled as strands of purple specks floated out of his body. The cold aura that penetrated the bones was diffused out with the purple specks.

Dempus was after all a sacred magus and was extremely proficient in manipulating mental energy. Although the invasion of the cold aura was able to chill and even freeze his body, once he came to his senses and used his mental energy to dispel the chilliness, the cold aura was clearly unable to threaten his life.

Furthermore, when the cold aura from the Demonslayer Edge entered his body, it was after he had resisted it twice with magic. Only a few strands of the dense cold poison was able to enter his body. A magus at his level naturally wouldn't be killed that easily by a few strands of cold poison.

After Dempus dispelled the cold aura within his body, he still had some lingering fears. Fortunately, he had reacted promptly and there were many experts guarding by his side. Otherwise, if Han Shuo had the opportunity to attack after Dempus was affected by the cold poison, his life might truly have been lost.

Such a frightening martial technique! Dempus felt aghast, gazing toward the faraway Han Shuo who was wounded from head to toe but still appearing malevolent as he headed toward Lawrence. He thought in his heart about astrologer Grace's prophecy that this person would bring prosperity to Lancelot Empire. Could it really be true?

"Bryan, are-you ok?" Phoebe struggled with all her might to escape from Karel's grasp, tearfully rushing toward Han Shuo, her delicate hands trembling as she caressed the terrible wounds on Han Shuo's face.

"It's nothing, don't need to worry!" Han Shuo gave an unsightly grin as he consoled Phoebe who was crying uncontrollably. He reached out to grab Phoebe's hand which was caressing the wounds on his face and walked toward Lawrence.

Lawrence's expression was filled with concern as he asked hurriedly, "Healer, where's the healer?"

"Dead, dead a long time ago!" dark grand magus Crowley who had pledged allegiance to Lawrence sighed softly and then took out a medicine bottle, passing it over to Han Shuo as he said, "Quickly apply this on your wounds!"

"Senior!" Old assassin Bollands who had watching Han Shuo all along called out softly.

Bollands was no longer young and had seen all sorts of situations as an assassin. He didn't deliberately express his concern in front of Han Shuo,

but the killing intent on his body become even stronger, obviously not directed at the people by Han Shuo's side.

"I'm ok!" Han Shuo smiled as he declined. However, when his smile was displayed on that frightening face, it didn't cause people to feel reassured. To say the least, Phoebe started crying bitterly once again.

"I'm really fine, I am already no longer bleeding from my wounds. The martial technique I practice is special. These injuries may look extremely serious, but they don't have a substantial effect on me." When Han Shuo saw everyone anxiously trying to apply medicine to his body, he couldn't help but explain again.

Hearing Han Shuo's statement, everyone couldn't help but be filled with doubts as they earnestly sized up Han Shuo. Everyone's expression suddenly changed.

The wounds that had covered Han Shuo's entire body were previously still finger-sized and dripping with blood. All the blood had since congealed like ice. The scarlet injured muscle fibers started wiggling like worms and the originally finger-sized wounds actually shrunk by a fold.

Sacred swordmaster Karel who had been calm doubted his eyes, subconsciously closing his eyes before opening them again, his eyes shining as he fixed his eyes on the wounds on Han Shuo's body.

Really shrunk by a fold!

Karel was moved, his torch-like eyes clearly saw that Han Shuo's wounds were about the size of a little finger and was oozing with scarlet blood. However, not only did the bleeding stop, even the wounds were only the size of chopsticks.

Han Shuo had charged out from within the ground, sent that peculiar undead creature back to the netherworld and then flew toward them. All these only took at most two minutes!

Two minutes was roughly equivalent to the duration where one is entranced. Such an outrageous change in such a short time, Karel couldn't help but be indescribably shocked!

Bollands' expression was burning hot, his eyes shining as he stared at the changes of a wound on Han Shuo's belly. This wound which was near to Han Shuo's demon infant was currently just the width of a toothpick and was far from the terrifying sight at the beginning.

Demonic arts! This is precisely the might of demonic arts! Bollands shouted in his heart. He who was on the verge of cultivating secret demonic arts felt his heartbeat suddenly increasing at this moment. The excitement in his heart became somewhat unable to be contained.

"Alright, you all need not take care of me, I'll be able to recover very soon. Currently, we should rather be thinking of how to obstruct the attack of those people and fight for sufficient time for Mister Sabakas!" Han Shuo turned his head to look at the restless enemies and said calmly.

With Han Shuo's reminder, everyone discovered the anomalies in his body. When they heard him speaking with his usual calm expression, they suddenly realized the unfavorability of their situation and looked at the enemy. They suddenly realized that the sacred knight and earth sacred magus Dempus were recklessly charging over.

Space sacred magus Sabakas was the only one who didn't turn to look at Han Shuo. At this moment, he was holding a pointed magic staff, carving a complicated space magic array on the smooth rock ground.

The three-meter long magic array was in an irregular rhombus shape. With every stroke of Sabakas' magic staff, a slender line will appear and strands of elemental energy would flow through the sharp tip of the magic staff and enter each line of the magic array.

The focused Sabakas had totally immersed himself. In his eyes, there was nothing else except the magic array under his feet. He had simply ignored all other activity, as though he wouldn't even crease his brows if the heaven fell and earth rendered.

As a space sacred magus, no one could stop him if Sabakas wanted to leave by himself. If Sabakas wished, he could even bring a few people along. Unfortunately, there were too many important people here. Even Sabakas was unable to act without a care for the lives of others and hence



could only utilize a magic transportation array.

The sacred knight and earth sacred magus who were charging over were clearly aiming to prevent Sabakas from completing his magic array. Having the superiority in numbers, they planned to get rid of everyone here once and for all, so as to avoid leaving behind endless trouble.

While Dempus was flying over, another magic staff actually appeared in his hand as he started chanting a long magic spell once again. His eyes were fixed on Han Shuo, as if Han Shuo was his greatest enemy.

“Pay attention, we definitely can’t let anyone disturb Sabakas!” sacred swordmaster Karel drew back his astonishment toward Han Shuo and instructed hastily.

The strongest person in a team was usually the leader. Karel’s words caused everyone by Lawrence to focus their attention, immediately going to a square-shaped formation with Sabakas in the middle, intending to obtain enough time for Sabakas.

“Let’s go!” When everyone had prepared to fight for time for Sabakas, Sabakas who had been fully focused on deploying the space magic array suddenly called out.

Everyone’s expression relaxed as, under Sabakas’s directions, Lawrence and those who were the weakest took the lead to stand in the magic transportation array.

“Don’t let them get away!” the sacred knight shouted loudly while charging over.

“Meteor Shower!” Dempus who had been constantly chanting earth magic completed his current incantation. Rumbling sounds suddenly appeared above everyone as several hundred meteorites suddenly smashed downward.

It was obvious that such a concentrated Meteor Shower could cause when it fell on such a small area.

The skeletal staff suddenly appeared in Han Shuo’s hand as numerous bone spears flew into the sky like an arrow rain. A pretty white bone

shield blossomed in malevolent beauty as it covered above everyone's heads.

Several magi simultaneously cast defensive spells. Sacred swordmaster Karel held his longsword as he looked coolly above him, prepared to obstruct the descending attack at any time.

Zhi, zhi... As the meteorites rumbled downward, a peculiar sound could be heard in the sky.

Han Shuo looked up, realizing that the sky had suddenly split open and formed a black hole, like a demon opening its giant mouth, similar to tearing a black burlap in the sky. As the mighty Meteor Shower was swallowed bit by bit by the huge black hole, Han Shuo's defensive measures were simply untouched.

"Alright, it's your turn!" space sacred magus Sabakas pointed at the magic array in front of him and said to the remaining Han Shuo, Karel, Crowley and Phoebe. He had a calm expression, devoid of the slightest nervous from confronting danger, which was truly surprising!

Han Shuo stared blankly as he looked at space sacred magus Sabakas in amazement. The current Sabakas didn't have his usual amiable smile, his focused expression giving off a feeling of solemnness. The previous black hole which had swallowed the Meteor Shower was indeed cast by this old man.

However, Han Shuo didn't hear Sabakas chanting any incantations. This caused Han Shuo to be amazed as well as realize that Sabakas was already able to silently cast magic. It seems that even though they were both sacred magus, Sabakas' comprehension of the essence of magic ought to be higher than Dempus.

"Let's go!" While Han Shuo was in a daze, Phoebe grabbed onto him, forcefully pulling him into Sabakas' transportation array.

Even before Han Shuo could react, Sabakas had already activated the magic array. A beam of white light suddenly shone as Han Shuo and the rest disappeared.

There was only space sacred magus Sabakas remaining in the whole area. The sharp end of his magic staff pierced downward, causing the magic array that he had painstakingly deployed to suddenly shatter and no longer resemble its original appearance.

“Dempus, I didn’t expect someone at your realm would actually act in a way against Lancelot Empire’s future. As your friend for many years, I feel grief for you!” After Sabakas destroyed the space magic array, he sighed as he looked at Dempus before him.

“I don’t believe in vague prophecies. Letting that illegitimate child become the king of Lancelot Empire is simply a preposterous blasphemy. Apart from myself, many nobles within the empire would not allow such a thing to happen.

I’ve no choice but to act this way precisely for the Empire’s future. You are the ones that are obstinately persistent. You shouldn’t believe the words of a muddleheaded astrologer and bet the kingdom’s future on a heresy. He is a vicious disciple of the Calamity Church. Why would he bring prosperity to the Lancelot Empire in the future?” Dempus righteously rebuked Sabakas, clearly wasn’t one who believed in fate.

“Mister Sabakas, I respect your character greatly and have also heard many stories about you. However, I still have to say that even if you save Lawrence and the rest, you would still be unable to change their fate. Currently, the entire Ossen City is under the control of Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles. Lawrence and the others will ultimately not be able to escape.” the sacred knight laughed loudly as said to Sabakas.

“That is not necessarily the case!” Sabakas calmly looked at the sacred knight and said, “There is at least one region that you wouldn’t be able to control easily!”

The Dark Mantle Headquarters had a tighter defense than the royal palace. Even though they had seized the royal palace, the Dark Mantle Headquarters would not be easily conquered. As the chief elder of the Dark Mantle, Sabakas is the one who arranged the defensive measures on Mt. Ordas. He clearly understood Mt. Ordas’ formidable defenses.

“It’s undeniable that the Dark Mantle Headquarters is indeed hard to be attacked from the outside!” the sacred knight had a serious expression as he spoke. He once again revealed a smile soon after as he said, “However if there starts to be disorder internally, the situation would be totally different!”

Space sacred magus Sabakas’ expression changed when he heard the sacred knight’s words. He no longer spoke superfluous words with them, hurriedly brandishing his magic staff and disappeared with a beam of light.

# Chapter 416: Everything was under control

Mt. Ordas, Dark Mantle Headquarters.

Sabakas's space magic array led directly to the Dark Mantle's headquarters. However, when Han Shuo and the rest arrived, they discovered that the situation within the headquarters wasn't as stable as they had thought.

Mt. Ordas, which had the best defenses within Ossen City, was having a civil strife. All kinds of tight defenses measures had been damaged. A small group of high-ranking personnel who sided with eldest Prince Charles harbored ulterior motives as they destroyed the Dark Mantle's defenses from within.

Out of the eleven high-ranking officials at their previous meeting, apart from the three heads who firmly believed in the two chief elders' judgment, five of them had secretly defected to eldest prince Charles and had revolted at the most crucial moment. Not only did they destroyed the defenses within the headquarters, they even allied with the empire's troops to attack the Dark Mantle.

The sudden internal revolt caused the heavily guarded Mt. Ordas to similarly become a battlefield. When Han Shuo and the rest had arrived at the Dark Mantle's headquarters through the transportation array, they could hear numerous shouts, which indicated that the situation here was equally not optimistic.

The space seemed to be ripped open by a sharp blade as an opening appeared in front of Han Shuo and the others. "There are people who defected! Perhaps they think that Amyes and the other two have held their position for too long and feel that they themselves should replace them." space sacred magus Sabakas said with a vexed expression as he appeared.

Under the effects of his demonic yuan energy, Han Shuo's wounds were still slowly shrinking and closing. Mystical demons cruised through the various passageways within the Dark Mantle headquarters, slowly projecting the situation here within his mind.

There was a five thousand-strong army at the foot of the Mt. Ordas which thoroughly surrounded the Dark Mantle headquarters. The five high ranking members had joined hands with forces of Charles and Duke Ashburn and were currently attacking the Dark Mantle Headquarters. This gang of five had destroyed all the defenses of the Dark Mantle at the beginning and were very familiar with the layout of the headquarters.

Under their command, the battle advanced orderly. As the Lancelot Empire's king's hand in the darkness, even with the appearance of five traitors, the Dark Mantle was still able to withstand the attack by leveraging their geographical advantage over the enemy. It was clear that the members who had remained within the Dark Mantle headquarters were all genuine experts.

Faced with the betrayal of former allies, the hatred in their hearts couldn't be suppressed. If not for the overwhelming number of enemies, they would have perhaps rushed out of Mt. Ordas and sliced the five traitors into a thousand pieces.

"There are only five thousand troops at the foot of the mountain and it isn't a very large number. With our arrival, we should be able to eliminate them easily!" Having surveyed the situation through his mystical demons, Han Shuo knitted his brows as he said to Sabakas.

Sabakas was stunned and astonished by Han Shuo's ability to assess the general situation. As a master of space magic, Sabakas had gone to the surroundings to observe the situation while heading over so as to understand the forces surrounding Mt. Ordas. He didn't expect that Han Shuo who had just arrived to actually also work out the situation in the surroundings. Sabakas has heard much of Han Shuo's miracles from others but he was clearly skeptical without witnessing it himself. Currently, when he heard Han Shuo's statement and took a closer look at Han Shuo, he noticed that the bleeding wounds on his face had completely healed without a trace.

"Grace's prophecy was right! The emergence of such an amazing person in the empire would definitely bring a new dawn to Lancelot Empire's future. It looks like we should have a way out from this nasty situation."

Sabakas thought.

“These men are soldiers of the Lancelot Empire and they have no choice to attack Mt. Ordas due to the orders of Charles and Ashburn. As soldiers who only know to obey a superior’s orders, they are not to blame. The fault lies with those who give them those orders.” sacred swordmaster Karel said before looking at Han Shuo and continued, “Therefore, these men, who are the backbone of the Lancelot Empire’s strength, cannot be sacrificed innocently!”

As the mystical demons surveyed the surroundings, Han Shuo realized that there were no light magi who could threaten his undead army within the forces surrounding Mt. Ordas. He planned to summon his undead army and combine with Sabakas’s space magic to resolve the threat in one go, but he didn’t expect this idea to be rejected by Karel.

Although Han Shuo’s soul had descended to the Lancelot Empire, he didn’t think of himself as a citizen of the empire. He made such a proposal because he didn’t place much importance on the lives of those people. On the other hand, sacred swordmaster Karel who had taken responsibility for Lancelot Empire’s future all along obviously wouldn’t agree to let those innocent soldiers die tragically from terrifying magic.

“Let’s first look for Candide and the rest before thinking of other plans,” Sabakas said calmly.

“There’s no need for that. They are heading over!” Han Shuo replied.

Not long after Han Shuo completed his sentence, the three heads of the Dark Mantle and the remaining high-ranking members that supported Sabakas’ decision had all arrived in this area.

“Grandpa, we sensed a disturbance in the transportation array and saw your arrival using the magic mirror” Cecilia had a solemn expression as she spoke.

Emily was also among the people who had just arrived. It was clear that her attention was on Han Shuo’s body from the start. The bloodstains on Han Shuo’s body were still sticky and there were two tiny wounds on his chest that had not completely healed.

Without having to think further, Emily knew that Han Shuo was injured. Her eyes suddenly reddened, wanting to disregard everything and lean on Han Shuo like Phoebe did, personally treat his wounds and ask him about his injuries.

Unfortunately, she was well aware of her status and understood that doing so will only cause more trouble for Han Shuo. In such circumstances, all Emily could do was to hold back to the worry in her heart and only secretly express her concern and worry through her gaze.

In this group, the person that Han Shuo cared most about was Emily. When Han Shuo arrived at the Dark Mantle headquarters and discovered that the Dark Mantle was surrounded by enemies, Han Shuo immediately started to use his mystical demons to look for her. He only truly calmed down when he found out that Emily was safe and sound.

Han Shuo had noticed her concern through her reddened eyes and he couldn't help but feel warmth in his heart. Right at this moment, Phoebe wrote the word 'quiet' on Han Shuo's hand before struggling free of his tight grip and walked towards Emily.

Candide and Amyes greeted Sabakas respectfully before Amyes immediately described the situation at hand and said, "It was because of our negligence that caused this internal revolt. Fortunately, the real power in the Dark Mantle had always been in the hands of the three of us. Therefore, although there was heavy damage to the headquarters from the start, the three of us was able to stabilize the situation."

As matters have reached such an extent, Amyes, Candide, and the others clearly new the actual situation. Candide had a gloomy face as he continued after Amyes, "These traitors were primarily responsible for gathering and sending news from His Majesty's palace. The news of His Majesty's demise was not leaked at all and it is precisely because we didn't make any prior preparations that we are in such a passive situation."

"They must all die!" Lawrence shouted word by word.

Lawrence, who was already grieving, currently had an ice-cold expression on his face. Uhtred's devoted encouragement and support



during this period of time had caused Lawrence to have deep feelings toward Uhtred. As a stubborn person himself, Lawrence clearly knew that Uhtred's sudden death had an undeniable connection with Charles and Ashburn.

"Of Ossen City's four city gates, the northern gate is under the supervision of Count Boris. I reckon that currently, only the northern wall is slightly safer." Amyes said with a heavy expression.

Lawrence nodded and said calmly, "It is best that resolve the rebellion within Ossen City. I'm afraid that once we leave Ossen City, Charles and Ashburn will be able to distort the truth. I definitely don't want to see this rebellion resulting in large-scale war. In that situation, even if we were to win the war, the Lancelot Empire will be greatly weakened!"

"That's right. It's best to resolve matters within Ossen City. However, I'm afraid that this is also what Ashburn and Charles want. Currently, there are powerful enemies outside Lancelot Empire. If Lancelot Empire sinks into civil strife due to the princes fighting over the throne, I reckon that Lancelot Empire will surely be heading toward its destruction." Karel strongly agreed with Lawrence's suggestion and immediately stated his stand on the matter.

"In that case, the fastest way to end the rebellion is by eliminating Charles and Ashburn. The enemy will be like a headless snake once they are killed. However, this matter won't be easy to carry out, as they surely would have considered this and take precautions. I reckon that there must be numerous experts protecting them." Lawrence continued.

"Let's temporarily not discuss this. Old Hahn and the rest are at the northern wall. Apart from him, there are also a few Marquises under your father that are still alive. They are all within the castle by the northern wall. Ashburn and his men have yet to truly attack the northern wall for the time being. We can make that location our base camp. We can discuss in detail after we reach." Han Shuo suddenly spoke.

Lawrence was shocked when he heard Han Shuo's words and asked, "They are all over there?"

Han Shuo nodded affirmatively and said, "That's right. Besides them, the second prince, the youngest prince, and their men who had survived are all at the northern wall. Currently, apart from the northern wall, the entire Ossen City is filled with soldiers and knights under Duke Ashburn and eldest prince Charles. Only that location is temporarily safe."

The twelve mystical demons scattered to every corner of Ossen City, constantly patrolling and surveying the entire Ossen City. Nobody knew the situation within the city better than Han Shuo. He was calm and collected, as though everything was under his control.

# Chapter 417: I can

In such a crucial time, the role of a person who is able to accurately view the overall situation goes without saying. Hence, when everyone realized Han Shuo could expertly explain the situation in each district of Ossen City, they were so shocked by Han Shuo's calm and natural expression that they were momentarily absent-minded.

"Bryan, your body is here, so how are you able to know the situation in each district of Ossen City? After the five traitors appeared within the Dark Mantle, many branches were met with destruction. The five of them know the location of several main branches of the Dark Mantle. Even the Dark Mantle is unable to easily grasp the situation of Ossen City at the moment, don't tell me that you are able to?" Sabakas stared blankly at Han Shuo, asking in amazement after a long while.

Han Shuo nodded his head as he calmly admitted, "I can!"

Hearing his reply, everyone's expression was a mix of surprise and delight, but clearly more delighted than surprised.

If what Han Shuo said is true, Han Shuo would be able to achieve the intelligence gathering and monitoring that each branch of the Dark Mantle was originally responsible for by himself. In the current extremely chaotic Ossen City, if Han Shuo was truly able to understand clearly the situation in every area of Ossen City, everyone would be able to make the proper decision and seize an opportunity to turn around the current unfavorable situation.

When the Dark Mantle's three heavyweights and the two sacred rank characters heard Han Shuo reply "I can" so confidently, they were expressionless for a moment, so much so that they forgot about the many experts surrounding them on the outside.

While the rest of them were ineffably shocked, Han Shuo seemed to think that they weren't surprised enough, continuing to say, "I am not only able to observe the situation in the four districts of Ossen City, even Ashburn and Charles' conversation, as well as the implementation and

details of their every move, I am able to observe without missing out anything.

As long as I want to, apart from a few areas that have deployed layers of barriers, as long as I'm given a bit of time, I am able to clearly observe any area in Ossen City and be aware of what they are doing or saying. I'm speaking the truth. For example, currently, Ashburn and Charles are gathered together, discussing how to capture the northern city district. Oh, they say that among Count Boris' men, there's an officer named Bishop who is actually one of their men..."

"Oh, what's wrong?" While Han Shuo was speaking, he suddenly discovered that everyone by his side was looking dull as they stared blankly at himself, hence he couldn't help but ask in bafflement.

"Are, are you God?" dark grand magus Crowley who had previously lost to Han Shuo stared blankly for a while before speaking out everyone's thoughts in a revering tone.

Are you God? The three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle and the two sacred magus as well as Bollands, Emily and Phoebe suddenly realized that what they wanted to say was actually mentioned by that fellow first.

The ability to observe any area in a city clearly, finding out any information he wanted to know without overlooking anything. Such an existence, apart from "God", even a half-God realm expert had no way of achieving it. Could this fellow before them be a "Hidden God" that was banished to the mortal world?

Harboring this sort of doubt, everyone's vision was uniformly fixed on Han Shuo as they waited anxiously for Han Shuo to explain.

Han Shuo naturally wasn't stupid. His temporary puzzlement was swept aside by Crowley's "Are you God?", immediately understanding what his omnipresent twelve mystical demons meant to the people of this world!

"No, this is a special use that supplements the martial technique I train in. It's nothing amazing. Oh, that's right. Bollands, I will impart this martial technique to you after some time. At that time, you will understand what is going on!" Han Shuo explained hastily.

When Bolland who had a blank expression heard Han Shuo's sentence, he almost fainted in happiness. Luckily, Bolland had not lived for so long in vain. He hastily stabilized his disturbed mood, trembling as he said, "Thank you senior, thank you senior!"

Everyone's envious expression was fixed on the excited Bolland in a split second. Even the calm sacred swordmaster Karel had the slightest of envy toward Bolland. He felt that Bolland's foresight was so vicious, actually finding such a mystical senior.

"I want to learn too!" Phoebe's eyes were fixed on Han Shuo as she said bluntly.

Han Shuo was slightly distracted, shooting a glance at Phoebe. He sighed and said in feigned seriousness, "Our sect's secrets cannot be passed to outsiders, not even to our wives!"

However, Han Shuo was actually thinking inwardly that since she had a request from him, he had to seize it properly and not agree rashly. At the very least, he had to let her know her place.

"Phoebe, don't cause a scene!" sacred swordmaster Karel frowned as he berated Phoebe.

Phoebe dreaded her master the most. She stared at Han Shuo resentfully when she heard Karel's words, thinking inwardly that when they were alone, she must obtain this martial technique from Han Shuo be it through harassing or emotional attacks.

"I am familiar with Bishop. I didn't expect that he is actually a traitor. We need to immediately head to the northern city district and stabilize the situation there." Lawrence was feeling extremely impatient, planning to first head for Boris at the northern district. This was because as of now, only the northern city guard was still under their control.

"All of you leave first, I'll seal off Mt. Ordas!" Candide's expression was unchangingly gloomily as he hesitated for a while before saying to everyone.

Space sacred magus Sabakas hesitated for a moment when he heard

Candide before nodding his head soon after and said, "Alright, it's a good idea to temporarily seal off Mt. Ordas. At least we will still be able to temporarily hide in Mt. Ordas if we fail to defend the northern city district or leave Ossen City from the magic array in Mt. Ordas. Thankfully, the power of Dark Mantle has always been in the hands of the three of you. Otherwise if those fellows happened to know more secrets of the Dark Mantle, I fear that it would truly be very problematic this time around."

From the conversation between Candide and Sabakas, Han Shuo realized that the Dark Mantle was still hiding many secrets. Even the idea of sealing the mountain was new to Han Shuo. However, it seems like the entire Mt. Ordas should be able to be sealed off. The two of them mentioned that the Dark Mantle Headquarters could still be the last stronghold after sealing off the mountain, indicating that the safety of Mt. Ordas after sealing it off need not be doubted.

"Candide, we'll temporarily leave this area to you, this is my token." Amyes held the token that represented his status and passed it to Candide.

"Be careful!" Cecilia was solemn as she also passed the token that represented her status over to Candide.

"To seal Mt. Ordas, the identity tokens of all three heavyweights are needed. Once Mt. Ordas is sealed, every entrance and all magical arrays would be sealed. Apart from the few of us, anyone else who doesn't know the method would be unable to freely enter and exit Mt. Ordas." Amyes explained to Han Shuo, Lawrence and the others.

This secret was something even Han Shuo didn't know. When Han Shuo looked toward Emily, he realized that Emily was similarly puzzled. After observing everyone else, Han Shuo realized that even though there were many high ranked personnel of the Dark Mantle here, he reckoned that the only people who actually knew this secret were the three heavyweights and chief elder Sabakas.

It seems that as the empire's largest and most formidable organization, the secrets hidden by the Dark Mantle ought to not only be as sporadic as

it appeared to everyone. The sealing of the entire Mt. Ordas was most likely just the tip of the iceberg.

After Amyes finished explaining, everyone made the prompt decision to utilize the existing magic array here to directly reach the Dark Mantle branch at the northern city district before Candide sealed off Mt. Ordas.

The northern district had similarly suffered from attacks. Han Shuo's mansion was in this area. However, as compared to the other districts, the northern district was still considered safe. Those that had attacked Han Shuo's mansion, regardless of whether they ultimately succeeded, had left the northern city district before the northern city army's knight regiment were able to arrive.

When they reached Count Boris' castle, the people who supported Lawrence had all gathered. As Han Shuo was able to clearly observe the layout of Ashburn and Charles' troops and also know the details of their next actions, Han Shuo had become the most important person here.

With Han Shuo's description, the distribution of Ashburn and the eldest prince's troops, the secret operations of every noble, the current situation within the imperial palace, the movements of the other two princes were known without omission by everyone.

With all the chaos within Ossen City, the extent of benefits of having Han Shuo who was able to observe the entire situation clearly was reflected very quickly.

Under Han Shuo's directions for two days in a row, twelve traitors headed by Bishop within the northern city guard were all executed. Some lucky surviving nobles who opposed Ashburn were sent by sacred magus Sabakas one after another into the castle. Two attacks by Ashburn and the rest were ambushed by traps that were deployed in advance, with their head being killed on the spot.

Leveraging on Han Shuo's existence, Lawrence, Old Hahn and other military strategists skillfully utilized the power they held to firmly defend the northern city district in such disadvantageous circumstances. Furthermore, they slowly accumulated their strength, forming the only

force that was able to threaten Ashburn and Charles' power within Ossen City. However, the superiority of Ashburn, Charles and the others were too great. Currently, four out of the five districts of Ossen City were under their control. The forces under them was also four times that of Lawrence and the others. The small victories by the northern city guard appeared to be insufficient in reversing the overall situation.

On the third day of everyone worriedly pondering how to solve this problem, Han Shuo suddenly saw through a mystical demon that a fifty thousand strong Ironblood troop was staying by Ossen City's northern city gate.

It was also during the night of that same day that a thin middle-aged man pulled along Fanny as he abused Han Shuo while bursting into the castle at the northern city district, bring about a new problem for Han Shuo!



# Chapter 418: Tripartite talks

“Get that brat Bryan out here!” A thin middle-aged man swore and shouted, dragging along a reluctant Fanny as they burst into the castle.

The guards stationed along the heavily-guarded pathway seemed to recognize this thin middle-aged man. Everyone frowned and was worried but surprisingly none of them dared to stop him.

Due to Han Shuo’s stunning ability during the last three days, he had gained an exquisitely high status. Even in Ossen City, it was exceedingly rare to find someone who dared to abuse a noble so unbridled. A few soldiers who couldn’t identify this man were extremely furious but suddenly quietened down after the veterans succinctly explained, their expression filled with hints of reverence when they looked at this man again.

The loud curses were clearly audible from the assembly room at the third-floor of the castle where Han Shuo and his party were gathered. Old Hahn, Boris, Eevee, sacred swordmaster Karel, sacred magus Sabakas as well as Amyes and the others from the Dark Mantle smiled bitterly when they heard that voice.

Lawrence, Amyes and those who knew what was going on, suddenly glanced at Han Shuo with glinting eyes. Emily was even more uncomfortable. No one knew what unpredictable outcome this madman’s arrival would bring.

“Why has this guy come over?” Old Hahn’s expression suddenly changed, and soon after looked flabbergasted at Han Shuo who was smiling wryly and asked probingly, “Why would you have animosity with him?”

Han Shuo awkwardly scratched his head, his face bitter as he explained, “I don’t have any animosity with him. Forget it, let’s deal with things as they happen. I’ll go take a look.”

“Bryan, this madman cannot be provoked, you must treat him with caution!” Just as Han Shuo stood up from his seat and was heading out,

Lawrence suddenly spoke while having a queer expression.

“I’ll take note of that!” Han Shuo replied and directly headed towards the exit.

Lawrence was familiar with Han Shuo’s temperament, but he still didn’t feel completely assured, so he got up and followed him out. Those who sat around the table were all people of status. Some of them were somewhat well acquainted with Firenze. When they saw Lawrence getting up and leaving, they hesitated for a moment before following suit, leaving just space sacred magus Sabakas and sacred swordmaster Karel in the room.

In the whole Lancelot Empire, it could be said that the only person that Duke Ashburn and eldest Prince Charles was apprehensive about was the southern border’s war god, Firenze. In the entire Lancelot Empire, the one person who could defend the southern border from the bloodthirsty orcs was none other than this man.

The citizens within the dozens of cities at the southern border were extremely valiant. In the many years of battle with the Orc Empire, every soldier and knight have been tempered to become exceedingly strong and powerful. The strongest knight regiment and legion within the Lancelot Empire were all at the southern border. But without this man’s leadership, the vast southern border would have turned into the orc’s land and Lancelot Empire would also be invaded by the bestial Orcs.

It could be said that no matter who ultimately won the civil war, Firenze’s status at the southern border will not be affected. This was because, other than this madman, no one else could stabilize the situation at the southern border. Based on this, he had become the one who had the most freedom to act as he wanted.

While such a civil strife was going on, If this man wanted to, he could declare independence from the Lancelot Empire, and become the true monarch of the southern border.

“Where’s that little bastard, come out now!” Firenze shouted as he walked. Although there were numerous densely packed soldiers in the surroundings, no one dared to obstruct him and instead took the initiative

to open a path for him.

“Father!” Fanny, who was being held by Firenze, was blushing as if she was embarrassed to have such a father.

“You stay out of this. This little bastard is a womanizer at such young age. I must definitely teach him a lesson today. I don’t care that he’s the city lord of Brettel City. If he pisses me off, I’ll declare war on him. Lancelot Empire is already in disorder anyways, it wouldn’t matter if I add some oil to the fire!” Firenze shouted in rage as he dragged Fanny to the second floor.

At the beginning, Firenze was quite pleased when Fanny was talked about Bryan’s status. He had also heard of some of Bryan’s achievements. He felt that Bryan met his expectations and was suitable. Fanny marrying him would also not disgrace himself.

However, Firenze was unhappy that Bryan stood him up multiple times. This time he had obviously come to Ossen City, but Bryan still did not take the initiative to pay his respects. This cause Firenze to feel angry. However, he was still able to accept it reluctantly as he understood that Ossen City wasn’t in a good situation. However, when he started using his own power to find out more about Han Shuo, he suddenly realized that Han Shuo was actually a couple with Boozt Merchant Alliance’s Phoebe.

This news was shocking to Firenze who was far away from Ossen City. When he was aware of this matter, Firenze immediately thought that Han Shuo had cheated his daughter’s feelings. He had nearly charged to Han Shuo’s mansion and cause a scene. However, he managed to resist the urge and instead went to interrogate Fanny.

He discovered that not only did Fanny know about Han Shuo’s sinful acts, she had actually still coyly say that she was fine with it. Fanny’s conformist thoughts almost caused Firenze to faint in anger. When Fanny courageously said that apart from Phoebe, Han Shuo still had another woman named Emily, Firenze truly exploded! Without saying a word, he immediately dragged Fanny along to find Han Shuo and make things clear.

“Uh, I’m Bryan.” An anxious but helpless Han Shuo stood on the stone

steps that connected the second floor with the third floor as he looked at Firenze, whose complexion was red with anger.

“You still have the guts to come out, Not bad, not bad” Firenze gnashed his teeth, casually snatching a pike from a guard standing beside him and threw it toward Han Shuo.

The dazzling pike was like silver lightning and was in front of Han Shuo in the blink of an eye.

Firenze was an outstanding commander and was personally a Sky Rider. His strike was filled with fighting aura and it was not to be belittled.

Han Shuo knew Firenze will not let things go easily. He lifted his left hand and the Demonslayer Edge emerged from his palm and struck the tip of the pike with a clang, causing the pike to shatter into pieces. “Father! You said you’ll talk about it!” Fanny shouted as she tried to pull back Firenze with both her hands while looking helplessly at Han Shuo.

“Aren’t we talking now? Otherwise, why would I come here alone?! This guy can kill Leah Cain by himself and there are so many old farts here protecting him. If this is not called talking, I don’t know what is!” Firenze glared at Fanny and lightly scolded, “Lass, let go of me, I still have more things to talk with him!”

Old Hahn, Amyes and the rest had just reached Han Shuo’s side when they heard Firenze’s “so many old farts”. Old Hahn was furious, pointing at Firenze as he shouted angrily, “You lunatic, who are you calling old farts?”

“I didn’t say it was you!” Firenze snorted coldly.

Old Hahn face relaxed. Just when he decided not to pursue this further, he was driven mad by what Firenze said next.

“I’m addressing all of you! Including old fart Karel that’s still inside! Don’t think that I wouldn’t know you’re here just because you stay inside!” Firenze sneered when he saw Old Hahn’s expression relax before resolutely continuing his sentence.

Han Shuo was stunned and stared blankly at Firenze. He thought in his

heart that this man really had a unique personality. It seems that the person who dared to beat up Grand Duke Ashburn within the main hall was indeed not an ordinary person.

“Damn it, you mad dog, when did I ever offend you?” Old Hahn rarely became angry in his recent years. However, he was so angered as soon as he met with Firenze that he threw a vulgar remark.

“Your daughter-in-law seduced my daughter’s man! And Karel’s apprentice also snatched my daughter’s man! Damn it, are you all bully me because I’m far away at the southern border?!” Firenze was indeed a madman as Old Hahn described, cursing anyone he got his hands on.

When he said that, Emily’s pretty face turned deathly white. Han Shuo also trembled inwardly, thinking to himself that the situation was going downhill.

Sure enough, Old Hahn’s expression suddenly sank. He gave Firenze a cold, frosty gaze and asked, “What do you mean? Please make yourself clear! If you dare to randomly slander my family’s name and reputation, I’ll pursue this with my entire life”

Sacred swordmaster Karel and Sabakas had walked out at an unknown time and heard the conversation too. Karel glowered at Firenze and shouted loudly, “What the hell do you want? The empire is in chaos and we have no time for your nonsense!”

“This brat is in a relationship with Phoebe and Emily, but still dared to go after my daughter. Don’t you all know about it?” Firenze didn’t fear the rage of Old Hahn and Karel. He sneered as he paused, as though he had not cause enough chaos. He then added coldly, “I will definitely pursue this matter till the end. As long as it’s not settled, the civil strife within the empire has nothing to do with me. Do whatever you guys want, whoever lives or dies is none of my business. Hmph, even if Lancelot Empire was finished, I will not let anyone bully my daughter. If the few of you want to play, I’ll accompany you until the end!”

When he finished, everyone’s gaze was on Han Shuo, Fanny, Emily, and Phoebe. Old Hahn and Karel’s expressions turned ashen. On one hand,

they were dumbfounded by the sudden revelation, and the other, they were shocked by Firenze's reckless words.

To Old Hahn and Karel, their whole life had been dedicated to the Lancelot Empire. To them, the only thing they truly cared about was the future of Lancelot Empire. They could never be like the lunatic Firenze and disregard Lancelot Empire's survival.

"Emily, is what he said true?" Old Hahn was somewhat embarrassed as he asked a pitiful looking Emily, who looked as though she was going to cry.

# Chapter 419: I'm willing.

As matters stand, it simply could no longer be concealed. Han Shuo didn't expect that at such a crucial time, they were actually placed in such a situation.

Emily's eyes watered. Being exposed in front of so many people was completely out of her expectations. At this moment, the feeling of bitterness, misery, helplessness, fear and many other feelings swarmed her, causing Emily's inferior heart to be severely hurt. Tears uncontrollably flowed down her tender face.

"It's true!" Unexpectedly, Han Shuo replied coldly before Emily could respond.

When everyone's gaze turned toward Han Shuo, he released the hand of Phoebe whose face was pale as she looked at him, directly walking toward the crying Emily and holding Emily's hand tightly in front of everyone. His face was gloomy as he slowly observed everyone and said, "What he said is the truth, Emily is my woman. However, I was the one who pursued her bitterly, there's nothing to do with anyone else!"

Old Hahn's face became ashen, glaring at Han Shuo and Emily in anger as he said, "Good, very good, I never would have thought that our Betteridge Family would actually produce such a scandal!"

"I apologize on behalf of my sister! However, if anyone wants to bully my sister, they would have to see if I'm agreeable!" After a brief shock, Amyes resisted the urge of questioning Emily and instead sneered as he looked at everyone.

As Emily's blood brother, the amount of love Amyes showed Emily was something only they knew. At such a crucial time, Amyes stood by Emily's side without the slightest hesitation. Seeing Emily trying to conceal her tears, Amyes who was the God of Death in the eyes of the empire's nobles was similarly angered.

"Bryan, look at the good you have done!" sacred swordmaster Karel stared coldly at Han Shuo as he shouted in anger.

In a flash, everyone's gaze gathered again on Han Shuo. Everyone only came to their senses at this moment. The main culprit should be Han Shuo. All kinds of criticizing and angry gazes landed on Han Shuo.

Facing everyone's ire, Han Shuo had a gloomy expression as he looked at everyone and said, "This is our matter and doesn't seem to be related to you. Whoever feels that they can use the power in their hands to exert pressure on me, we shall wait and see what happens."

"Brat, you have guts!" Firenze was so angry that he laughed, pointing at Han Shuo as he said, "As long as you immediately leave that two women and only concentrate on my daughter, I can treat the matters before as bygones. So long as you follow me back to the southern border, no matter how chaotic Lancelot Empire is, I can guarantee that you will be free of worries."

Firenze paused for a moment before continuing, "If not, we shall struggle to our deaths. Let's see who will still be laughing at the end!"

"Father!" At this moment, Fanny also had a distressed expression as she couldn't help but shout loudly. Fanny didn't expect that things would develop in such a way. However, she was also unable to control Firenze's temper and simply unable to tell when he would go crazy. Currently, Emily, Phoebe, herself, as well as Han Shuo, were extremely embarrassed.

What was originally Han Shuo's personal matters was now like a tripartite talk. Fanny had expectedly blamed herself, thinking inwardly, "Bryan would definitely hate me. Ah, what should I do now?"

"Bryan, since things have reached this stage, shouldn't you give us an explanation?" Old Hahn's face was ashen as he glowered at Han Shuo.

Looking at the crying Emily, gazing at the distressed Fanny and taking a look at the terrified Phoebe, Han Shuo took a deep breath. As everyone watched attentively, Han Shuo said, "I have already described the sequence of events to the three of you. The three of you should already be clear about what had happened. As matters stand, I don't have anything else to say, all of you are aware of how I feel about each of you.

Right now, I'll give all of you a choice. You should also give yourself this



choice. If you are willing to be with me, you just need to nod in agreement. I will face any difficulty that arises with you. As long as you are willing to be with me, I promise that I will treat you well in the future, and definitely not let anyone bully you.

If you are unable to accept this, you can take it as something I owe you in this lifetime. Our relationship in this life will end here and from today onward, we will no longer have any emotional connection!”

“Brat, what nonsense are you spouting! Could it be that till now you still want to have all of them?” Firenze raged, lifting his sleeves with the intention of punishing Han Shuo.

Han Shuo’s expression darkened as he glared at Firenze and said in anger, “What does this have to do with you! The person I want to marry isn’t you, why do you have so much to say?”

“Damn it, You stinky brat has such a temper. There’s no one else within Lancelot Empire that dares to talk to me like that. You should take a look at your...” Firenze shouted loudly as he prepared to charge toward Han Shuo.

“Father, you don’t need to bother about my matters!” Fanny held onto Firenze and shouted loudly.

“I’m willing. I don’t care about anything else. As long as you want me, I will follow you!” Emily who had tears rolling down her face was the first to declare her stand while she sobbed. She was already willing to give up everything.

Emily gripped Han Shuo’s hand tightly. Because she was using strength, her fingertips had even entered his skin. Emily seemed to want to gain strength and courage through this method.

“Brother, I’m sorry. I love him. I’m sorry to cause trouble for you, but I’m unable to leave him!” Emily’s tears rolled down her face as she spoke while looking at Amyes.

Amyes trembled, suddenly recalling their misery when they were younger and how they relied on each other for many years...

“Fool, what are you saying all these for. No matter what, I will always be on your side!” Amyes had a doting expression as he smiled and replied Emily gently.

It is said that an elder brother is like a father. Amyes had always treated Emily this way. When they were younger, their parents had died and it was Amyes who had worked hard to raise Emily. Everything the two of them had today had been the result of them risking their lives and their efforts. In Amyes’ heart, the most important person in this world was his sister. He had married Emily off to the Betteridge Family yet Emily’s husband had suddenly died on the battlefield even before they had consummated their marriage. All these years, Emily had become a widow that was difficult to accept.

Amyes clearly understood the pain Emily endured all these years. He placed all the blame on himself and had always wished for Emily to strive for happiness once again. However, Emily simply didn’t have anyone that she fancied. Amyes didn’t think that the current situation was ideal, but it wasn’t bad either. Without thinking, he naturally placed the most importance on his sister’s happiness.

“Thank you, brother!” Emily cried as she expressed her thanks. Soon after, she looked toward Old Hahn who had a queer expression and said, “Father, all these years, I have been very happy living in the Betteridge family. I have truly looked upon you as my father. I also know that you love me dearly. I am extremely grateful toward you and I know that my actions would possibly smear the Betteridge family’s name. I’m sorry, really sorry, please forgive me. Father, you will always be my father.”

Old Hahn was startled and stared blankly at Emily. After quite a while, Old Hahn sighed. He didn’t say anything, his expression desolate as he walked back to the assembly room on the third floor.

“I’m also willing. I don’t wish for anything much. Father, I beg you to not bother about my affairs!” Fanny had a death grip on Firenze as if she feared that Firenze would be so furious that he disregarded everything. She continued sharply, “If you don’t promise me, I will leave home once again and you will never be able to see me again!”

Firenze who was shouting loudly that he wanted to kill Han Shuo was suddenly stunned, his expression reddened as he pointed at Han Shuo and sworn while saying, "What's so good about this brat. There are so many good men within Lancelot Empire. Why must you insist on being with a half-hearted fellow? Because of him, you are actually thinking of abandoning your family?"

"Father, you are incredible at war but you would never understand what is true love. My mother had waited for you her entire life, always worried that something would happen to you on the battlefield. When she was sick, you were still fighting more than a thousand miles away. Even when Mother died unhappily from her illness, you weren't present by her side.

You already ruined her life's happiness. Don't tell me that you want to also destroy my happiness?" Fanny was somewhat hysterical when she saw Firenze throwing off her hand and charge toward Han Shuo and suddenly screamed.

Firenze who had struggled free of Fanny with great difficulty suddenly stopped in his tracks. His face was distorted and his breath uneven, showing signs of a beast wanting to run away.

Everyone was startled. Some of them looked at Firenze nervously, afraid that he would act recklessly. This person's reputation had always been that he didn't behave like an ordinary person. Therefore, everyone had reason to believe that he would go crazy.

Even Han Shuo was somewhat fearful, secretly increasing his vigilance. He felt that if Firenze dared to recklessly attack himself, he would preemptively knock Firenze unconscious and tie him up, so as to avoid his fluctuating exuberant energy. He would then explain to Fanny afterward.

Under everyone's watchful gaze, Firenze's distorted face actually calmed down gradually. However, his expression was still dark and frightening. After a long while, Firenze turned around to look at Fanny and spoke in a tranquil tone for the first time since he came and asked, "Lass, are you truly certain?"

Fanny immediately nodded her head, her expression firm as she replied,

“Father, I am certain.”

“Brat, are you able to give Fanny happiness?” Firenze suddenly stared at Han Shuo and inquired word by word.

“As long as I am alive, no one can bully her!” Han Shuo raised his hand and pledged while having a serene expression.

# Chapter 420: I'm unwilling to part with you

"Father!" Fanny silently walked to Firenze's side, her eyes filled with expectation as she gazed at him and spoke softly.

Firenze stared blankly at Han Shuo for a long time before suddenly shaking his head as he sighed and said, "Forget it, since you insist, I wouldn't obstruct you."

"Thank you, Father!" Fanny had a delighted expression as she then gazed at Han Shuo lovingly.

Han Shuo also sighed in relief as he nodded toward Fanny. He then bowed in salute to Firenze and said, "I will give her happiness, I promise!"

"Hmph! You have so many women yet still dare to say you will give her happiness. If you bully my daughter, I don't care who you are, I'll definitely go all out to settle the debt!" Firenze didn't give any face to Han Shuo as he shouted coldly in response.

Han Shuo smiled bitterly without responding. He hesitated for a while before casting his gaze toward Phoebe. Of the three women, Phoebe had the most unyielding personality and was the most independent. Currently, Fanny and Emily had already stated their stand, and only the pale-faced Phoebe was left.

Phoebe looked as if she had suffered a large stimulus. Her originally delicate face had become exceedingly white, as she stared in a daze at Han Shuo without saying a word as if she had suddenly become a fool.

By Phoebe's side, Lawrence suddenly coughed and pulled Phoebe's sleeve in passing, reminding the distracted Phoebe to not hesitate any longer.

Phoebe suddenly came to her senses, struggling repeatedly in her heart. She recalled many past events which she had gone through with Han Shuo, the uncertainty when they assassinated her rival together in the Boozt Merchant Guild, the sweetness when they were escaping together, thinking of Han Shuo's care for her, even presenting the divine weapon

‘Starry Sky’ as a gift without hesitation...

These warm scenes were like snares of love. When Phoebe thought of these moments, they bound her even more tightly, causing her to feel stifled.

However, as a strong independent woman, Phoebe never had the intention of sharing a man with others. She had shown great determination to understand the details of the situation for Emily’s matter previously before she finally forgave Han Shuo for running amok.

However, Fanny’s situation was somewhat different from Emily’s. The way Han Shuo’s treated Fanny also caused her to realize how strong the love was between the two of them. Furthermore, Fanny had a superior upbringing and family background. All of these added together clearly caused Phoebe to somewhat be unable to accept the situation.

Han Shuo silently watched Phoebe. When he saw Phoebe look like she was struggling indeterminately, the guilt in his heart grew exponentially. He endured the pain in his heart as he said bitterly, “Let’s forget it. Phoebe, I’ve let you down in this lifetime!”

When she heard Han Shuo’s words, Phoebe’s eyes were suddenly occupied by endless pain, her face suddenly becoming as white as a sheet. Phoebe looked at Han Shuo in disbelief, her heart akin to have been stabbed and shattered. With a sway, Phoebe actually fell backward.

When Han Shuo who had been keeping a close watch on Phoebe saw her body sway and fall backward, he was terrified. He was by Phoebe’s side without a second thought, supporting her before she could fall on the ground and shout worriedly, “Phoebe, are you ok?”

There was a flash of white light. Karel had also moved to Phoebe’s side. As Han Shuo had rushed over first, Karel who was initially prepared to support Phoebe could only anxiously extend two fingers and place them on Phoebe’s nose. After pausing for three seconds, he clearly loosened his breath. He held back the anger in his heart as he said, “She has fainted, it’s all because of you!”

At this moment, Han Shuo didn’t have the energy to argue with

Karel. When he heard Karel say that Phoebe had simply fainted, his heart calmed. He then placed his right hand on Phoebe's back and circulate demonic yuán energy into her body.

The sorrowful and heartbroken Phoebe felt a comfortable warmth in the middle of her back and slowly came to soon after. When she saw Han Shuo's worried expression immediately as she opened her eyes, she only felt a myriad of emotions entering her heart at the same time. She could no longer pretend to be strong and her tears suddenly flowed like a fountain as she cried bitterly at the top of her voice.

As two fists bombarded Han Shuo's chest like raindrops, Phoebe scolded as she hit him, "You heartless scoundrel, you actually dare to say those words to me. You've swindled away my life's happiness and now you still want to stand aside and do nothing. Do you actually have a conscience..."

There were constant pounding sounds as Phoebe hit Han Shuo's chest, his expression filled with pain. As he looked at Phoebe who was bawling in his embrace, Han Shuo similarly felt extremely distressed. However, Han Shuo really didn't know what to say to console Phoebe at this moment and could only repeatedly say "I'm sorry."

Phoebe had never lost control of herself like she did today. No matter what difficulties she came across, she would never be as weak as she was today. Furthermore, there were so many elders and officials present here. With Phoebe's character, it was even more unlikely that she would reveal signs of weakness.

However, when Han Shuo said the words "Let's forget it", Phoebe felt as though the sky had collapsed. The world seemed to turn grey in a split second, no longer having any color. That piercing pain destroyed all of Phoebe's pretense, causing her to feel as though she was beaten black and blue.

Emly and Fanny's line of sight had never left Han Shuo from the beginning. When they saw Phoebe pounding her fists repeatedly on Han Shuo's chest, they both felt incessantly distressed, fearing that Phoebe would not know what's important and injure Han Shuo.

Everyone observing by the side had different expressions as they looked at Han Shuo and the three women, not knowing what they should say. They actually wanted to interfere in this matter, but unfortunately, they weren't able to make the decision in this situation and could only look on helplessly as the unorthodox situation developed in a way they totally couldn't explain.

"That's great, that's great. Bryan truly has his ways!" The happiest person in the crowd was definitely Lawrence, who felt ecstatic by the way things turned out.

Han Shuo and the three women represented four different powers. If they become hostile toward each other, Lawrence would definitely not have any hope of ascending the throne. During this period of time, Lawrence felt as though he was sitting on pins and needles and was more nervous than anyone else. He was truly afraid that the four parties would recklessly cause enormous disturbances, destroying all of his hopes.

Even now, Phoebe was still crying loudly as she leaned into Han Shuo's embrace. Lawrence was finally able to truly relax. He knew in his heart that although none of the three parties were pleased with this outcome, due to the three women's insistence, none of them were able to change this favorable situation.

"I'm sorry!" Han Shuo embraced Phoebe, repeating the same words as before.

Weary from both hitting and scolding Han Shuo, Phoebe gradually suppressed the pain in her heart, wiping the neverending tears from her eyes and fiercely glared at Han Shuo and said, "In this lifetime, you can forget about trying to abandon me. If you dare to do such a thing, I'll kill you and then commit suicide!"

"So long as you are willing to be with me, why would I be willing to part with you!" Han Shuo looked at Phoebe and said with deep emotion.

"We are already like this, how can I not be with you. You scoundrel, you heartless creature!" Phoebe felt indignant, once again sending a fist toward Han Shuo's chest.



When he heard what Phoebe said, Karel's expression changed, clearly understanding the hidden meaning within Phoebe's words. The people around them were all cunning fellows and when they heard Phoebe divulge such information, they were able to grasp the crucial point in a flash. Their eyes flickered as they shifted their gaze between Han Shuo and the three women.

When Han Shuo saw the gazes of these people, he immediately understood. Surprisingly, Han Shuo's thick-skinned face turned red as he coughed dryly.

Phoebe, Emily, and Fanny gradually understood somewhat. Under the strange gazes from everyone, all of them started to blush. Phoebe inwardly scolded herself for blabbing. Unfortunately, this wasn't the time to try and explain herself and she momentarily became shy and embarrassed, not knowing what she should do.

As the three women had all taken a Rebirth Pill, their skin was all fair and glossy, delicate like water. Among them, as Emily and Phoebe had received Han Shuo's nourishment, their bodies faintly had a hint of charm and maturity. If one looked seriously, they were indeed somewhat different from Fanny.

Forget it, let's forget about it. She had been disappointing too, having given her body to this brat. What else can I say? Sacred swordmaster Karel sighed in his heart, staring distractedly at Phoebe for a while before finally saying, "Let's let it be. You have grown up, I'm unable to control you anyways."

"Master!" Phoebe cried out softly, continuing to say, "Master, I'm sorry. I've caused you to be disappointed."

"Hai!" space sacred magus Sabakas sighed. When he saw everyone look at him in puzzlement, he smiled and said, "It is most appropriate that the youngsters handle their own matters. Hehe, we have all grown older. How can we restrict them on every matter? Presently, Lancelot Empire is suffering from internal trouble and outside aggression and is precisely in its most challenging situation. Everyone here is the backbone of the

empire. What we should be doing now should be resolving the empire's problems!"

As Sabakas was a senior with good moral standing and reputation within the empire, even that madman Firenze somewhat respected him. Now that he had spoken, everyone was resentful but didn't say anything else.

As the protector of Lancelot Empire, Karel naturally wouldn't be like Firenze and disregard the survival of the empire. When he heard what Sabakas said, he gradually calmed down and was in deep thought, not saying a word.

Sabakas paused for a moment. Seeing that everyone still seemed to show him respect, he loosened a breath. Just as he was about to seize the opportunity and let all parties reconcile, Han Shuo suddenly creased his eyebrows and said, "Ashburn and eldest prince Charles have personally led their troops and are headed for the northern city district. It looks like they intend to settle the situation of the entire Lancelot Empire in one battle!"

# Chapter 421: We want to become even stronger

The sudden changes caused everyone to rapidly free themselves from the matter between Han Shuo and the three women. Everyone had a heavy expression as they started to worry about the attack from Ashburn, Charles, and their forces.

“Brat, how do you know that that old fox Ashburn is coming over?” Firenze looked at Han Shuo suspiciously, as if he didn’t really believe what Han Shuo was saying.

Among the people present, Firenze was the most unfamiliar with Han Shuo, unlike Karel, Sabakas and the rest who knew that Han Shuo possessed a mysterious martial technique that was able to clearly observe the entire area. Hence when he saw that Han Shuo had said those words so confidently, he naturally didn’t believe him.

“He indeed knows.” Sabakas explained to Firenze, “It is precisely due to his mystical observational ability that we are still able to hold the fort here.”

Firenze was stunned, his eyes filled with amazement as he looked at Han Shuo, not comprehending how Han Shuo was able to do it. Firenze knew that Sabakas wasn’t someone who spoke lightly. Since he said that Han Shuo had such an ability, that meant that Han Shuo was definitely able to do it.

“This time around, those that are heading over include the city guards from the other city gates. With our current forces, we shouldn’t be able to ward them off. Furthermore, that sacred knight and Temple Knights from the Church of Light, as well as earth sacred magus Dempus are within this group of people...” Han Shuo shut his eyes, describing the composition and strength of Ashburn’s forces as observed through his mystical demons, no details able to escape his sights.

These days, everyone was already familiar with Han Shuo’s mystical

observation ability and they earnestly listened to Han Shuo's detailed explanation of Ashburn's troops. As Han Shuo's low voice continued, numerous images were revealed in front of everyone's eyes. The movements of Ashburn and the rest were laid bare.

When Han Shuo finished speaking, Firenze was calm as he said, "It seems like Ashburn intends to seize the northern city district in one go."

"Firenze, what do you think we should do?" Old Hahn had unknowingly walked over and asked Firenze seriously.

"Give the order to open Ossen City. I'll bring my troops over. Hmph, Ashburn has become insane. It looks like what His Highness expected is indeed happening!" Firenze said, his voice filled with murderous spirit.

"You, you will lead your troops over?" Old Hahn was clearly startled, staring stupefied at Firenze as he replied.

"Obviously. Otherwise, in this time of great chaos, why would I come unaccompanied to Ossen City? Do you think I'm just here to watch a show?" Firenze unhappily glared at Old Hahn, casually pointing toward the head of the northern city guards, Boris, and said, "How about you and me head over to the northern gate together?"

"Sure, I'll immediately make a trip with you!" Boris didn't express any annoyance toward Firenze's gestures, immediately agreeing to Firenze's suggestion.

In front of Firenze, regardless of experience or seniority, Boris was far inferior to him. Firenze had always been arrogant and haughty. However, he had a basis for being this arrogant. This was something everyone in the Lancelot Empire was clear about. Furthermore, seeing that Firenze's intention was clearly to assist Lawrence, the unusual situation beforehand seemed to be forgotten. Emily was extremely pleased with the current outcome, seeing her brother's unconditional support and Old Hahn having no choice but to take an indifferent attitude as he didn't want to sink into further disorder. All these caused the miserable Emily to feel reborn.

"My two sisters, what are your thoughts?" After speaking to Han Shuo,

Emily smiled as she glanced at Fanny and Phoebe.

Fanny and Phoebe ignored the glance, somewhat uncomfortably nodding their heads. As she was nodding her head, Phoebe suddenly thought of something, glaring at Han Shuo as she said, “You are not allowed to use your martial technique to eavesdrop. You are too vile. Hmph, based on what you said, your martial technique is able to spy on the entire city. Doesn’t that mean that you are able to watch any woman bathing? You repulsive fellow, how could you practice such an obscene and vulgar martial technique!”

When they heard what Phoebe said, Fanny and Emily’s eyebrows suddenly creased, as if suddenly realizing such a possibility. As they thought about Han Shuo’s actions all along, the three women were worried about Han Shuo’s character. Their gazes toward Han Shuo suddenly became much sharper.

Han Shuo felt a headache incoming and hurriedly said, “There’s another anomaly, I need to tell them immediately!”

After he spoke, Han Shuo didn’t care about the three women’s clamor, hurriedly leaving the side of the three women and headed for an area of rubble at the back of the castle.

Han Shuo didn’t head for the assembly room where Sabakas and the rest were. After the matter that had just happened, Amyes, Karel, Old Hahn and the others would probably not be pleased with him. Han Shuo knew that they felt anger in their hearts and naturally wouldn’t bring trouble upon himself.

Using the Demonslayer Edge to carve out a large, hidden cave, Han Shuo arranged a transporting array and teleported to the Cemetery of Death.

Within the dusky Cemetery of Death, the earth zombie lied quietly in the place of extreme earth, looking as if he was in a coma. Faint strands of earthen yellow earth essence energy from the surroundings slowly flowed into the earth zombie’s body, gradually restoring the wounded earth zombie.

A greater part of the earth essence energy within the Cemetery of

Death's place of extreme earth had been consumed when refining the earth elite zombie and there was only very little remaining currently. Han Shuo had placed the earth zombie here three days ago, taking advantage of the remaining earth essence energy within the place of extreme earth to restore the earth zombie's wounds.

As Han Shuo's heart ached as he looked at the silent earth zombie deep underground, Han Shuo sensed the little skeleton's call. He hesitated for a moment before summoning the little skeleton before him.

"Father, we want to seek revenge for him!" the little skeleton transmitted immediately after he arrived.

"I know, I'm currently awaiting the opportunity, waiting for a chance to send that knight to his death!" Han Shuo replied.

"We want to become stronger!" The little skeleton transmitted another message. Soon after, there was a walnut-like black fruit in his hand. The little skeleton handed over the fruit to Han Shuo and said, "Father, this fruit is for you. It's extremely useful!"

The black fruit looked like a walnut. There was nothing unusual about its ordinary appearance. However, when Han Shuo examined with his consciousness, he immediately felt that the fruit contained a bizarre energy and was stunned.

"What is this, what's its use?" Han Shuo extended his hand as he spoke, taking the fruit that the little skeleton handed over.

Tens of thousands of brilliance suddenly exploded out of the fruit, binding around Han Shuo momentarily like ribbons. Han Shuo immediately became like a cocoon.

# Chapter 422: Radiant Translations

The ribbon-like brilliance wrapped tightly around Han Shuo's entire body, but Han Shuo didn't have the feeling of being restricted.

Strands of light slowly entered Han Shuo's skin, causing a refreshing feeling to flow through his whole body, as though he had entered a cool and refreshing lake.

When the little skeleton saw Han Shuo being wrapped up by the black fruit after receiving the black fruit from him, he extended his snowy white hands which were holding a few thumb-sized ores in his palms. The little skeleton's Purple Demon Eye shined brightly, as though he was pondering about something.

After staring blankly for a while, he put his palms together and started to grind them against each other. As an ear-piercing creaking sound emitted from his palms, a dense deathly aura suddenly emanated from his palms, and the creaking sound stopped abruptly.

Grains of greyish-white sand-like particles slowly flowed out from between the little skeleton's palms. He quickly rushed to Han Shuo's side, sprinkling the sand-like particles on Han Shuo's body.

As the fine grains were falling Han Shuo's body, they suddenly sparkled like stars in the night, giving off a bizarre yet beautiful sight. However, when the fine particles landed on his body, they disappeared without a trace, like water that flowed into the sea and no more sparkles could be seen.

The little skeleton's Purple Demon Eye actually exuded a serene dense color which moved non-stop as it winded around Han Shuo who was encased by the black fruit. It sprinkled the particles from the little skeleton's hands even throughout Han Shuo's body, making sure not miss a spot.

At first, Han Shuo had a snug and lazy feeling, as though he was soaking in a refreshing pool of water, causing him to be languid and somewhat drowsy.

However, when the fine particles landed on his body, the areas where the particles landed had a sudden fiery, stinging pain. The thread-like particles seemed to have spirituality as they slowly assimilated into Han Shuo's bones.

Han Shuo who was originally feeling languid and comfortable, suddenly felt his body become incredibly heavy. Wherever the fine grains landed on, the surrounding bones would felt as though they were cast with lead. Han Shuo realized that the heavy sensation wasn't an illusion, but was actually happening.

Han Shuo did an internal inspection using his consciousness, and distinctly saw specks of starlight-like radiance slowly fusing into his skeleton, gradually reinforcing his bones and causing them to strengthen. This felt similar to the first time Han Shuo felt that he was reborn.

Gradually, the numerous strands of light from the fruit completely entered Han Shuo's body. The little skeleton had already stopped moving around Han Shuo. The fine sand-like particles from his hands had flowed into Han Shuo's skeleton like water, fusing with the fruit's radiance, enhancing every inch of Han Shuo's bones.

Throughout the process, Han Shuo's bones ached as though they were pierced by many fine needles. However, having practiced his demonic arts till this level, Han Shuo had endured all kinds of pain. When compared to the time when his skull was cut open, where he had felt terrifying pain as though his brain was sliced into many pieces, the current pain was easily endured by Han Shuo.

Therefore, Han Shuo did not reveal any signs of being unable to endure throughout the process, nor did he even groan. He was quiet as though he had fallen asleep.

The little skeleton who was beside Han Shuo, looked at him in a daze, as though Han Shuo's expression was extremely strange.

After an indefinite amount of time, Han Shuo felt the pain throughout his body subsiding, allowing Han Shuo to be able to ignore it. Right at this moment, he exhaled and opened his eyes. When he looked down, Han



Shuo realized that he had already completely recovered, and there wasn't anything abnormal with his body anymore.

He cracked his neck, swung his arms, flexing his muscles and bones. Han Shuo suddenly had an odd expression. This was because Han Shuo suddenly felt that his body weight had increased tenfold. This was truly inconceivable!

That ordinary-looking fruit had strengthened Han Shuo's bones and increased their density, causing their durability to become extremely astonishing. As his bones were strengthened, his weight had increased along with it. Although Han Shuo was mentally prepared and understood that there would be changes to his body, when the changes were way beyond his expectations, Han Shuo was also extremely amazed.

"What kind of fruit is this? What are its uses?" A shocked Han Shuo stared blankly for a while before he asked the little skeleton.

"We call it 'black resolute crystal'. Just like the serene luster gem you had taken previously, they are extremely miraculous items from my world. The serene luster gem can strengthen one's soul, causing the soul to be purer; the black resolute crystal strengthens one's bones and can make our bones much harder.

A black resolute crystal like this can strengthen an evil knight's body several times. I had previously consumed a black resolute crystal and had suffered terribly. However, after absorbing the black resolute crystal's energy, I could detect that my bones became much more solid." The little skeleton explained to Han Shuo, pausing for a moment before sighing in admiration, "Father, you are truly amazing! You actually didn't have the slightest dreading of the pain!"

It turns out that the fruit was something as precious as the serene luster gem. No wonder it had such a miraculous effect! During Han Shuo's previous visit to the netherworld, he had seen with his own eyes how the undead creatures fought desperately over a serene luster gem. Therefore, he knew that this black resolute crystal was definitely also a highly sought-after item that all undead creatures will scramble for.

The little skeleton had actually not kept such a valuable treasure to improve his own strength and instead gifted it to Han Shuo without the slightest hesitation. This caused Han Shuo to be extremely moved. As Han Shuo looked at the ordinary-looking little skeleton and was just about to praise him, he suddenly thought of another matter.

In the past, whenever changes happened to Han Shuo's body, time would pass unwittingly. He didn't know if a long time had passed this time around when he used the black resolute crystal to strengthen his bones. As Ossen City was currently at its most chaotic moments, time was the most precious thing. As someone who could observe the whole situation remotely, Han Shuo was someone who could not be missing at this critical moment.

"How much time has passed?" Han Shuo's eyebrows creased as he hurriedly asked the little skeleton.

"I have no idea!" the little skeleton calmly replied.

Han Shuo came to his senses soon after. The Cemetery of Death was the same as the netherworld where there was no concept of time. The Cemetery of Death was encapsulated by a strong barrier. Neither sunlight nor moonlight could penetrate it, and therefore it was naturally impossible to derive time from the rise and setting of the sun and moon.

Thinking about the impending major battle, Han Shuo immediately panicked. He didn't dare to continue staying in the Cemetery of Death. After sending the little skeleton back to the netherworld, he hurriedly stood in the center of the Cemetery of Death's magical transportation array.

All of a sudden, the sounds of horses trampling, magic exploding and the wretched howls of warriors' at death's door all rushed into Han Shuo's ears. The source of these sounds wasn't that far away.

Sure enough, the battle had already begun! Han Shuo immediately came to his senses, tidying up the magic array. All kinds of images were being projected into his brain, allowing him to clearly observe everything that was happening.

So long as Han Shuo was within Ossen City, the mystical demons would be able to transmit every scene of Ossen City into his brain. However, if Han Shuo is too far away from Ossen City, the connection between Han Shuo and the mystical demons will be too weak to support the transfer of information. Moreover, the Cemetery of Death has a peculiar barrier, and therefore Han Shuo naturally wasn't able to know the happenings within Ossen City while in the Cemetery of Death.

However, once Han Shuo returned Ossen City via the transportation array, his connection with the twelve mystical demons was immediately re-established, allowing him to possess the ability to control the whole situation again.

Through the mystical demons' point of view, Han Shuo saw that fierce battles were ongoing on several wide spaces around the castle. The powers headed by Firenze, Karel, and Lawrence were fighting relentlessly with Ashburn and eldest prince Charles' troops, with deaths occurring at every moment.

This castle was originally used for storage of military supplies and it just so happened that there were no residents in the surroundings. The surroundings were simply vast open land, allowing the two sides to have the perfect location for battle.

TL note: So, the black resolute crystal is supposed to be an item similar to the previous serene luster gem. The raws for this is 黑坚晶. Wanted it to have a similar style of naming with the serene luster gem. Do give your thoughts on what you feel about the name and any suggestions on what else it could be caught that might fit better!

Everywhere he looked was involved in a vigorous battle. Every plot of land within a few kilometers radius of the castle was densely packed with troops fighting. Apart from the northern city district, mystical demons placed in the different districts observed that the other districts including the imperial palace were also shrouded in the flames of battle.

However, compared to the great battle ongoing at the northern city district, the battles at the other districts were clearly smaller in scale. This

was because, headed by Lawrence, those high-ranking figures that could threaten Charles were currently all gathered in the northern city district.

It was unknown if there was a tacit agreement, none of the sacred rank experts participated in the battle. Karel and Sabakas on Lawrence's side, Dempus and the sacred knight on Charles' side, all watched by the sidelines as their troops went all out in battle.

Both Lawrence and Charles knew the incredible lethality of sacred rank experts, especially that of sacred magi. A single forbidden magic spell was enough to turn the tide of battle. However, every kingdom within the Profound Continent had a tacit agreement, that sacred magi would not use forbidden magic in an ordinary battle.

With forbidden magic not permitted against foreign enemies, it was naturally must not be used during internal conflict. Even though Ossen City was rather huge, if it was really bombarded by a few forbidden magic spells, Lancelot Empire's capital, Ossen City would disappear from the continent, with countless casualties among the residents.

This was precisely why both space sacred magus Sabakas and earth sacred magus Dempus have been looking on without lifting a finger during this war. Neither of them dared to use forbidden magic on the opposing army which was from the same empire.

Firenze was the commander of the war. At a high vantage point at the middle of the castle, Firenze roared unendingly as several armored officers under his command arranged their troops methodically in accordance to Firenze's orders and attacked Ashburn and Charles' troops from all directions.

Han Shuo observed the overall situation through his mystical demons. He suddenly realized that under Firenze's never-ending roar, the troops from his Howling Legion looked as though they were randomly dispersed, but indistinctly formed various peculiar formations that divided Ashburn and Charles' army into several large chunks, and quietly surrounded every one of them.

Only Han Shuo who could see the view the overall situation through his

mystical demons could clearly see this strange transformation. The participating soldiers and generals would never be able to notice the quiet changes in battle without overlooking anything.

The Howling Legion, which Firenze had brought, had the same design painted on their armor. These soldiers came from the southern border and they had many years of experience fighting against the brutal Orcs. All their weapons have been doused in too much blood. Each and every one of them looked valiant and had a cold expression. Their fighting strength was more fearsome than the Redbud Knights that Han Shuo had seen previously.

The fighting strength of the city guards of Ossen City was also ranked among the best. However, when facing against Firenze's Howling Legion, they were clearly being suppressed. Apart from being slightly better equipped, their battle experience, troop coordination, and individual strength were all greatly inferior to the Howling Legion.

Han Shuo suddenly noticed that Firenze's Howling Legion and the northern city guards were actually gradually gaining the upper hand under Firenze's seemingly crazy commands. Unknowingly, they were slowly withering away Ashburn and Charles' troops.

This madman who was able to stand tall at the southern border for so many years, preventing the barbaric Orcs from penetrating the southern border defense line, definitely had a well-deserved reputation! Han Shuo was in awe and deeply convinced with Firenze's remarkable commanding skills.

"Firenze! These men are soldiers of the Lancelot Empire. They are innocent and have no choice but to fight simply because of the orders of Charles and Ashburn. If they were all killed, it would be Lancelot Empire's loss!" sacred swordmaster Karel was enraged as he glared at Firenze.

Karel placed the utmost priority on the future of the Lancelot Empire. When he saw that under Firenze's commands, the northern city district had completely turned into a war zone, with corpses lying everywhere in the northern city district, corpses which belonged to soldiers who were

loyal and faithful to the Lancelot Empire. However, because they were under a different commander, they had no choice but to kill each other mercilessly. The loss of the empire's own people was clearly what Karel didn't want to see and hence he continuously made a racket.

Even Dark Mantle's chief elder Sabakas felt endless grief as he saw the ever increasing losses. He hesitated for a moment before shouting, "Firenze! At the rate you're going, even if we win the war, the empire's strength will be greatly weakened! "

Firenze was unmoved and continued to howl out commands to his officers. When he saw that Sabakas and Karel were still clamoring, he suddenly glared at Karel and said, "During the civil strife of any country within the continent, which of them did not end in rivers of blood? Other than defeating their army, do you think you can make Ashburn yield just by mere words?

Hmph, with the sacred knight and earth sacred magus Dempus over there, not to mention all kinds of experts around them, even a semi-divine expert might not be enough to kill them! I don't think that you have a better plan?

Both of you listen up! This matter can only be resolved quickly by shedding blood. The longer a civil strife drags on, the worse off it is for the empire. Dammit, my men are also getting killed but am I complaining? What's the use of being so emotional? Well if you don't like my methods, I can stand aside and do nothing. Let's see if you guys can convince the two foxes on the other side to give up the throne with words. Are you willing to take control of the whole battle?"

Firenze spoke unrestrainedly, bombarding the two sacred rank experts like artillery and leaving them speechless and unable to find any grounds to retort.

Firenze had always been arrogant and conceited. At other times, he might perhaps still show some respect to Sabakas. However, during a state of war, Firenze would immediately turn into a real madman. In order to achieve victory, he would even dare to violate His Majesty's orders without

hesitation. So it's needless to say that Firenze wouldn't bat an eye at the advice of the two sacred rank experts.

After his vulgarity-filled tongue-lashing, Firenze no longer paid attention to them and continued to howl commands at his officers, conveying information of the battlefield to his troops. His Howling Legion slowly and quietly took control of the battlefield, covertly surrounding Ashburn's troops without anyone noticing.

The two sacred rank masters bitterly turned a blind eye and could only sigh. Although they felt aggrieved, there was no other way. They weren't good at commanding large-scale warfare. Furthermore, without Firenze and his Howling Legion, this battle would simply be impossible to win.

Besides, what Firenze said made sense. He who hesitates loses. Unfortunately, the current Lancelot Empire would only be able to swiftly settle its turmoil through blood-filled battle. Otherwise, if either side escaped Ossen City and occupies other cities, the battle would continue to spill out into other cities, which would be a destructive blow to the Lancelot Empire.

Hence, even though the two sacred rank experts were berated and cursed by Firenze, they could only swallow their grievances and no longer dared to contradict Firenze, so as to avoid that fellow having any further crazy behavior.

Having received images of every location, Han Shuo couldn't help but let out a breath of relief. He didn't stay in the cave that he dug any longer, immediately flying out and headed for the castle.

"Whoosh whoosh!" several long-range arrows streaked across the sky as they pierced toward Han Shuo.

Han Shuo was shocked. He looked downwards and saw a few soldiers from the Howling Legion, their expressions cold as they gave him deadly stares. They had unexpectedly sighted Han Shuo from far away and shot arrows at him.

Han Shuo's evaluation of the Howling Legion rose even higher. He cast a spell and a snow white flower bud appeared in mid-air. The bone shield

blocked all the arrows and Han Shuo was unharmed. By now, he had already reached the middle of the castle where Firenze was.



# Chapter 423: Instructing a disciple

“Brat, we’ve already fought for two days. Where the hell have you been?” When Firenze saw Han Shuo, he couldn’t help but scold loudly.

Han Shuo was considered the key person during this battle. When he suddenly disappeared for two days, everyone was frightened, especially Phoebe, Fanny, and Emily. They even thought that Han Shuo dreaded punishment and had hidden himself, causing them to be so impatient they didn’t know what they should do.

Fortunately, the Dark Mantle displayed its astonishing abilities. In the two days that Han Shuo was missing, members of Dark Mantle that were concealed within Ossen City unceasingly transmitted all sorts of information, helping Firenze, Old Hahn and the rest to make an accurate decision in deploying their troops, allowing them to have the advantage in this battle with Ashburn and the rest.

“Um, I had some personal matters to handle.” Han Shuo also didn’t anticipate that a black resolute gem would actually cause him to stay in the Cemetery of Death for two days. Han Shuo had originally only wanted to take a look at the earth zombie’s condition and return immediately. He wouldn’t have known that he would stay for so long. Hence, he had nothing to say as Firenze continued his scolding.

“Alright then, let’s not talk about useless matters. Since you are here, describe to me the situation in the other districts. This time around, we have to resolve the situation in one battle, so as to not let Ashburn and the rest be able to escape. Otherwise, once Ashburn and the others leave Ossen City, there would be even more battles within the Lancelot Empire.” Firenze was extremely blunt with Han Shuo, hastily urging Han Shuo to supply him with information of the bigger picture.

In such a crucial time, Han Shuo didn’t say much else, immediately describing the situation in every district of Ossen City to Firenze as observed through the twelve mystical demons, even including details of what Ashburn, Charles and the rest were saying.

Firenze listened calmly to Han Shuo's description, constantly shouting out orders. Firenze not only had his officers by his side, he also had one of Dark Mantle's three heavyweights, Amyes. In such a crucial period, Amyes had impressively also become Firenze's subordinate. At his orders, Amyes conveyed information through the enormous Dark Mantle organization to every corner of Ossen City.

It was during this course of events that Han Shuo realized that the battle had gone on endlessly within Ossen City during these two days. Due to Charles giving orders mercilessly without caring about past feelings, apart from Lawrence's side, the powers under the other two princes suffered heavy casualties. Charles clearly intended to exterminate them, constantly pressuring the other two princes.

The two princes who react immediately suffered disastrous losses over the past two days and were pressured till the point that they had no alternative but to head for the northern city district and form an alliance with Lawrence so as to combine their forces and face Charles together.

With the addition of the powers of the two princes and Firenze's Howling Legion, the strength of Lawrence's camp was no longer inferior to Charles'. In the past two days, Ossen City's northern city district had become the main battlefield. However, under Firenze's arrangements, the powers under the other two princes were also put to use, starting to gradually nibble away at the other districts being controlled by Ashburn and the others.

As of now, they seemed to have obtained decent achievements. The powers under Ashburn were constantly being hiddenly consumed and they no longer had the strength to take control over Ossen City on their own.

Space sacred magus Sabakas had also roamed everywhere within this two days, sealing all the space transportation arrays within Ossen City, putting an end to anyone's plans of using the transportation arrays to send reinforcements from other cities.

Every large-scale transportation array within Ossen City had been deployed by space sacred magus Sabakas. Although Ashburn and Charles

had suddenly guarded them with massive numbers of troops, as the person who deployed the transportation arrays, although Sabakas was unable to seize them back, he was able to seal the arrays.

Therefore, no one would be able to transfer troops from other cities over through the transportation arrays. In the short term, the battle within Ossen City wouldn't expand. Whoever was able to rapidly achieve victory within Ossen City in the next few days would most likely obtain the position of Lancelot Empire's King.

"Alright, there's nothing else for you. Do whatever you should be doing!" After Han Shuo described the situation in every district of Ossen City to Firenze once and Firenze passed down numerous orders based on Han Shuo's narration, Firenze impatiently urged Han Shuo to leave.

Han Shuo stared blankly for a moment before nodding silently and headed for the location of the three women.

Fanny and the others were currently staying in a lounge on the second floor of the castle. Han Shuo had already spotted the three women through his mystical demons. Han Shuo was unclear about what the three women had discussed in secret but it seemed like they no longer had the same enormous estrangement from each other that was present two days ago. Although they weren't exactly on great terms with each other, it wasn't till the extent where they were quarreling with one another.

Even now, Han Shuo was honestly still feeling apprehensive and somewhat didn't dare to face the three women. However, Han Shuo knew that some matters could not be avoided. Since he had appeared after disappearing for two days, if he didn't go over to see the three women, he would not be able to justify his actions. Hence, he could only summon his courage and head for the lounge where the three women were at.

When Han Shuo purposely caused his footsteps to echo outside the lounge, the gaze of the three women who were conversing indifferently suddenly converged on Han Shuo who had already appeared by the door. Their gazes were like piercing arrows as they landed on Han Shuo's body, causing Han Shuo to feel uncomfortable all over.

Forcing a cough, Han Shuo exclaimed, "Oh, you are all here!"

Phoebe glared at Han Shuo unhappily and said, "That's right, we are all waiting for you, this bigshot. We certainly wouldn't dare to be like you, hiding yourself during wartime. If we didn't know of your past behavior, someone might have already left the castle in search of you!"

When she spoke, Phoebe's eyes wandered between Emily and Fanny, clearly hinting at something.

Emily was calm and composed, her lips curling up into an amused smile as she looked at Han Shuo, not at all affected by Phoebe's words. However, Fanny's expression had clearly relaxed, or perhaps because she still wasn't very familiar with Phoebe and Emily, her face unconsciously turned red as she blushed.

"I didn't know that I would leave for two days. However, it seems like without me within the castle, everything seemed to operate better. Ha, isn't our side already gradually holding the advantage?" Han Shuo mocked himself and chuckled as he spoke to the three women casually.

"When you weren't within the castle, everything depended on the Dark Mantle to acquire information. These two days, the members were as busy as bees while being extremely careful, afraid of being caught and becoming the catalyst for the shift in power. However, Fanny's father is truly extraordinary. With him at the helm, the situation of our side gradually became better." Emily smiled as she said to Han Shuo.

Of the three women, Emily knew the most of Han Shuo's secrets, including the knowledge that Han Shuo controlled the Cemetery of Death. She roughly guessed that Han Shuo had perhaps gone to the Cemetery of Death through a transportation array. Hence, she wasn't too concerned about Han Shuo's sudden disappearance and instead constantly consoled the other two women.

"Hmph, he only knows how to wage war." When Fanny heard Emily praise her father, she didn't reveal any happiness and instead grumbled somewhat resentfully.

Han Shuo found out previously from Fanny that Firenze continued

campaigning on the battle while Fanny's mother was severely ill. Even when her mother had passed away from her illness, Firenze was still not present. This caused Fanny to always be troubled. It seems like even now, she still hasn't forgiven him.

"He was also acting in the interests of the empire and the southern border. If your father didn't fight as hard as he did, countless families at the southern border would be destitute and homeless! Sister Fanny, actually it also isn't easy for your father." Emily sighed softly as she tactfully consoled Fanny.

"I know that too. However, when I saw my mother constantly talking about him before she died from her illness, without even having the chance to see him one last time..." Fanny's volume gradually dropped, as though recalling unhappy memories as a strand of hesitation helplessly emerged.

"Alright, alright. Let's talk about happier things and not lose oneself in grief from the past." Phoebe also consoled Fanny. It looks as if the relationship between the three women could still be regarded as harmonious and not as prickly as Han Shuo had guessed.

Just as he was contemplating what to say, Han Shuo suddenly felt the Demonslayer Edge within his body begin to stir. This caused him to be startled. After he shut his eyes and pondered for a while, Han Shuo suddenly realized something, immediately exclaiming happily, "It seems like I need to train for a while!"

The battle for Ossen City had been ongoing unceasing for the past two days, with the fiercest battles in the northern city district. Within this extremely short duration, more than ten thousands soldiers had already died in battle. Every one of Ossen City's city guards was part of Lancelot Empire's elites while Firenze's Howling Legion was even more formidable. In these two days, the soldiers that died on the battlefield had left behind soaring killing intent and their spirits filled with hate and ire.

This type of energy caused ordinary people to feel constrained, as if there was a large mountain pressing down on their chest, giving people a

feeling of suppression. Some experts were able to sense this energy even more clearly. However, of this boundless killing intent and negative energy from the deceased, only powerful necromancers within the Profound Continent were able to utilize this energy to obtain a few powerful souls and refine special undead creatures. No one was able to directly absorb this energy.

However, Han Shuo who trained in demonic arts was able to condense the killing intent and directly absorb it. The boundless resentment and fear left behind by the souls of the dead that had yet to dissipate were also easily absorbed by the Demonslayer Edge. It was precisely because the Demonslayer Edge had sensed this familiar energy enveloping the world that it transmitted a signal to Han Shuo in its thirst for this energy.

“What’s going on, why do you suddenly need to train?” Phoebe looked at Han Shuo and asked in puzzlement.

“This is hard to explain. It’s related to the special martial technique that I train in. Just like how Bollands has dense killing intent because he had killed too many people when he was an assassin and it unwittingly attached to his body, hence he’s able to utilize killing intent to intimidate others, I’m able to do so as well.

Oh, that’s right. This energy is similarly useful to Bollands. As long as I give him a hand, he will also be able to seize the opportunity to assimilate a little of the killing intent that’s present everywhere. Alright, I won’t speak any longer to all of you. I’ll first go and look for Bollands.” Han Shuo casually explained and soon after suddenly thought of Bollands and left hurriedly.

“That bastard!” When Phoebe realized that Han Shuo had already disappeared while she was distracted for a moment, she couldn’t help but curse loudly.

During this two days, Bollands’ tranquil and unfeeling heart had become somewhat unstable. Han Shuo’s mystical martial technique was like an unbelievable revelation to Bollands. Bollands who was about to learn the martial technique from Han Shuo would become excited every time he

thought of it.

At Bolland's age and rank, what he pursued wasn't as varied and random as youngsters. Only some considerable benefits would make people of their level excited. Bolland who had been an assassin for many years always considered himself to be extremely cool-headed. However, his mind had been overwhelmed repeatedly these few days by Han Shuo's mystical martial technique, causing his tranquil heart to finally become excited again.

"It's been two days. I hope Senior is fine. In this world, I fear that only Senior would be able to guide me in the correct direction." Bolland thought inwardly. He was truly worried about Han Shuo, afraid that his only beacon in this world would die out.

As a swishing sound entered his ears, Bolland was suddenly startled, contracting his killing intent as he asked coldly, "Who is it?"

"Hehe, it's me!" Han Shuo chuckled as he replied and soon after landed by Bolland's side.

Bolland had uncontrollable happiness in his heart, however, his expression didn't have the slightest difference. He bowed toward Han Shuo and said respectfully, "Senior!"

During the war, Bolland who wasn't proficient in commanding the battle had been staying alone in a remote room on the third floor.

There were too many experts on Ashburn and Charles' side. No matter how strong he was, Bolland was unable to carry out an assassination on any of them. There were currently also many experts within the castle and Lawrence simply wasn't worried about his safety. Hence, Bolland had suddenly become idle and thus stayed alone in the remote room.

"I'm looking for you for important matters. Come, let's go to the highest roof of the castle!" Han Shuo didn't say any superfluous words, immediately smiling and instructing Bolland to follow.

Without saying anything, Bolland immediately nodded and flew with Han Shuo toward the tallest tower of the castle.

Before Bolland became his disciple, Han Shuo had already laid down some ground rules and Bolland had remembered them by heart. One of the rules of not violating the orders of seniors had been repeatedly stressed by Han Shuo. As the senior student who would impart the martial technique to Bolland, Han Shuo naturally became his senior. Bolland had not lived his life in vain, clearly understanding that currently, Han Shuo's orders were the most important.

As the battle blazed on like wildfire, Han Shuo directly brought Bolland to the clock tower. After they arrived, Han Shuo smiled at Bolland and said, "Originally you would have to enter the sect before I'm able to impart you with our martial technique. However as the war is ongoing unceasingly, the entire Ossen City has been filled with a lot of extraordinary energy. Perhaps you are also able to sense this energy. If I impart the martial technique to you now, it would just so happen to be able to assist you in assimilating this energy before it dissipates. In that way, your strength would be able to advance by leaps and bounds."

Even before Han Shuo finished speaking, Bolland was already brimming with ecstasy. He had been longing for this day and night. When he heard that Han Shuo would impart this martial technique to him, the excitement in his heart simply couldn't be repressed. His body actually even trembled uncontrollably.

When Han Shuo mentioned that the martial technique was able to absorb this kind of energy, Bolland was so excited he was about to faint. His voice trembled as he asked, "Sen, senior, you mean that, the energy lingering within Ossen City which is causing people to feel suppressed can be absorbed by this martial technique?"

Han Shuo nodded his head, smiling as he replied, "Of course. In this world, all forms of energy can be absorbed. Death qi, killing intent and even spiritual strength can be absorbed. Hehe, I believe you have also felt it. The soaring killing intent from those soldiers has yet to dissipate. As long as you grasp the God Slaying Devil Path, you will be able to directly absorb this type of energy."

"That's right. I am able to sense the omnipresent killing intent within



the battlefield. However, that energy doesn't belong to me. I'm unable to even control the killing intent in my body proficiently and naturally wouldn't be able to utilize the killing intent of others." Bollands said honestly.

"Control your breath and pay attention, I'll help you familiarize with the new energy!" Han Shuo said softly before moving behind Bollands and suddenly send a strand of demonic yuan energy into Bollands' body.

After many years of random practice, Bollands had some vague understanding of how to utilize killing intent. The meridians within his body were full of killing intent. Through the transformation from the God Slaying Devil Path, this killing intent can directly form his own unique energy. It was just that all along, he didn't know how to make use of this killing intent.

Han Shuo's demonic yuan energy suddenly entered Bollands' body so as to start assisting the relaxed Bollands in setting things right. Han Shuo made use of the demonic yuan energy to first slowly absorb the impure killing intent that was circulating through Bollands' meridians.

The chart of the meridian flow for the God Slaying Devil Path had already appeared clearly within Han Shuo's mind. Han Shuo revolved the killing intent within Bollands' body in accordance with his memory and slowly guided them along a peculiar path.

"Remember this circulation method. It can help you increase your strength." Han Shuo said softly, as he transferred another strand of demonic yuan energy into Bollands' body.

While he was doing all these things, Han Shuo's Demonslayer Edge had already flew up into the sky and constantly revolve in accordance to Han Shuo's will, forming a layer of thick blood clouds and slowly absorbed all the various kinds of negative energy that lingered within Ossen City and caused the ordinary citizens to be distraught with anxiety.

# Chapter 424: Spectacle in the sky

When Bollands heard that this circulation method could allow him to become stronger, he immediately focused his attention, not daring to relax the slightest.

Bollands' body was filled with a great amount of killing intent. When it was pulled along by the demonic yuan energy to slowly circulate through his meridians, it gradually formed a perfect orbit. With the completion of every round of circulation, Bollands could feel as though there was something additional within his body. However, Bollands could only go all out in remembering the circulation method of this killing intent and couldn't manipulate the circulation of the killing intent on his own.

"Pay attention, this is a section of mnemonic chant. As long as you remember this mnemonic chant and are able to understand how it's used, you would be able to circulate the killing intent within your body without relying on the guidance of my demonic yuan energy!" Han Shuo said seriously to Bollands.

Bollands was startled and not daring to move as he waited for Han Shuo to narrate the mnemonic chant. Everything that Han Shuo did for him seemed so novel to Bollands and every word he said was profound and mysterious. Bollands knew nothing at all of this unknown martial technique but he had already witnessed the miracles produced by this martial technique from Han Shuo. Now that the opportunity to learn this martial technique was right in front of him, he didn't dare to relax no matter what happened.

Han Shuo's deep voice rang in Bollands' ear. Bollands no longer indulged in flights of fancy. When Han Shuo started speaking again, he discarded all distracting thoughts and conscientiously listened to Han Shuo's narration. Regardless of whether he could understand immediately, first of all, he had to commit the mnemonic chant to his memory.

Han Shuo repeated the mnemonic chant three times, and then slowly explained the basics of demonic arts. After all, as the demonic arts

originated from another world and was different from all the martial techniques and magic within the Profound Continent, it definitely wouldn't be easy for Bolland, as a native who had never been exposed to demonic arts, to fathom the true meaning behind the mnemonic chant.

Han Shuo took great pains in clarifying some of the general questions regarding demonic arts, and then explained in detail again on how to remember the mnemonic chant. He imparted everything he knew about God Slaying Devil Path to Bolland, regardless of whether Bolland could understand.

"Alright, I will leave a small portion of my demonic yuan energy within your body, so as to assist you in forming a vortex to absorb killing intent. You'll have to figure out the rest on your own. If you encounter anything you don't understand, note them down for now. When my matters are completed, I'll clarify your doubts." When Han Shuo felt that his explanations were good enough, he gave Bolland further instructions.

The few strands of demonic yuan energy that were in Bolland's body suddenly changed their direction and converged at Bolland's chest. The strands of demonic yuan energy slowly started to revolve in an arc, spurring the immense killing intent in his body, and gradually forming a vortex that others couldn't see.

After this vortex took shape, a substantial-looking killing intent appeared from Bolland's chest. The dense killing intent was like an unsheathed sharp sword which carried the desire for massacre and destruction. At this moment, the killing intent which was lingering everywhere suddenly converged towards Bolland's chest, as though they were being attracted by the energy of common origin within Bolland.

Bolland was indescribably ecstatic. If it wasn't that he couldn't move his body, he would probably have knelt in excitement and kowtowed to thank Han Shuo!

As the person who directly benefited from the killing intent, Bolland had never felt the circulation of killing intent as clearly as he did now. The vortex formed within his body was like an extremely mysterious force,

slowly absorbing the killing intent that lingered around the northern city district. It gathered the killing intent within his chest before transforming it with the vortex into strands of ice-cold energy which disseminated through his body.

Bollands have yet to comprehend how to use this energy, but he clearly knew the fearsome destructive power contained within this energy. Once strands of this energy, which an ordinary person could never be able to absorb, entered his body, not only did it not damage his body, it instead gradually turned into an energy that was compatible with the killing intent within his body.

This feeling could not be sufficiently expressed with just the word “AWESOME”!

“Alright. You just stay over here. It would suffice if you simply comprehend what I just told you. Currently, your body has not been properly tempered. Your bones are not durable enough and many meridian channels are still not cleared. Therefore, the amount of killing intent you can absorb isn’t that much. When you feel that you can’t bear it anymore, you can exert some strength to slap your chest to disperse the vortex. That will stop the absorption.” Han Shuo silently let go of Bollands and instructed him. Without waiting for Bollands to reply, Han Shuo flew toward a roof which was at another remote part of the castle.

Brave, courageous soldiers were still constantly fighting, causing a large volume of energy that was useful to Han Shuo to linger in the sky above Ossen City. Bollands was able to absorb a small portion with Han Shuo help. Han Shuo, whose strength was advancing by leaps and bounds, was naturally able to absorb much more of this energy together with his Demonslayer Edge.

If Han Shuo stayed beside Bollands, once he started absorbing the lingering energy, all the energy would directly enter Han Shuo’s body, greatly affecting the killing intent Bollands would absorb. Not only would his absorption rate decrease, the quality of energy would also weaken greatly. Therefore, Han Shuo chose to stay away from Bollands.

As the demonic yuan energy within his body revolved frantically, an enormous vortex formed in the sky above Han Shuo. Compared to the vortex within Bolland's body, Han Shuo's vortex was a thousand times bigger. With demonic yuan energy as the foundation, the vortex slowly started to revolve.

All the various energy lingering within the northern city district were suddenly like rivers converging into the sea, rushing forth at high speed toward the vortex formed above Han Shuo. In an instant, the color of the sky above the castle changed. The ordinary citizens felt the pressure on their bodies slowly decreasing while the experts were terrified, their expressions grotesque as they raised their head to look at the sky.

Two spectacles appeared above the castle. One was the blood clouds formed by Demonslayer Edge, while the other was a monstrous black vortex. The Demonslayer Edge was in the center of the blood clouds, rapidly absorbing the mix of fear and hatred lingering within the northern city district. On the other hand, the huge bizarre black vortex was madly swallowing the soaring killing intent.

The sudden appearance of the two spectacles on the northern city sky, and the impact they had on the negative energy that enveloped the northern city district caused many experts to be flabbergasted!

"Lord Blount, can you sense that?" Earth sacred magus Dempus asked the sacred knight gravely.

The sacred knight Blount creased his brows as he gazed at the two spectacles above the northern city district and said with a deep voice, "I can sense that a sinister energy is present there. I'm unfamiliar with that energy, which is filled with chaos, slaughter, and madness. This energy is vastly different from the energy of the Calamity Church. What the hell is going on!"

Dempus was somewhat appalled to learn that experienced sacred knight Blount didn't know what was happening. He muttered to himself, "I can sense through my mental energy that this energy comes from the dead soldiers. However, doesn't the energy from the soldiers rest between

heaven and earth? How could they be drawn together by any forces? This, this is unbelievable!”

“Damnit. If Karel and Sabakas weren’t here, we could actually go over and investigate. However, all we could do now is watch from afar without knowing what’s going on!” Blount said resentfully but was also helpless to change the situation.

The spectacle in the sky appeared above the castle where the northern city guards were garrisoned. This clearly meant that it had something to do with someone within the castle. However, that area was currently heavily guarded, even having two sacred rank experts guarding it. Even Blount and Dempus didn’t dare to risk entering that area to investigate.

While Blount and Dempus were inexplicably horrified, the experts within the castle had similarly turned pale in fright. All of them looked upwards and stared blankly at the spectacle that appeared, not knowing what was going on.

The blood clouds emitted by the Demonslayer Edge were a bewitching blood red color under the illumination of the sun. The clouds enveloped the entire area surrounding the castle. With the obstruction of the blood clouds, the sunlight projected on the ground was completely blood red in color. Along with blood that was everywhere, the battlefield had completely become a world drenched with blood.

The glaring, bewitching blood red color seemed to possess the ability to ignite the endless hatred hidden deep within people’s hearts. Both sides of the battlefield became more reckless as if they had all become killing machines as they crazily unleashed savage attacks at the enemy, resulting in the losses on both sides to increase exponentially.

The enormous vortex formed by Han Shuo’s demonic yuan energy was like a crazy black abyss, rapidly devouring the killing intent that filled the sky in the northern city district. Some grand magi and great swordmasters could feel the fluctuation in energy, As sacred rank experts, Sabakas and Karel could sense the fluctuations even more clearly

Both of them had astonished expressions, still frightened by the

spectacle in the sky. AS the changes appeared in the sky above the castle, both of them even assumed that it was a devastating strike by the enemy on the castle and were panicking and didn't know what to do.

“You guys must immediately obliterate these two strange phenomenons, those must definitely be actions taken by the enemy against us!” Firenze too was somewhat confused. He had heard about the destructive power of some forbidden magic. If the two spectacles overhead were the prelude to two destructive forbidden magic spells, the people in this district would be in a terrible situation. No matter how good Firenze was at commanding troops, there's no way he could evade from such a large-scale attack.

The two sacred rank experts glanced at Firenze while having a confused expression. Sabakas hesitated for a moment, and remarked suspiciously, “The energy that formed the two spectacles overhead is somewhat queer. I think that neither the Church of Light nor Dempus is capable of creating these spectacles. This energy is brimming with chaos and slaughter, which is poles apart from the energy those two people possess. Something isn't quite right!”

“I feel that it's different too. If Ashburn was assisted by someone from the Calamity Church, I might possibly be convinced that this is a terrifying magic attack against us. However, since this energy clearly contains an evil aura and the Calamity Church will definitely not work together with the Church of Light. Therefore we can eliminate that possibility. This is really somewhat odd.” Karel also had a doubtful expression as he slowly expressed his thoughts.

After listening to both of them, Amyes suddenly had a thought and said, “Could it really be Calamity Church and their target is Ashburn and his men? There is a sacred knight from the Church of Light on their side and the Calamity Church and the Church of Light are mortal enemies. Could it indeed be caused by them?”

There was actually another possibility in Amyes' heart. As one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, Amyes knew Han Shuo better than most people. He knew that Han Shuo seemed to have some connection with the Calamity Church. Generally, the Calamity Church will do their

utmost to rope in the Church of Light's mortal enemies. Since the Church of Light was so adamant in treating Han Shuo as a mortal enemy, the Calamity Church will surely strive to win over Han Shuo and to establish a good relationship with him.

However, saying that would damage Han Shuo's reputation. To Amyes, Karel, and Sabakas, both the Calamity Church and the Church of Light were just regarded as just religions. They didn't feel reverence or hatred toward these two organizations like original people and hence wouldn't have any prejudices against Han Shuo due to Amyes' remarks.

However, the ordinary nobles of Lancelot Empire had a somewhat instinctively opposition toward the Calamity Church. As Amyes didn't want them to have a bad impression of Han Shuo, he didn't mention this reason.

Sabakas, Karel and the rest were startled when they heard Amyes' interpretation. Soon after, the two of them glanced at each other and Karel said, "Oh, that's possible too!"

"Hmph. But what if this is actually an impending attack against us? If you don't take action to resolve this and a large-scale killing magic descends upon us, we simply don't need to fight this war any longer and we'll all be done for." Not buying the explanation, Firenze shouted at the two experts.

Firenze's words caused Karel and Sabakas hesitated and become unsure on how they should act. If they make the wrong decision, it will result in an unpredictable situation. That outcome was something even the two of them couldn't bear.

While everyone was still hesitating, Emily had walked over from the second floor. When she overheard their conversation from afar, she hid her mouth as she chuckled and said, "These spectacles are definitely caused by Bryan, all of you don't need to worry!"

Hearing her statement, everyone was stunned. Amyes immediately asked, "How can you be so sure?"

"Hehe, only he is able to manipulate this sort of energy, I have previously



witnessed him doing so. There's no need to worry, it's definitely him. Apart from him, I had never met anyone who could manipulate the energy left behind between heaven and earth by the soldiers that died in battle. Relax, there won't be any problems." Emily who knew many of Han Shuo's secrets, smiled as she explained to the crowd.

Seeing Emily being so confident, sacred swordmaster Karel suddenly came to his senses, laughing heartily as he said, "Right, right. It must be Bryan. Previously when I sparred with him, the energy he used is quite similar to the energy gathering in the sky. I only thought of it after you mentioned it. So that's what going on!"

Karel's words clearly had more weight than Emily's. His remarks caused the crowd to suddenly calm down. Soon after, Sabakas suddenly flew up into the sky to observe the two spectacles more clearly. Within the huge black vortex, strands of bizarre energy were filtered and transformed by the vortex and entered Han Shuo who was on the roof of the castle little by little.

Seeing that, Sabakas completely understood what was going on. He calmly landed in front of everyone, smiling as he explained, "It is indeed caused by Bryan!"

"Yes, he mentioned previously that he had to train for a while and hastily left the lounge we were in. It looks like he is practicing his martial technique. There is nothing to worry about." Emily explained.

With Emily's further reassurance, the party turned to look at each other in amazement. They were shocked of the mysterious martial technique Han Shuo uses!

However, the subject of the crowd's discussion currently encountered a thorny problem. He was gradually losing control over the changes of the various kinds of chaotic energy within the Demonslayer Edge.

As there was a massive death toll due to the civil strife, it caused too much energy from fear, hatred, and wrath to be present in Ossen City. The soldiers from both factions left behind their tenacious willpower after death. Due to there being too much chaotic energy which couldn't be

rapidly fused together, it caused the energy within the Demonslayer Edge to become extremely chaotic.

However, the Demonslayer Edge was still diligently absorbing the negative energy within Ossen City. The blood cloud became denser and denser, causing Han Shuo to feel that he was somewhat losing control.

When Han Shuo came to his senses, the vast amount of energy absorbed within the Demonslayer Edge was already becoming disorderly. This caused Han Shuo's control over the Demonslayer Edge to become somewhat difficult. As the huge amount of negative energy could not be fused quickly due to the strong enmity, the original energy within the Demonslayer Edge was attempting to neutralize and coalesce them together.

As a result, it was extremely chaotic within the Demonslayer Edge. It was surging like a soaring dragon within the blood cloud. Dense, ruthless, and sinister aura gradually flowed into the blood cloud, affecting the soldiers of both sides who were still fighting the vigorous battle.

# Chapter 425: Han Shuo's sudden change

Han Shuo understood that this was because he had been too greedy. However, with things reaching this point, he didn't have a good solution.

As his mind was connected with the Demonslayer Edge, with the chaotic negative negative energy within the Demonslayer Edge scattering everywhere, it gradually affected Han Shuo's calm frame of mind. An intention of slaughter unconsciously leaped into his mind. It was like a toxin enhancer, causing Han Shuo's heartbeat to start increasing.

Not good! Han Shuo was alarmed.

This feeling had not appeared for a long time. Han Shuo knew that this is a sign of entering demonhood. The Demonslayer Edge was unfortunately still wildly absorbing the negative energy within Ossen City, while Han Shuo was absorbing the soaring killing intent through the vortex. Both of these energies required Han Shuo's manipulation and an error on one side will immediately affect the other.

Han Shuo's pupils started to gradually turn red. Blood-coloured light wound around his whole body and violent, sinister energy started emanating from Han Shuo. Sabakas and Karel, who were both inside the castle, immediately felt the changes to Han Shuo.

"What's going on?" Karel was terrified as he looked towards the roof that Han Shuo was on.

Bang, bang bang!

Just as Karel finished speaking, crackling sounds came from the direction he was looking toward. Rays of scarlet light shot out, causing the pile of rocks that used to be houses in that area to shatter and disintegrate.

Sabakas stared blankly for two seconds but soon after teleported to the area where Han Shuo sat cross-legged. He saw that Han Shuo's expression was distorted with malevolence, appearing extremely frightful. Strands of energy within the enormous vortex overhead formed rays of blood-colored

light which flowed into Han Shuo's body like electric currents.

The sinister and ruthless energy suddenly erupted from Han Shuo's body. With Han Shuo at the center, the buildings surrounding him collapsed with a loud bang one after another. Some of the soldiers in the castle were caught off guard and were immediately affected by this formidable force. In a flash, almost a hundred soldiers were killed.

Space sacred magus Sabakas' expression changed dramatically. Without saying another word, he hurriedly deployed a defensive barrier and then concentrated his mental strength and shouted loudly at Han Shuo, "Bryan!"

The pupils of Han Shuo, who was on the verge of falling into demonhood, had become a frightful scarlet color. It was as though blood was flowing within his pupils and appeared extremely terrifying.

The loud shout made with Sabakas' condensed mental strength, pierced into Han Shuo's mind like a sharp needle. Han Shuo felt a slight headache and became clear-headed after a brief moment.

Han Shuo's eyes spun rapidly for a while before he suddenly raised his head and roared toward the sky. An enormous killing intent was mixed within the roar. While Sabakas was ineffably horrified, Han Shuo suddenly flew up toward the sky like a lightning bolt, vanished within the blood cloud.

The dreadful roar resounded across the entire northern city district like thunder. Many experts sensed the fearsome energy contained within the roar and looked toward the area where Han Shuo was, momentarily clueless about what had happened.

"What happened?" Sacred swordmaster Karel hastily asked the startled Sabakas as he was late to the scene, only seeing a red flash shooting into the sky.

"I don't know, I have no idea either!" Sabakas came to his senses, immediately shaking his head and answered frantically. He looked at the blood cloud which was amassing and becoming denser and said, "However, I have a bad feeling. A moment ago, Bryan looked somewhat

terrifying. There's an extremely formidable energy in his body, so powerful that my heart rate quickened."

Karel was shocked as he knew Sabakas' true strength. When he heard Sabakas say that he felt terrified by the strength Han Shuo just revealed, Karel replied gravely, "I can sense soaring killing intent and evil within Bryan's roar. I think something is amiss."

"I'm also worried about that. Just a moment ago, his gaze looked extremely unfeeling and felt extremely unfamiliar. He was totally different from the Han Shuo we usually see. I'm certain that something we can't understand must have happened to his body." Sabakas was also feeling down as he replied Karel.

Karel suddenly shouted in alarm, "Look! The blood cloud in the sky is moving! Oh? It's actually moving in Ashburn's direction!"

"Guys, what's going on? What happened here?" Firenze had come over and asked calmly.

Amyes, Emily, and a few others had come along with Firenze. They had all heard the frightening roar originating from here, which filled their hearts with doubt and bafflement, and immediately came to investigate.

Fanny and Pheobe who were originally still on the second floor had also stopped their conversation and rushed over in a panic. They had no idea why Han Shuo would let out such a terrifying roar, causing them to be filled with worry and panic.

Sabakas didn't answer Firenze's question and instead creased his brows as he looked toward the sky.

The blood cloud had originally sat quietly in the sky above the castle, continuously absorbing negative energy from the entire northern city district. Although it grew in volume, it didn't move.

But now, the thick blood clouds had started to move!

The blood cloud's migration caused the weather to change drastically. An oppressive pressure carrying the weight of a mountain came crashing down. An enormous wicked aura gradually left the sky above the castle

and headed toward the location of Ashburn and his allies.

“Emily, do you know what just happened?” Amyes creased his brows as he sought clarification from Emily.

Of the people present, Emily was the most familiar with Han Shuo. When Amyes completed his question, everyone turned their gazes toward to Emily, all of them curious and puzzled.

“This should be what Han Shuo referred to as entering demonhood. He mentioned that this state would cause him to go crazy and even he himself wouldn’t be able to control his own actions. This terrifying state is extremely dangerous but will cause his strength to rise explosively. I don’t really understand it either and that’s all I have heard from him.” Emily similarly creased her brows as she explained immediately.

As Emily explained, everyone saw the numerous houses that had collapsed and some of the castle guards who had died tragically, immediately acknowledging Emily’s explanation. Even Sabakas and Karel, didn’t dare to forcefully charge toward Ashburn’s location. Yet, Han Shuo had condensed a thick blood cloud and headed over directly. Such a lunatic action was clearly something that he wouldn’t do in normal situations.

“Oh no! This means Bryan is in great danger! That location is filled with powerful experts and he even lost his rationality. What should we do?” Karel said anxiously.

“Ai, we can only take it one step at a time. We have to constantly monitor his movements. If anything really goes wrong, we will have to find a way to save him!” Sabakas sighed and answered grudgingly.

As Sabakas spoke, a blue crystal ball the size of a human head materialized in his hand. He then chanted an incantation and the crystal ball suddenly shot out blue light. This blue light was like ripples created when a rock is thrown into a lake, constantly swaying.

As Sabakas continued to recite his spell, the wavering blue light within the crystal ball gradually calmed down. When Sabakas had completed his incantation, the crystal ball suddenly displayed a clear scene.

Within the crystal ball, Han Shuo's entire body was covered in blood-colored light, his pupils scarlet red. The Demonslayer Edge floated above his head and the surrounding layers of blood clouds churned as they moved toward Ashburn's location.

Sabakas moved his five fingers over the crystal ball, causing the image within to zoom in and change, revealing the appearances of Ashburn, eldest prince Charles, their allies. Among them were the sacred knight and earth sacred magus Dempus, all of them having shocked expressions as they looked nervously at the blood cloud inching toward them.

"This crystal ball was given to me by Madam Grace. Although it can't foresee the future, it can show scenes within a fixed area. We won't be able to hear any sound though." Sabakas explained.

"Hmph. You clearly have something good but have been hiding it all along. What a selfish fellow." Firenze remarked impolitely.

Sabakas cleared his throat, smiling bitterly as he explained, "This crystal ball consumes a lot of mental strength to operate, has a very limited range, and doesn't transmit sound. It's a far cry from Han Shuo's mystical powers. That's why I had kept it hidden, not because I was being selfish."

"Alright, alright, let's see if Bryan will meet with a mishap," Karel said impatiently to Firenze and turned his attention to the changing scenes within Sabakas's crystal ball.

While Sabakas and the others were watching the changes happening within the crystal ball attentively, some of the weaker nobles by Ashburn's side were in misery. The enormous pressure brought by the blood cloud caused them to start gasping for breath.

"Dammit, what the hell is happening? Why did red clouds suddenly float over!" Eldest prince Charles also felt his heart palpating. The pressure was like a mountain pressing onto his body, causing him to feel all over. He can't help but cuss as he looked toward the sky.

"Two esteem sacred rank experts, do you know what is happening?" Even though Ashburn was the Grand Duke of Lancelot Empire, he didn't train in either martial arts or magic. He felt the pressure even more clearly

and actually had an urge to engage in crazed slaughter. To Ashburn who had to be calm to deal with all kinds of situations, this impulse was undoubtedly deadly. Thus, he hastily asked the sacred knight and Dempus.

The two sacred rank experts had grave expressions as they stared at the blood cloud in the sky. They could clearly sense the blood cloud accumulating more and more energy. Having absorbed the negative energy which contained the unyielding anger and dread of countless thousands of soldiers killed on the battlefield, the energy within the blood cloud far surpassed their imagination. This caused the two sacred rank experts to feel nervous.

“This is caused by that brat, Bryan. I can sense that he’s inside the blood cloud!” sacred knight Blount said calmly as he looked toward the sky.

“It’s him? Is that brat courting death? To actually dare to appear here!” Eldest prince Charles sneered.

In addition to two sacred rank masters, there were numerous great swordmasters and grand magi stationed along with a few thousand troops. Charles naturally believed that Han Shuo would definitely be killed.

However, both scared knight Blount and Dempus could faintly sense the formidability of the energy accumulated within the blood cloud. However, morale was extremely important at this moment. If Blount and Dempus told the truth, it would definitely cause the soldiers here to be filled with fear.

Blount and Dempus shot a glance at each other and Dempus suddenly began to chant a magic spell to deploy a barrier for Ashburn and the others, so as to avoid them being influenced by the energy within the blood cloud, so as to prevent them from feeling dread before the battle truly began.

“Wind magi, use tornados to sweep away that blood cloud.” Sacred knight Blount ordered the magi beside him to immediately take action.

As the blood cloud grew bigger and denser, Blount could clearly feel that energy came from the negative energy condensed within the blood cloud. As Dempus was an earth magus, he was powerless against the blood cloud



in the sky. Only wind magi were able to unleash their strength to the greatest degree.

At Blount's command, the wind magi on Ashburn's side began their incantations one after another. The essence of wind suddenly became denser as tornadoes and hurricanes of various sizes gradually formed and headed straight for the blood cloud that was about to reach them.

However, some things don't go as planned. The layers of dense blood cloud unexpectedly didn't disperse at all under the force of the different wind magic spells and instead continued along its original trajectory toward the location above Ashburn and the others.

While the wind magi were indescribably stunned, a magus with sharp vision suddenly shouted in fear while pointing at the blood cloud, "Look! There's someone's in the middle of the cloud!"

As the magus cried out in fear, others with sharp eyes all paid attention to the center of the blood cloud, spotting an imposing figure that was covered in a blood-colored light that interweaved around his body like lightning and looked as though he had the ability to control the blood cloud. All of a sudden, the figure roared wildly as he pressured downward like the blood cloud.

All of a sudden, terrifying wicked energy the weight of a mountain abruptly enveloped the entire area. An overbearing weapon wound around the thick blood cloud before suddenly striking downward like a meteor with red light trailing behind. The power within the rapidly descending weapon and the friction with the air produced a terrifying sharp screech.

In a split second, the entire sky was covered with red light. Blount and Dempus were both so terrified their faces paled.

"Retreat!" Dempus shouted, his hands grabbing onto Ashburn and eldest prince Charles and immediately using his levitation skills to hastily retreat into the distance.

# Chapter 426: Unstoppable

When the numerous experts on Ashburn's side saw that Dempus had actually dragged Ashburn and Charles along and retreated, they couldn't believe their eyes.

"Everyone withdraw!" The Church of Light's sacred knight Blount suddenly shouted and immediately rushed in Dempus' direction.

The Demonslayer Edge was entangled within the dense blood cloud and part of the chaotic negative energy within it rushed forth and interweaved with the energy within the blood cloud, causing an incomparably formidable force to strike downwards.

Dempus and Blount were aghast and couldn't understand what was going on. This was especially true for Blount who had effortlessly inflicted heavy injuries onto Han Shuo just a few days ago. Although he knew that Han Shuo's strength was out of the ordinary, it still wasn't something he paid attention to. He could never have anticipated that within a few days, Han Shuo's strength had unexpectedly reached such a frightening level.

Both of them had precisely felt the frightening energy contained this strike and immediately started to retreat. This was because even Blount and Dempus weren't confident in being able to withstand such a powerful strike.

Seeing Dempus and Blount retreat, the rest of them were naturally alarmed and started fleeing from the area in panic in random directions. The figures of some powerful experts became indistinct as they left the area in the blink of an eye.

The terrifying strike had the force of a collapsing mountain, causing a loud rumble as it struck the the hundred people that had yet to leave the area.

Rumble...

Trembles and rumbles akin to Judgement Day erupted with that area as the epicenter. Dust storms swept wildly across the cracked earth as

hurricanes carried the broken fragments in all directions. The various rays of blood-colored light exploded like fireworks as the sounds of ghosts wailing and wolves howling occurred again and again.

The soldiers who had not left were instantaneously turned into dregs by the strike. Flesh was mixed into the debris as they flew into the distance. From afar, a scene of desolation filled the eyes. When the dust settled, the area looked as though it had collapsed or encountered a great earthquake, leaving behind a deep oval crater that was ten meters in diameter.

The deep crater was obviously a result of the strike. Jet-black corpses laid within the crater, flowing with scarlet blood. Some of the clothes were scorched and still emitting black smoke. With the crater at the center, the earth seemed severely ravaged, as though a giant awl had bored a hole into it. The center of the crater was so deep the base couldn't be seen and the area was filled with potholes.

The might of this strike shocked everyone present. Not only Ashburn and the others by his side who had just escaped were dumbstruck, the jaws of Karel, Sabakas, and the others who were observing the area through crystal ball had dropped, their expressions filled with disbelief.

By now, Fanny and Phoebe had also hurried over. "This... Bryan did this?" Fanny stared blankly as she murmured. She had never thought that Han Shuo was actually frightening.

Even sacred swordmaster Karel felt his lips become dry as he remarked, "Truly unbelievable. That strike did not contain any magic, yet a strike purely based on martial arts has caused the deaths of numerous people. He even made a deep crater with that terrifying strike. Even if I went all out, I won't be able to produce such a terrifying strike. I truly have no idea how he achieved it!"

"No wonder Grace said he will bring about a new future to the Lancelot Empire. It seems that she was really far-sighted. If those people didn't escape in time, that strike would cause the deaths of several hundred people. That's absolutely terrifying. What's more peculiar is that the strike didn't contain any sort of magic and was achieved solely by his mystical

martial arts. What a mystery-filled fellow. “ Sabakas stated his heartfelt admiration.

“Mas.. Master, that’s not possible. I know Bryan’s strength and it isn’t this terrifying. Are you saying that he’s stronger than you?” Phoebe was dumbfounded, feeling that what she had just seen within the crystal ball wasn’t real.

Phoebe had believed all along that her master, Karel, was the continent’s strongest person. In the years she has been by Karel’s side, she had witnessed Karel being challenged by countless experts, yet all the experts that dared to challenge Karel suffered crushing defeats in the end without exception.

Phoebe had seen many of such battles over the years. It left a strong impression in her heart that Karel was omnipotent. She always thought in her heart that Karel was the world’s most fearsome expert and no one could ever surpass him.

However, when she heard Karel’s current words, Phoebe sensed the hidden meaning within, that the dreadful scene caused by Han Shuo’s strike was something even her master couldn’t accomplish. This totally subverted Phoebe’s understanding and was extremely surreal to her.

“If Bryan can always maintain his strength at such a level, even I would honestly have to flee too!” Karel glanced at Phoebe who had an odd expression, sighing as he said, “I truly didn’t foresee that this brat would be so terrifying. Could it be that he had deliberately concealed his strength during our spar so as to let me save face?”

“This brat is so terrifying that even Dempus and Blount, two sacred-grade experts, have to immediately retreat. I can imagine how powerful that strike must have been. Otherwise, with Dempus and Blount’s arrogance and statures, they would never retreat when facing the younger generation.” Sabakas remarked.

Amyes was amazed, thinking to himself, “After the civil war is over, if Lawrence ascends to the throne, the brat’s standing in the empire will be as high as that of Grand Duke Ashburn. In that case, Emily’s relationship

with him wouldn't be considered as a disgrace to her. Hopefully, this man will genuinely treat Emily well.

While Amyes was sighing in his heart, Firenze was astonished, foolishly staring at Fanny as he asked, "Lass, this brat really used to be your student?"

"Yes, that's right. Back when he was still in the academy, he was even bullied regularly." Fanny smiled bitterly as she answered Firenze.

"This world is changing too fast. I've become old, I'm definitely old now, I feel that I'm too outdated!" Firenze had an odd expression, astonished by Han Shuo's shocking performance at such young age.

"Look! He's starting to move again!" The person who cried out this time was Lawrence, his tone brimming with excitement.

No one on this side could be happier than Lawrence. Seeing Ashburn, Charles, and the others cutting a sorry figure as they flee, Lawrence felt unspeakable joy. Ashburn and Charles had tried to act against him in secret multiple times, nearly succeeding in killing him on a few occasions. The hatred he had for the duo had long passed the point where he wouldn't rest till they were dead.

Now that he saw Ashburn and Charles being humiliated, Lawrence naturally felt extremely overjoyed. Moreover, if the duo was killed at such a crucial moment, the whole Lancelot Empire will undoubtedly fall into his control. Lawrence's heart palpitated with excitement as he imagined the scene where everyone pledged their allegiance to him.

When Lawrence cried out in surprise, everyone hastily turned their attention back to the crystal ball in Sabakas' hand.

The scene within the crystal ball was still fixed on the heavily destroyed area. In the sky above the desolate land, a sinister looking Han Shou was roaring wildly. The thick blood clouds behind him emanated a heavy smell of blood, constantly rumbling as he roared.

A bolt of red lighting suddenly appeared from the bottomless crater and rapidly flew in front of Han Shuo. The blood-red eyed Han Shuo caught it

at one go. It was precisely the lethal Demonslayer Edge that had caused the frightening attack.

When the vicious Demonslayer Edge entered his hand, a frightening might spread out. His scarlet red eyes scanned the area, and he immediately charged in sacred knight Blount's direction. A hundred-meter long scarlet red sword light was suddenly shot out from the Demonslayer Edge. The scarlet sword light whistled and pulled along a portion of the blood cloud as if it had bizarre powers.

Han Shuo was like a demon that descended from another plane, his expression malevolent as he held the Demonslayer Edge and charged towards Blount. The Demonslayer Edge effortlessly destroyed everything in his path. As he flew onward, terrifying power spread out to the whole area.

Many of Ashburn's troops that were within a hundred meters of Han Shuo were affected, all of them being sliced and diced into pieces in succession by the sword light, causing a bountiful rain of blood to fall. Along the path where Han Shuo flew, sand and stones were sent flying. As the sword light streaked across the area, it left many deep gorges.

"My two esteem sacred rank experts, what, what was going on?" Grand Duke Ashburn asked Blount and earth sacred magus Dempus with a trembling voice as he looked at the fiend-like Han Shuo charging at them imposingly.

Han Shuo's current demeanor was really too terrifying and wild. Nothing could stop him along the way, and anyone who dared to obstruct him was obliterated under the hundred-meter-long sword light. In just a brief moment, five hundred elite soldiers under Ashburn were killed.

These elite soldiers had been protecting Ashburn, and didn't participate in the ongoing battle. All of them were death soldiers that Ashburn had meticulously asked others to train, consuming a tremendous amount of Ashburn's gold coins and manpower. Each of them was much stronger than the average soldier.

However, these elite soldiers that Ashburn relied on were sliced apart

like paper when facing the crazed Han Shuo. Not a single one of them could actually survive an attack from Han Shuo.

“For some unknown reason, that wicked fellow’s strength suddenly rose sharply. It’s as though he could borrow the energy from the dead that had not dispersed. Every strike was filled with frightening negative energy. I truly have no idea how he did it!” Sacred knight Blount had a grave expression as he replied Ashburn.

“What should we do, what should we do now that he’s charging over?” Eldest prince Charles voice trembling as he shrieked. He was clearly intimidated by Han Shuo’s sinister appearance and frightening strength.

“There’s no other way, we could only retreat. Currently, no one in the entire Lancelot Empire can stop him!” Earth sacred magus Dempus immediately answered. Although this decision caused him to feel aggrieved, he really didn’t have any other ideas.

“What did the two of you say in the beginning? There’s no need to worry even if there was a sacred expert? But now you can’t even obstruct a young fellow? You guys are useless! Where else can I withdraw to? If I leave Ossen City, all our plans and efforts will be wasted!” Charles was obviously somewhat hysterical and even spoke incoherently as he was truly frightened.

“Charles, shut up! The judgment of the two esteemed sacred rank experts will not be wrong, you better calm down!” When Ashburn saw that the expressions of the two sacred rank experts turned ugly, he hastily berated Charles.

After getting scolded by Ashburn, Charles came to his senses and immediately became silent.

“My dearest esteem sacred rank experts, Charles is still young and momentarily forgot his manners. Please do not take it to heart. We will listen to your advice.” Ashburn chided Charles before immediately apologizing to Blount and Dempus.

Even though Ashburn was the Grand Duke of the Lancelot Empire, he still needed to treat these sacred rank experts with great caution,

especially now when they needed to rely on the two sacred rank experts. It would further worsen their plight if they were to offend these two experts. Therefore, Ashburn had no choice but to humbly apologize.

Sacred knight Blount gave a frosty snort and glanced at the now silent Charles, “Next time be more careful when you speak. I came here to help you guys because of my good friend Kosse. Otherwise, I wouldn’t care less about whether you are dead or alive.”

Charles secretly cursed him in his heart, thinking that after he took power, he will teach him a lesson. However, he dared not to reveal any dissatisfaction at this moment, and could only nod and smile.

“Lord Blount, for the sake of spreading the glory and radiance of Church of Light all over Lancelot Empire, please forgive them.” Red Archbishop Kosse said to Blount with a smile.

“Forget it, everything is for the glory of the Church of Light!” Blount exclaimed before saying to Dempus, “Escort them away from this area. I will lead that fellow away. I sense that his primary target is me. It seems like he hates me for injuring him previously.”

“Thank you Mister Blount, take care!” Dempus stared blankly for a moment before he replied respectfully.

Ashburn and Charles glanced at each other. Charles was cursing in his heart again, thinking, “Since you knew that his target was you, why did you still stay together with us? Doesn’t this show that you obviously want to harm us? You old fart is sure enough up to no good!”

“Old friend Kosse, I’d have to trouble you to stay by my side. This fellow is a grand magus necromancer. Only with your divine weapon ‘Revelation’ would be able to nullify his undead army.” Blount said to Kosse.

“Of course.” Kosse nodded in agreement.



# Chapter 427: One vs A Hundred

Once Blount finished speaking, Dempus led Grand Duke Ashburn, Charles, and the experts protecting them, withdrawing hurriedly.

Blount and Kosse formed a group with a few Temple Knights and white priests from the Church of Light and headed in the exact opposite direction of Dempus and the others.

Blount's guess was absolutely correct. Currently, Han Shuo had firmly remembered the sacred aura on Blount's body. The earth elite zombie getting injured was a sore point for Han Shuo. Before entering demonhood, he had deemed Blount as his target, not letting Blount out of his sights.

As expected, when Blount, Kosse, and the other members of Church of Light left, the fiend-like Han Shuo who was flying over was indeed targeting Blount and persevered in chasing after him.

Dempus and the others who originally planned to escape quickly suddenly realized that Han Shuo's target was indeed Blount and immediately let out sighs of relief. Under Ashburn's command, they changed directions again and circled back towards the center of the battlefield to continue directing their troops in the ongoing war.

Han Shuo, who had sunk into the state of demonhood, was like a pillar of lightning, spurring a frightening sound as he charged towards Blount, Kosse, and his party. He didn't care about the fates of Ashburn and the others.

Firenze, who had been observing the crystal ball, gave a cold hmph and said, "Ashburn has returned to court death. Till this point, he actually still unable to tell the outcome of the battle."

"It seems that Blount and the members of the Church of Light are in trouble!" Karel's mood had calmed down, smiling as he said to Sabakas.

"Yes, that's right. I was originally prepared to assist Bryan at any moment. I didn't expect this brat to be so miraculous. It seems that we

need not be concerned and just need to deal with Ashburn.” Sabakas similarly loosened his breath, his tone relaxed as he replied.

“Do you mean that Bryan shouldn’t be in any trouble?” Fanny was the most concerned about Han Shuo’s safety. She hesitated for a moment but still didn’t feel very reassured.

“Lass, it is those that were being chased by Bryan that should be worried. I think there’s no need for us to worry about that brat. Alright, be at ease, don’t worry about this and that the entire day.” Firenze consoled Fanny.

Emily and Phoebe had normal expressions, only feeling amazed by his extreme performance. Ever since they met Han Shuo, they never had seen him suffer losses. Han Shuo had always given them a powerful strength and hence they had indistinctly formed a blind confidence deep in their hearts.

Fanny was however different from them. Of the three, Fanny was the first to meet Han Shuo. When Han Shuo was still in the necromancy major and yet to become strong, she even had to step forward at times and help him resolve problems. This deeply-rooted impression wasn’t something that could be altered within a short time. Even though Han Shuo was currently so powerful, she would still worry for him.

While the crowd was looking upon Han Shuo with varying emotions, the fiend-like Han Shuo had actually already caught up to Blount and started to attack the followers of the Church of Light.

Standing tall within the blood cloud, Han Shuo lifted the Demonslayer Edge within the writhing blood cloud. It emitted a dragon-like sword light and every strike contained boundless might. The magi from the Church of Light continuously weaved layers of defensive barriers. Even sacred knight Blount dare not withstand the strikes by himself.

A long and narrow red lightning bombarded them from above. It was like the meandering, twisting body of a hundred-meter-long dragon, containing vast amounts of killing intent, directly striking the magic barrier deployed by Kosse and the group of magi.

A revolving screen of wind, sparkling and translucent ice shield, blazing

firewall, and a magnificent holy shield of light took shape one after another over their heads, forming a variegated peculiar scene. Blount was in charge of the final layer of defense, as his fighting aura containing divine energy shot out from his golden pike in the form of dazzling light.

These followers of the Church of Light concentrated their attention on the sky above, as though they were in anticipation of a great enemy, exerting all their strength to meet the already unavoidable strike.

Finally, a powerful attack struck down loudly on the combined barriers deployed by the members of the Church of Light.

It shattered into small pieces, like the stars in the Milky Way, causing multi-colored lights to shoot in all directions with an eardrum-bursting loud sound. The enormous energy contained unmatched ruthlessness, easily destroying six barriers of multiple elements in a flash.

The magical barriers made with the full strength of those magi was like paper in the face of the destructive force. They seemed to be instantly demolished, simply causing the destructive strike to pause for a moment.

The relentless strike continued onward, causing another eight magical barriers to shatter into a variety of colored lights. Only when it reached the 'Shield of Light' deployed by Red Archbishop Kosse's divine weapon 'Revelation', was there a frightening explosion and the force of the strike was truly diminished.

"Deng, deng, deng!"

Red Archbishop Kosse who had been strenuously concentrating his mental strength to deploy the Shield of Light, couldn't resist falling backward by three steps before falling on his butt. His brain buzzed and he couldn't help but spit out a mouthful of blood.

"Lord Blount, hurry!" Kosse took a breath and shouted, as his brain suddenly suffered a wave of pain again.

"Crack" With the crisp sound of an egg cracking, the Shield of Light that Kosse deployed ruptured, and the ferocious strike continued on its path downwards.

Sacred knight Blount shouted loudly, raising the shining golden spike towards the sky. Holy aura burst out from Blount's body and fused with the golden spike in his hand, forming a golden lighting that shot out towards Han Shuo's strike.

Rumble...

A series of muffled thunders could suddenly be heard from the clear sky as gold and red interweaved with each other, forming a spectacular sight. However, the terrifying energy transmitted from the two strikes burst out like a torrent, causing multiple spatial tears to appear.

Blount gave off a muffled groan as terrifying energy suddenly surged into his body. The golden armor on his body gave off a sweet-sounding jingling sound as he suddenly felt as though his internal organs were smashed by a huge hammer, causing him to stagger as blood flowed out of his mouth and nose.

"Blount's injured! What a frightening attack!" Karel shouted, his expression filled with inexplicable joy.

Through the crystal ball on Sabakas's hand, Lawrence and the others saw the situation clearly, especially how blood flowed from Blount's mouth and nose. Those with sharp eyes even noticed Blount's brief stagger.

In contrast to the battered and exhausted Blount, Han Shuo, who had just received the Demonslayer Edge in his palm, still carried a malevolent appearance. His scarlet pupils were filled with madness and his unfeeling expression made him appear like a machine sculpted for a massacre.

Apart from continuously breathing heavily, there were no changes to Han Shuo's outward appearance. There were no signs of fatigue, only that the blood cloud had shrunk slightly, as though it was dispersed by the turbulent energy released during the battle.

"Insane, Bryan really is insane. He actually injured the Church of Light's sacred knight!" Cecilia, one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, had been silently monitoring the latest developments, but couldn't resist shouting in excitement.

Cecilia who spent years carrying out missions in enemy countries was more familiar than anyone else about the sacred knight's frightening strength. In the entire Profound Continent, the Church of Light's sacred knight was always the most formidable existence. Cecilia who had roamed around many countries had heard many rumors about sacred knights and she knew just how formidable these experts who had obtained divine blessing were.

However, it was such an existence that disdained the experts of the various countries that was now injured by a young man!

If this matter was to spread, Han Shuo would immediately become a legend in the Profound Continent, easily topping the ranks of the finest experts within the continent.

To Cecilia, Han Shuo's performance today could only be described as outrageous. It was also from that moment on that Cecilia thoroughly abandoned any intention of competing with Han Shuo.

Even though she's Sabakas's granddaughter, even though she's one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, even though she always believed that she's inferior to any youngster.

However, Han Shuo's stunning performance at this moment completely overturned her thoughts and made her realize how powerless she was to compete with Han Shuo.

"Based on this strike, Bryan's name will spread widely throughout the Profound Continent!" Space sacred magus Sabakas had a serene expression as he remarked definitively while looking at the unyielding Han Shuo within the crystal ball.

"Lord Blount, Lord Blount's injured!" Contrary the surprise felt by Sabakas and the others, the followers of the Church of Light beside Blount were all enveloped in fear. These followers continuously repeated that sentence, as though Blount's injury meant that the mission had completely failed.

Their morale, in the wake of those continuously repeated words, sank to its lowest!

“Shut up. Those who are alive continue deploying magical barriers. The next wave of attack is arriving. You fools, if you want to live, start moving immediately!” The usually unruffled Blount suddenly seemed to lose control, unable to restrain himself from shouting angrily.

The fellows of the Church of Light had no time to think about the change in Blount’s tone at this moment as the thick blood cloud above their heads had started to churn wildly again.

It was clear in their hearts that this is the sign that the fiend above was taking action!

“Cough, cough!” Red Archbishop Kosse coughed violently for a short while before he tremblingly stood up, holding the divine weapon ‘Revelation’ as he continued his incantation. He was the first to re-deploy a magical barrier.

Kosse’s heart was filled with bitterness. Even with his outstanding wisdom and knowledge, he couldn’t figure out how Han Shuo’s strength could rise so dramatically in such a short period of time. Just a few days back, Blount was able to seriously injure Han Shuo. Yet, the strength he revealed today could not be simply described as terrifying. Kosse who originally thought that victory over Ossen City was assured now felt that not only was there no longer any certainty of success, his heart was also filled with a frightening sense of dispiritedness.

This fiend, I should have destroyed him when I first met him! Kosse sighed regretfully in his heart.

When Kosse began his incantation, the magi of the Church of Light who still had the strength to spare, similarly continued to chant incantations for the sake of their own survival, continuing to do what they were already doing.

Han Shuo’s terrifying speed when he flew over previously made them realize that if they didn’t work as one, they simply wouldn’t be able to escape from Han Shuo as his speed was faster than their levitation skills.

They didn’t know if their magical barriers would be of use like they did previously but in order to survive for a while longer, they didn’t have

much choice but to do as Blount and Kosse ordered.

The facts proved that their actions were correct.

Han Shuo's next strike arrived as expected, but its power was obviously much weaker than the previous strike. However, it still tore through the barriers deployed by these magi, once again knocking out Red Archbishop Kosse. Blount who was defending the same way he did previously was struck directly into the ground in the midst of shimmering golden lights.

Although the magnitude of this strike was much weaker, its lethality was greater than the previous strike.

The previous unparalleled attack didn't kill any followers of the Church of Light as it was blocked by the barriers and Blount.

Yet, although Han Shuo's second attack was weaker, the followers of the Church of Light were heavily injured by the first attack, causing the second set of barriers deployed to not be as sturdy and perfect as the first. This resulted in Red Archbishop Kosse being knocked out and Blount's body being smashed into the ground.

In addition, over twenty Temple Knights and white priests were immediately cut into pieces by the blood-red sword light.

As the second attack was much weaker, the preparation time needed for the following attack was also much shorter. Before they could react, the blood-red sword light no longer gathered together and instead wound around the thick blood cloud, Quickly followed by the weaker hammering and before those men could react, forming a blood rain that rained downward, causing unceasing blood-curdling screams to be heard coming from below.

When everyone was fending for themselves, a blood-red light the thickness of an arm suddenly stabbed into the fainted Red Archbishop Kosse. The divine weapon 'Revelation' on his hand suddenly shone brightly, and a ruthless aura suddenly emanated from his body.

When the members of the Church of Light came to their senses, they suddenly noticed that Kosse was bleeding from his seven apertures and

had lost all signs of life. The divine weapon 'Revelation' that he held tightly in his hand had also become dull and lackluster.



# Chapter 428: Already a foregone conclusion

“Lord Kosse, Lord Kosse! “ A white priest near Kosse suddenly shrieked.

“He’s dead, Lord Kosse is dead!” Another Temple Knight suddenly cried out involuntarily. His cry was extremely loud and voice traveled very far away.

When sacred knight Blount, whose throat was filled with blood, heard the news, he spurted out the blood he had been suppressing. Blount’s originally shiny golden armor was now filled with cracks like a turtle’s shell, appearing to have been seriously damaged from the last attack.

“Calm down, everybody calm down. Quicky secure the ‘Revelation’!“ Blount shouted from afar.

Beams of blood-red sword light swished as they shot down like a rain of arrows. The remaining blood cloud that enveloped Han Shuo twisted around the descending sword light, enhancing their destructive power. They proved to be a lethal weapon, taking the lives of the followers of the Church of Light below.

Miserable howls could be heard continuously. Under the bombardment of the blood light, more than half of the Church of Light’s followers were killed in a flash. Their bodies were in a horrifying condition where even the sturdy armor of the Temple Knights was simply unable to withstand the blood light, collapsing into pools of blood one after another.

Blount exclaimed loudly as he pulled himself out from the ground. He saw that a white priest had already retrieved the Church of Light’s divine weapon, ‘Revelation’ and swung the golden pike in his hand to block a blood light shooting toward the white priest. His eyes were bloodshot as he stared at Han Shuo who stood imposingly in the sky, his heart filled with boundless hatred. When the rain of blood light finally ceased, there were only slightly more than thirty members that remained around Blount. Their operation against the Lancelot Empire could be considered

an utter failure. Even the Church of Light's representative in Lancelot Empire, Red Archbishop Kosse, was killed on the scene. The losses were way beyond Blount's expectations.

The thick blood cloud in the sky had already disappeared. Han Shuo who originally had scarlet eyes and a malevolent expression had actually already returned to normal. At this moment he looked down unfeelingly at the desolation but didn't take any further action.

He held a scarlet weapon shining in scarlet sword light in his hand. The blood red colour came from within the weapon hilt, as though it had soaked in blood for millions of years. Soaring killing intent emanated from the weapon, giving people an apprehensive feeling.

"Blount, you didn't expect this, didn't you? Hehe, this is the price the Church of Light ought to pay! All these while, the Church of Light has been attacking me like a mad dog, and I've simply acted on self-defense." Han Shuo sneered at Blount, continuing, "However, I will not passively wait for your attack. From today onward, I'll actively seek and destroy every power of the Church of Light one by one. Unfortunately, you won't live to see that."

"You wicked heretic, the God of Light would not permit your existence in this world. I guarantee that you will die very soon." Blount clenched his teeth before replying Han Shuo.

Han Shuo smiled mockingly while shaking his head, lifting the Demonslayer Edge and shot toward Blount, as though wanting to behead Blount on the spot.

But before Han Shuo could get near Blount, Blount had already rushed towards the church member who held 'Revelation' at lightning speed. As he grabbed the divine weapon, his golden armor suddenly burst out in brilliant golden light. A divine energy enveloped Blount, rocketing him up to the sky, shooting toward the horizon like a golden ray.

"He escaped! The sacred knight actually fled!" Cecelia, who had been observing the scene through the crystal ball, shouted in disbelief.

"Blount was injured quite heavily. It looks like Bryan must have imprinted

an unforgettable impression on him.” Sacred swordmaster Karel said affirmatively.

“Within the Church of Light, a sacred knight of Blount’s level, would not be restrained by ordinary people. This is because the Church of Light would absolutely not allow them to be lost. If Blount wanted to leave, he would have done so long ago. It’s just that he wanted to protect Kosse and the other members, and was confident in holding back Bryan, which was why he had delayed his departure.

Unfortunately, he was still unable to obstruct Bryan and was even badly injured. However, our Lancelot Empire could be considered to have enmity with the Church of Light from today onward. There would be more troublesome matters in the future. The Church of Light has an enormous influence within the Oden Empire, the most powerful kingdom in the Profound Continent. We might face threats from the Oden Empire this time.” Sabakas sighed lightly, appearing to be somewhat worried about the future of the Lancelot Empire.

“Hehe, you can’t say that for sure. Madam Grace prophesied that so long as Bryan remains in the Lancelot Empire, our empire shall enjoy lasting prosperity. Everything that happened today is in line with the prophecy. Look at the empire’s current situation, are these changes all happening because of Bryan’s existence?

Maybe Bryan would be like demigod Ayermike Cotton, and bring hundreds of years of prosperity to the Lancelot Empire. Hehe, even though we can’t say for sure, I actually think highly of him. Furthermore, Oden Empire and Lancelot Empire are separated by a large distance. I don’t believe that they will be able to attack us from so far away.” sacred swordmaster Karel’s mood seemed pretty good, smiling as he replied Sabakas.

“What’s there to be afraid of. So what if the Oden Empire’s army comes over? Hmph, I’d love to meet the continent’s strongest army and see how strong they are!” Firenze the battle maniac was somewhat eager to give it a try, clearly happy to see the whole world be in chaos.

Hearing Karel and Firenze's remarks, Sabakas reflected that Oden Empire and Lancelot Empire were indeed separated by great geographical distances and his heart eased up slightly. Soon after, he moved his fingers, causing the crystal ball on his hand to spin for a moment, and its luster to slowly fade, causing the images within to disappear as well.

At this moment, Han Shuo was astonished as he looked in the direction that Blount had escaped in, but was feeling relieved in his heart.

Contrary to Blount's impression, Han Shuo was currently just strong in appearance but weak in reality. The power he displayed previously was through the energy within the thick blood cloud and the negative energy within the Demonslayer Edge. Currently, the thick blood cloud that had been enveloping Han Shuo had already vanished and even the negative energy in Demonslayer Edge begin to dwindle.

Thus, Han Shuo no longer had a source of power to borrow from and only had the same strength as when he mounted a sneak attack on Blount previously. If Blount didn't flee in panic and was determined to fight to the death, he might not have lost to Han Shuo.

Unfortunately, Han Shuo's prior performance was too overwhelming. Blount's injuries caused a dent in his confidence, causing him to go as far as to disregard the other members and evoke the special ability of his armor with divine energy so as to quickly escape the battlefield.

Han Shuo let out a sigh of relief after Blount left. He couldn't help but turned his eyes towards the remaining members of the Church of Light who were in despair. These men had seen Kosse being killed, Blount escaping and were intimidated by Han Shuo's previous display. Their faces were ashen and no longer had any hope of living under Han Shuo's gaze.

After experiencing his earth elite zombie being injured, Han Shuo has no mercy left for the Church of Light. He understood that the animosity between him and the Church of Light would only end when one of them dies. Only when the Church of Light completely disappears from the continent, would he be able to live a peaceful life. The only way to solve the problem of such fanatical followers is to kill all of them.

After Blount escaped, the remaining people were useless troops, which Han Shuo could handle easily with his original strength. He sneered as he looked at the remaining members of the Church of Light. Just as Han Shuo was about to say something, a white priest suddenly sang a song praising and worshipping the God of Light loudly.

After the white priest finished, he shouted sorrowfully, "The God of Light will definitely purify our souls, and avenge the humiliation we received today."

After that, under Han Shuo's gaze, the white priest took the lead with the remaining members committing suicide one after another.

"Truly a group of people whose minds are corrupted. Religion truly poisons the mind!" Han Shuo couldn't help but sigh when he saw the followers of the Church of Light, who knew that they couldn't escape, kill themselves one after another in front of Han Shuo.

Han Shuo raised his head and looked at the sky. He could still feel the soaring killing intent enveloping the entire Ossen City. Although Han Shuo had already absorbed a portion of it, the undispersed killing intent was still as rich as before. This caused Han Shuo to feel extremely refreshed.

Currently, under the drain from him entering demonhood, the two types of energy within the Demonslayer Edge had miraculously returned to normal. The previous impure energy had been changed into pure negative energy, trickling into the Demonslayer Edge. The Demonslayer Edge had once again returned to its natural state, becoming one with Han Shuo's mind.

The energy which Han Shuo had previously absorbed through the giant vortex had already been stored within the demon infant in his body, but it hasn't been fully assimilated for the time being. But in general, he now felt incredibly relaxed after releasing all the chaotic energy. He was no longer apprehensive of being delirious and need not worry about an upheaval between the Demonslayer Edge and his body for the time being.

Now that Han Shuo was clear-headed, he quickly observed the situation

through his mystical demons. The defeat of Ashburn and his men was now extremely obvious, where even Ashburn and eldest prince Charles had already realized it and were planning to retreat.

The other regions further from Ossen City had similarly been won under Firenze's leadership and the cooperation from the other two princes. It seems that Ashburn and Charles' sudden rebellion had failed completely.

When a mystical demon circled around the castle, Han Shuo discovered that the crowd was discussing spiritedly about him. Han Shuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry because from their discussions, Han Shuo discovered that his status had suddenly been raised to astonishing heights.

On top of the clock tower, Bollands was trembling from head to toe, as though he was having a seizure. His face was flushed and he seemed to have lost control over his body. A crazed killing intent could also be seen in his eyes.

Han Shuo dazed for a moment before quickly coming to his senses. He secretly cursed Bollands for his recklessness, as he flew toward Bollands at high-speed.

A blood-red light streaked across the sky with a sharp whistle. Han Shuo arrived in front of Bollands, extending his left hand, pressing it against Bollands' chest, and pushed suddenly. The trembling Bollands suddenly returned to normal. "Cough, cough....."

Bollands was like a drowning person who could suddenly breathe again. His face was flushed as he started to cough violently. The killing intent in his eyes had slowly faded.

Han Shuo pressed his left hand against Bollands' back again, drawing out a portion of the chaotic killing intent before Bollands could even react. He then slapped his hand against Bollands' back.

Bollands gave a muffled groan and fell to the ground. His eyes had completely returned to normal, but his face was pale as he knelt before Han Shuo and said, "Senior, thank you!"

Han Shuo snorted coldly and said in anger, "I told you before I left that

your body can't withstand too much killing intent and you should stop the vortex within your body when you felt that you were nearing your limit. Yet, you didn't listen. If I didn't arrive in time, your body would have burst apart at any moment."

"Senior, I'm sorry. I made a mistake!" Bollands apologized in terror and explained hastily, "I was too greedy. I had never thought that I could absorb this kind of killing intent to increase my strength. Now that I had come across this opportunity with great difficulty, I really couldn't suppress the excitement. I kept telling myself that I'll take just absorb a little more before stopping but had always not wanted to stop. By the time I felt that my body was going to explode, I realized that I couldn't control my body anymore."

The temptation to greatly improve one's strength was something Bollands couldn't resist. This was also the first time he could absorb this kind of energy. He simply couldn't extinguish the flames of greed, resulting in such a consequence.

"Forget about it. It's also my fault for not reminding you carefully. I thought that at your age, you should have good self-control. Sigh, you must remember, our martial technique is very different from fighting aura and it requires our body to be extremely strong. Before your body could bear it, never rashly absorb energy your body can't take." Han Shuo sighed as he said.

"Senior, I've learned my lesson. From now on, I will not be so reckless again." Bollands truly acknowledged his own impulsiveness, kneeling before Han Shuo to apologize.

# Chapter 429: New status

When Han Shuo was still lecturing Bolland, Sabakas and the others had hurried over after learning of his return.

“Bryan, are you alright?” Fanny looked tenderly at Han Shuo was the first to speak.

Han Shuo smiled, shaking his head as he replied, “Don’t worry, I’m fine.”

Emily and Phoebe’s gazes were also fixed on Han Shuo. They were overjoyed to see the man they love showing his extraordinariness and were even happier than if they were the ones in the spotlight. Such was the deep-rooted nature of a woman, to be proud of their man’s achievements.

“Brat, well done!” Even Firenze praised Han Shuo. However, he immediately added, “No matter how powerful you are, if you dare bully my daughter, I’ll will still never let you off.”

“Father, what are you saying, Bryan would never bully me! Ha, I’m still considered his teacher. Even though he’s powerful now, he’s still my student.” After these days, Fanny had clearly become less reserved, and appeared much more cheerful and lively.

When Firenze saw that Fanny revealed a smile as soon as she saw Han Shuo, he understood that Fanny’s feelings for Han Shuo were indeed extremely deep. As he observed her daughter’s sincere joy, Firenze gave a hollow laugh and did not continue speaking so as to avoid making her unhappy.

“Bryan, I didn’t expect your strength to actually be so frightening. It seems that you didn’t go all out in our previous spar. You little brat, did you feel I was unworthy of your full strength?” Karel’s expression changed as he said with some displeasure.

Bryan smiled bitterly and immediately explained, “Mister Karel, you have misunderstood me. A while ago, I was only able to injure Blount because I borrowed external energy. My actual strength is far weaker than Blount.



All of you had seen it as well. The blood cloud that enveloped the sky previously was the energy I relied on.

The energy within the blood cloud has been fully released by me. My strength has returned to its original level. I didn't hold back during our spar, I'm really not that strong. Please don't misunderstand."

"So that was the case. For you to actually be able to manipulate the chaotic energy within the blood cloud, your martial technique is truly mystical." Karel was amazed. He was just pretending to be unhappy. He actually had some idea of the truth and simply wanted Han Shuo to verify it personally.

Bollands had already stood up, staring blankly while being unable to make head or tail of the conversation as he had no idea of what had happened just now.

When Lawrence saw Bollands' puzzled expression, he took the initiative to approach Bollands, smiling as he described the extent of the strength Han Shuo had displayed. Lawrence was ineffably excited as he described the happenings. Bollands was incomparably shocked when he heard the story. He stared blankly at Han Shuo, feeling as though he was getting to know Han Shuo again. This wasn't the first time Bollands had felt this way.

Only experts at Bollands' level would understand how terrifying sacred knight Blount and earth sacred magus Dempus are. When he heard Lawrence say that two sacred rank experts had to escape from Han Shuo in succession, and Blount was even injured in the end, Bollands was extremely shocked.

However, when the shock faded, his heart was filled with excitement. To Bollands, the stronger Han Shuo was, the more beneficial it was to him. This news implied that Han Shuo's martial technique had matchless, mystical strength. Bollands, who was currently practicing martial arts imparted by Han Shuo, naturally felt even more expectation about the martial technique.

"Everyone, the battle in the northern city district has yet to end. I think

we should get back to what we need to do.” Han Shuo smiled as he said to the group who was buzzing with inquiries about his condition.

As Han Shuo’s previous performance was truly excessive and the situation in the northern city district was already determined, they had immediately rushed over when Sabakas said that Han Shuo had returned to the castle, desperate to know what was going on. They were extremely curious, their gazes peculiar as they looked at Han Shuo. Even Sabakas and Karel were kinder when they spoke to him, indicating their approval of Han Shuo’s strength.

Firenze was the first to react when he heard Han Shuo’s statement. He snorted and said, “I was just accompanying my daughter to take a look. Well, I still have to command those idiots to fight, so I won’t accompany you any longer.”

Firenze simply walked away as soon as he finished speaking.

“Lawrence, the situation in the northern city district is under control. It just so happens that I need this time to train. However, there’s something that I want to tell you.” Han Shuo said while looking at Lawrence sternly.

Lawrence currently had an extremely favorable opinion of Han Shuo. Moreover, he understood in his heart that Han Shuo played a big part in helping him secure control over Ossen City, and gained the upper hand in the war. Therefore, when he heard that Han Shuo had something to say, Lawrence immediately smiled cooperatively and said, “Hey, do not hesitate to be direct with me. You know that there’s no need to be so courteous between us.”

Han Shuo felt more comfortable when he heard what Lawrence said. He glanced at the three women, Amyes and the others and said, “I would like to discuss this matter with just you and the two sacred rank experts!”

“Alright, let’s get back to our own matters. Everyone, let’s leave.” Amyes, one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, smiled gracefully as he responded, taking the lead to leave.

With Amyes taking the lead and leave, the others in the area left while harboring suspicions. Even Emily, Phoebe and Fanny left one after another

at Han Shuo's request.

In the blink of an eye, the important people within the castle who had come over out of curiosity took Amyes hint and left the area. Only Han Shuo, Lawrence, space sacred magus Sabakas, and sacred swordmaster Karel was left on the clocktower.

After the others had gone a distance away from the clocktower, Lawrence looked at Han Shuo in amazement and asked, "Bryan, what's the matter?"

Space sacred magus Sabakas waved his hand and deployed a space barrier which enveloped the immediate area of the clocktower, preventing their conversation from being leaked. Sabakas faintly understood what Han Shuo was about to say to Lawrence.

"Since the defeat of Ashburn and eldest prince Charles is inevitable unless something unexpected happens, you will definitely be the new king of the Lancelot Empire. His Majesty had previously discussed a few things with me in secret. You have always been curious as to what His Majesty had said to me. I feel that I can reveal it to you now." Han Shuo looked firmly at Lawrence and said seriously.

"Oh?" Lawrence's curiosity was suddenly roused, his eyes glistening as he looked at Han Shuo and asked, "Bryan, what did Father say to you? Why was it that after you left the palace, His Majesty began to fully support me?"

Han Shuo glanced at space sacred magus Sabakas, and said with a smile, "Mister Sabakas, I believe you know of this?"

Sabakas smile and nodded, replying calmly, "That's right. I'm indeed aware of that matter."

When Lawrence's doubt-filled gaze turned towards Sabakas, he explained, "Old astrologer Madam Grace prophesied that the prince Bryan supports will become the next king of the Lancelot Empire, and shall bring a new wave of prosperity to the empire.

Hehe, as expected, with the good relationship you have with Bryan, you

would be the fortunate one. Madam Grace has made prophecies for the Lancelot Empire for many years and she has not once let down His Majesty. Therefore, His Majesty believed that you will be his successor, and will bring prosperity to the empire. That was why he went all out in assisting you.”

When Lawrence heard Sabakas’s explanation, he looked at Han Shuo with a startled expression. It was only now that he realized that the reason he, an illegitimate child, had become the center of attention was due to Han Shuo’s assistance, instead of His Majesty suddenly thinking highly of him.

To Lawrence who only paid attention to the results, he was clearly somewhat astonished upon hearing Sabakas’ words. He stared blankly at Han Shuo for a long time before finally taking a deep breath and said wholeheartedly to Han Shuo, “So that’s what happened. Bryan, thank you!”

“Since we are friends, hehe, I will naturally assist you. Furthermore, only with you as the king would Lancelot Empire be more prosperous. I know your capabilities, and I truly believe that you would bring a new future to the Lancelot Empire.” Han Shuo said with a smile.

Lawrence gave a wry smile as he shook his head and said, “It seems that I still need to rely on you. If I were to hear those words from Sabakas before today, I would perhaps not take them seriously. However, after I witnessed your unstoppable demeanor just now, I can’t help but admire Madam Grace’s incredible vision.

Bryan, there truly is boundless potential within you. I still remember your strength when you were still a student in the necromancy major. At that time, you acted as my practice target for just a few gold coins, and I could even defeat you then. But now, how long has it been? In less than five years, you’re already standing on the pinnacle! Oh, and you are just over twenty years old. Your future is something that no one can predict!”

“I have to say that Madam Grace’s prophecy is expectedly accurate. Everything has currently developed according to her predictions. It looks like the Lancelot Empire would really enjoy hundred years of prosperity

thanks to Bryan's existence, just as Madam Grace predicted." Sacred swordmaster Karel also sighed as he remarked.

"It's hard to predict what will happen in the future. Hehe, the future won't always be the same, at least that's how I feel." Han Shuo said before he swiftly concealed his smile and said, "However, when His Majesty agreed to fully support us, he made me agree to one condition. I believe I should inform you now."

"Bryan, you're too polite. No matter what happens, we will still be friends! Moreover, there would be more occasions that I would need to rely on you in the future. There's no need to speak in a roundabout way between us." Lawrence replied.

From Sabakas and Karel's accounts, Lawrence also understood how important Han Shuo was to the Lancelot Empire. As someone who could alter the entire Lancelot Empire, his throne would be extremely stable and the Lancelot Empire would grow even more prosperous.

With Grace even sacrificing her life to show the path to the future, he clearly understood how he should treat Han Shuo, the huge support he should tightly cling onto.

"Alright then, I will just say it then. His Majesty made me to promise that no matter what happens, the other three princes must live!" Han Shuo looked at Lawrence and added, "As a father, His Majesty didn't wish to have three sons die horrifically by my hand. I've promised him, but I still want to respect your opinion."

"Your Highness, this was also what His Majesty said to us." Sabakas explained, his gaze fixed on Lawrence.

Lawrence stared blankly and was silent for a while before he creased his brows and said, "Since this is Father's last wish, I know what I should do. But I will still banish or imprison Charles. As for the other two, as long as they don't oppose me, I'll let them be princes and not treat them shabbily."

If it wasn't for Han Shuo, Sabakas, and Karel's words, Lawrence would definitely have ruthlessly exterminated Charles. Afterall, Charles caused

the greatest harm to him. Lawrence had actually thought of brutally killing Charles with his own hands, so as to make up for the humiliation he suffered previously.

However, now that Han Shuo and the two sacred rank experts had spoken, and it was also his father's dying wish, he must let Charles live on, regardless of whether he truly willing, he had to let Charles live. However, apart from letting him live, it wasn't clear if Lawrence would also humiliate Charles.

With Lawrence's guarantee, Han Shuo let out a sigh of relief. He then smiled and said, "Since you agreed, I can be at ease. Alright, Ossen City currently contains special energy I need for my training. I think I'll need at least three days to train. With the two sacred rank experts and Lord Firenze within Ossen City, I believe Ashburn and the others have already reached the end of the road and I can train at ease."

"Bryan, train well. Your strength will allow our Lancelot Empire to become stronger!" Lawrence immediately smiled and agreed.

He understood what it meant for an empire to have an expert who is unrestrained. The appearance of demigod Ayermike Cotton at that time had allowed the Lancelot Empire to be established and enjoy a golden age of a hundred years. If Han Shuo could achieve Ayermike Cotton's level, he too could bring Lancelot Empire to new heights.

"Alright, this clocktower will be my training group. You should get going with your own matters. Right, please tell Emily and the other ladies not to bother me as the next few days are very important to me!" Han Shuo smiled as he chased Lawrence and the others away.

After the three of them left, Han Shuo closed his eyes to sense the residual energy from the dead that enveloped the whole of Ossen City. With a pleased expression, he muttered to himself, "Whether I can break through to the next realm will depend on the next few days!"

# Chapter 430: Assimilation

The political struggle over Ossen City was still ongoing. Wherever there was war, there would definitely be deaths. Adding the number of casualties over the previous two days, there was perhaps already at least forty thousand soldiers who had died within the Ossen City.

The soaring killing intent enveloped the sky over Ossen City, causing people to feel stifled, as though a huge rock was pressing down on their chest. Some experts even felt that the omnipresent magic essence seemed to be affected by this energy.

Han Shuo stood on the clock tower of the castle, looking up at the blue dome of heaven. A massive vortex took shape once again, swallowing the fiendish energy omnipresent in Ossen City bit by bit. He Demonslayer Edge soared into the sky once more, forming a blood cloud that floated in the sky.

Han Shuo was much more prudent this time. The Demonslayer Edge's adsorption of negative energy was slowed down, causing the rate at which the blood cloud condensing energy to also slow down. The energy transformation within the Demonslayer Edge was more relaxed. Han Shuo was able to manipulate and first combine the hostile energy before transferring it into the sword hilt of the Demonslayer Edge.

Unknown if it was due to previously absorbing the black resolute crystal, the rate at which Han Shuo purified the killing intent had greatly increased. The dense killing intent was first swallowed by the giant vortex overhead, where impurities were removed by the rapidly rotating vortex. The purified enriched energy then flowed into Han Shuo's body through the stem of the vortex where the demonic yuan energy in his body would further refine it, finally forming the origin energy suitable for Han Shuo's demon infant to absorb. Through the two-stage purification process, less than one-tenth of the rich killing intent was absorbed by Han Shuo. However, as the casualties within the Ossen City were enormous, one-tenth of that enormous amount of energy still brought about astonishing benefits to Han Shuo.

Having entered demonhood the previous time, Han Shuo was extremely cautious this time, not anxious for quick success and also not rapacious. He adopted the most cautious method of absorbing a little at a time, to guard against entering the dreadful state of demonhood again.

Time passed by quietly. After a whole day, the sky above the castle had completely turned blood red. When the scorching sun shone, the castle looked as though it was coated with a layer of blood and a strong scent of blood lingered in the air.

An enormous black vortex filled with lightning revolved wildly within the thick blood-red cloud. Vicious killing intent was constantly discharged, causing people to quake in fear.

This scene lasted for three days. Some ordinary people within Ossen City felt the pressure on their chest suddenly disappearing. Experts who could sense magical essence also discovered that the indescribable energy within Ossen City was all flowing frantically towards the northern city district, and then disappearing rapidly.

The experts protecting Lawrence within the castle, suddenly realized that the two spectacles in the sky had gradually reduced in volume. The omnipresent rich smell of blood had become heavier. The blood cloud was no longer as red as blood and was distinctly thinner. After another two days, the blood cloud above the castle seemed to have been blown away, while the vortex above the clock tower had also unknowingly disappeared and the bright clear sky had reappeared above the northern city district. Warm sunlight shone on every corner of the northern city district, causing people to feel warm and comfortable.

Breathing out gently, Han Shuo slowly woke up from his meditative state. He could feel that his body was abundant with surging energy that which covered his meridians, bones, and even his skin and flesh. This caused Han Shuo to feel like he was about to explode. Han Shuo knew that the energy in the sky had all been absorbed into his body, and he had to undergo training in seclusion soon so as to completely control and merge the energy with his original energy, so as to be able to make another breakthrough.



The Demonslayer Edge landed silently on his hand, without any signs of vitality. However, Han Shuo could feel the frantic circulation of energy within it. The Demonslayer Edge had absorbed even more energy than Han Shuo and the energy was also more volatile. If it was to fully absorb the energy, it also needed a long period of time.

Therefore, both Han Shuo or the Demonslayer Edge needed some time to process the energy they absorbed, and the sooner the better.

After walking down from the clocktower, Han Show headed toward the lounge on the second floor where Emily, Fanny, and Phoebe were. Along the way, the twelve mystical demons presented the entire situation of Ossen City to Han Shuo.

As a few days had passed, the battle had ended in the four city districts of Ossen City as well as within the palace. Lawrence and his group of supporters had already moved temporarily into the imperial palace. Ashburn and Lawrence's mansions were in complete disorder, with clear traces of battle. "Bryan!" Fanny immediately shouted in surprise as soon as she saw Han Shuo coming over.

Emily was meditating to enhance her mental energy while Phoebe was practicing her martial arts. When they heard Fanny cry out in surprise, they immediately stopped whatever they were doing and rushed to the room where Fanny was, their eyes immediately focusing on Han Shuo.

"You bastard, I can't believe you took no part in such a critical moment and went to train. You are such an unreasonable fellow." Phoebe pouted as she grumbled.

"What's the current situation of Ossen City?" Han Shuo asked with a faint smile.

"The situation is determined. Grand Duke Ashburn was killed by sacred swordmaster Karel, while prince Charles is imprisoned for the time being. As for the other two princes, they banished any thoughts of vying over the throne when they saw that Lawrence's influence greatly exceeded theirs. Lawrence is currently busy picking up the pieces and trying to win people's hearts. I reckon that it won't be long before he formally succeeds

to the throne.” Emily explained to Han Shuo.

“Well, it seems that the civil strife within Lancelot Empire should be already considered over?” Han Shuo said with a smile.

Nodding her head, Emily continued, “There’s indeed nothing much to worried about. Now that the whole of Ossen City is under Lawrence’s control, and he has command over so much military strength; with eldest prince imprisoned, no one within the Lancelot Empire could threaten Lawrence’s throne.”

“Since that was the case, I feel reassured.” Han Shuo remarked with a smile. Shortly after, he smiled bitterly as he looked at the three ladies and said with some difficulty, “However, I reckon that I will need a long period of time to train. It seems that I will have to temporarily part with all of you again.”

“You bastard. You have just returned and are already thinking of leaving? You heartless fellow, don’t you know that we will be concerned about you?” When Phoebe heard that Han Shuo was going to leave again, her expression was filled with grief as she shouted to her unwillingness.

When Emily and Fanny heard that Han Shuo was going to train again and needed a long period of time, they also panicked, their eyes focused on Han Shuo, showing their reluctance to part with him.

“I’ve no other choice. I must immediately seclude myself to refine that energy. Otherwise, it might affect my current state and might even cause me to enter demonhood again.” Han Shuo smiled bitterly as he explained.

“How long would you need for your training this time?” Emily’s brows were creased as she inquired.

“I’m not certain. If it’s fast, it will be about a year. If it’s slow, it might take two to three years. Sigh, training my martial technique in seclusion is really a very time-consuming matter. I also can’t estimate how long I’ll take.” Han Shuo sighed as he replied.

When they heard that the fastest would be about a year, the ladies’ hearts were in disorder. The worry and grief in their gazes became even

more prominent.

“Bryan, there’s something that I need to discuss with you alone.” Phoebe pouted her lips and said angrily to Han Shuo. However, after she finished speaking, Phoebe suddenly blushed. At first, Emily also had something to say. But when she heard Phoebe suddenly say the same words she wanted to say, she couldn’t help but look flabbergasted at Phoebe. When she saw Phoebe’s blushing face, she immediately thought of something. She secretly cursed in her heart as her face turned red as well.

Han Shuo stared blankly at first, but when he saw the blush on Phoebe’s face, he suddenly came to a revelation, chuckling as he said, “Alright. I’ll have a chat with you first. After that, I’ll look for Emily to have a chat.”

When she heard Han Shuo chuckling, Phoebe knew that he had realized something. She clenched her teeth resolutely as she glared at Han Shuo before heading directly to her room without saying another word.

“Just a few words with Phoebe!” Han Shuo said hurriedly as he walked swiftly toward Phoebe’s room, leaving behind a blushing Emily and a puzzled Fanny.

“Sister Emily, what do they have to talk about? Why do they need to talk in private?” The puzzled Fanny asked Emily.

“Hehe, they obviously need to talk about some intimate stuff. Hehe, I wonder how long Phoebe the little hussy would last.” Emily smiled licentiously as she replied amusedly while winking at Fanny.

Fanny was startled for a moment, but she suddenly heard Phoebe’s soft gasping noises. She immediately came to her senses, her face flushed red and the flush was rapidly spreading toward her neck.

“Pah!” Fanny cursed lightly.

“Heehee, I think sister Fanny should be aware of what they are talking about now? Hehe, sister Fanny, could it be that Bryan the little lecher had yet to eat you up? Why do you still seem so shy?” Fanny giggled as she teased Fanny, looking exceedingly cheerful.

“Sister Emily, you, you are really...” Fanny was extremely bashful,

stamping her foot and walking to her room with her head down without completing her sentence.

The apartment was rather spacious. Apart from the wide living room, there were five to six other rooms. Boris had specially arranged for them to stay here so that it was easy for the three ladies to talk to each other.

When Emily saw Fanny blushing as she retreated to her room, her smile grew even wider. As Emily and Fanny were both magi and the three rooms were extremely close to each other, she would naturally be able to hear certain sounds. With Fanny's departure, only Emily was left in the living room.

As soft moans echoed in Emily's ears, Emily's heartbeat had unknowingly sped up all of a sudden. Her body had heated unexplainably and was hard to tolerate. Emily covertly surveyed her surroundings before blushing as she tiptoed toward the room Phoebe and Han Shuo were in. She then gently stuck her ear on the door to listen to the sounds within the room.

"Ohh..." Phoebe moaned sweetly, her voice trembling, as though she was weeping and sobbing.

Han Shuo had finally stripped Phoebe naked, his large hands wandering over her smooth skin. His every stroke caused Phoebe to moan uncontrollably. Under Han Shuo's caress, Phoebe's fair white skin seemed to gradually become somewhat rosy.

Under the mood of imminent separation, Phoebe's almond eyes were unfocused, her body expressing the joy and excitement in her heart as Han Shuo teased her body. Lost in his fondling, Phoebe gasped as she took off Han Shuo's clothes. Not knowing if she was too excited or her mind was somewhat fuzzy, she was rougher than usual when she took off his clothes, even forcibly ripping apart his shirt.

As Han Shuo had also been holding back for a while, his breathing was rough as he suddenly pressed down on Phoebe, without even thinking of deploying a sound-proofing barrier.

"AH!" Phoebe shrieked, her hands suddenly pushing against Han Shuo's

chest, and her eyes became clear again.

Phoebe's scream was really a bit too loud. Even Fanny who was some distance away could hear it clearly. In her room, Fanny lowly scolded Phoebe for having no shame.

Emily who was outside eavesdropping was stunned. She had deliberately concentrated on her ear to eavesdrop and the scream caused her ear to feel somewhat painful. "You little hoof, why did you have to scream so loudly! You almost killed me!" Emily held her left ear as she secretly cursed Phoebe in her heart.

"What's wrong?" Han Shuo, who was about to mount her, looked at Phoebe with a stunned expression as he asked.

"You almost crushed me! Why are you suddenly so heavy. Luckily, I train in fighting aura and am a great swordmaster. If you were to press down on an ordinary woman, she would be immediately crushed to death!" Phoebe's face was extremely red, lowering her voice as she replied resentfully

Han Shuo stared blankly for a moment but came to his senses soon after. After he previously consumed the black resolute crystal, his weight had suddenly increased by ten folds. No wonder Phoebe would cry out in surprise.

Luckily, Phoebe was the first. If it was Emily or Fanny, an accident might have happened. Han Shuo inwardly rejoiced, hurriedly reminding himself to be careful next time. He then grinned wickedly as he pounced on Phoebe again. This time, he used a hand to prop himself up.

Han Shuo, who originally intended to start pounding Phoebe, suddenly had an idea and sat up swiftly. He then forcefully embraced Phoebe's perfect naked body and placed her on his thigh while she screamed.

This way, Han Shuo would be in a seated position while Phoebe's legs would be wrapped around his waist, her butt resting on Han Shuo's thighs.

"Scoundrel, you, you big pervert, I'm so embarrassed! Let go of me!" Phoebe felt Han Shuo's raised appendage on her butt, reproaching him in

embarrassment.

“Hehe, we’ll just change our position then!” Han Shuo grinned contently, his big hands caressing Phoebe’s butt while ignoring Phoebe’s struggles.

# Chapter 431: My name is Han Hao

As Emily listened to the gasping sounds coming from within the room, her body had unconsciously become hotter and weaker. She had also started to breathe irregularly.

With Han Shuo's stimulation, Phoebe reached the peak of pleasure extremely quickly, her body was weak and she felt as though she was floating. In a despondent state, she was in a shameful position for a long time, her moans gradually growing louder.

Just like Emily, Fanny who was a distance away in her own room could hear the faintest gasp. This caused her heart to be in sixes and sevens, scenes of her intimate moments with Han Shuo constantly appearing in her mind. When Fanny thought of what Phoebe and Han Shuo were currently doing, she felt pained and jealous.

This feeling interwoven with an indescribable feeling of anticipation caused her heart to be in utter chaos. She had no idea what was happening and was unable to calm down, her body and face becoming boiling hot.

The moaning continued for a while, with a loud moan coming to an end together with a grunting sound. Emily, whose legs were weak as she pressed her ear against the door, suddenly bumped into the door as her body relaxed. The door was unexpectedly not tightly locked and the staggering Emily ended up landing on her butt within the room.

Emily's face was very red, her erect twin peaks swayed as she gasped for breath. Her eyes were filled with expectation for amorous feelings. Emily was in a daze as she looked at Han Shuo's naked, imposing and devilish figure.

At that moment, Han Shuo had just laid down a limp and unconscious Phoebe. His lustful eyes landed on Emily who suddenly broke into the room. Han Shuo had detected her movement long ago and knew that Emily had been eavesdropping for a long time.

Han Shuo, who had yet to fully release his pent-up lust, suddenly

growled and charged toward Emily like a bolt of lightning, lifting the limp Emily and pressing her against the wall, his hands impatiently ripped apart Emily's clothes. Emily who was already unable to hold back her desires gasped as she cooperated with Han Shuo, hastily taking off her ripped clothes. When Fanny heard Emily's moan, she began to curse all three of them, shocked by their behavior.

After a long while, Han Shuo draped a long robe over his shoulders and walked over to Fanny's room. The blushing Fanny had been secretly listening to the activities from afar. When she heard the heavy footsteps gradually approaching, her heart became extremely flustered, her heart beating so quickly she could even feel it clearly.

When Han Shuo finally reached her room, Fanny suddenly lost her head and stood up hastily. Her face was red as she looked at Han Shuo as she stammered, "What, what, what are you doing?"

"What do you think?" Han Shuo smiled gently as he gazed at Fanny as he walked toward her.

When Fanny saw Han Shuo approaching her, she retreated in fear. When she had no more space to retreat, she pushed Han Shuo away, pinching her nose and said, "You, you bastard. You didn't even clean yourself up before coming to find me. I will not let you have your way today. Who asked you to still have someone else's scent on your body. There's no way I can stand that."

Fanny, who had never experienced such a situation, naturally wouldn't be as open as Emily or Phoebe who had been nourished by Han Shuo for a long time. She clearly couldn't accept Han Shuo being intimate with herself after just making love with other women.

As Han Shuo looked at the somewhat frenetic Fanny, he knew that Fanny really couldn't accept it. After thinking of a while, Han Shuo had no choice but to drop his original intentions. Fanny helped him wash off all the sweat and nasty filth on his body in her bath. He then embraced Fanny tenderly, speaking words of love for a long time. He didn't forcefully violate Fanny in spite of her feelings.



After spending a night, Han Shuo left the castle of the northern city district alone without even bidding the ladies farewell and headed toward the transportation array in Ossen City.

As a long time had passed, the transportation arrays that were sealed by space sacred magus Sabakas had once again operated as per normal.

After the previous civil strife, Han Shuo's status in the Lancelot Empire was raised even further. If not for Han Shuo training and absorbing energy for the last few days, Lawrence would have already bestowed a higher title to Han Shuo.

However, even though Han Shuo had disappeared for a few days, many bigwigs in Ossen City had learned of Han Shuo's astonishing actions during the civil strife through various means. In particular, the news of him single-handedly forcing two sacred rank experts to retreat, and even seriously injured sacred knight Blount, had spread across the entire Lancelot Empire.

Han Shuo's name has unwittingly resonated throughout the Lancelot Empire and had even faintly surpassed that of sacred swordmaster Karel and space sacred magus Sabakas, becoming the number one expert of the Lancelot Empire.

Thus, when Han Shuo arrived at the transportation array, the gazes of the guards were filled with admiration and excited when they saw Han Shuo appear.

"Marquis Bryan! It's Lord Marquis Bryan!"

"Ah! It really is Lord Marquis! Ha, I met Lord Marquis!"

"Lord, are you here to use the transportation array?"

The soldiers that guarded the transportation array were all incredibly passionate as they respectfully asked Han Shuo. When some merchants who had come from afar, heard the guards' surprise, they suddenly became ineffably excited and also began to rush over, wanting to catch a glimpse of Han Shuo.

When he saw the crowd rushing toward him like the tide, Han Shuo

hastily replied, "I'd like to use the transportation array to head to Seamist City. Please make the adjustments for me."

"No problem, this way please my lord. I will immediately assist you in operating the array." The head guard replied respectfully, bowing as he earnestly requested for Han Shuo to enter the transportation array.

Han Shuo suddenly realized that since the battle a few days ago, his status within the Lancelot Empire had reached new heights. Just from the gazes of these soldiers and merchants, Han Shuo could tell how much they revered him. He didn't dare to stay a moment longer, hurriedly standing on the transportation array. Under the head guard's activation, the transportation array began to gather the energy within the magic crystals. With a flash of light, Han Shuo had already appeared in Seamist City.

As soon as he entered Seamist City, Han Shuo immediately established a link with an aura. Han Shuo instantly realized that the elite metal zombie has been successfully refined.

Awesome, the five element zombies have finally been assembled! Han Shuo was pleasantly surprised, no longer dallying in Seamist City and instead went to a remote corner and immediately used the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to fly, streaking across the vast sky like a bolt of lightning and flew rapidly toward Brettel City.

It has been a few months since he had visited Mount Silk. Han Shuo discovered that the scale of the armaments workshop was five to six times larger than the previous time he was here. The armaments workshop occupied more than half of Mount Silk, with thousands of weaponsmiths in a frenzy as they forged armors.

The area around Brettel City was rich in ores. Originally, no one was willing to stay here because Brettel City was constantly at war. That was why there weren't any armaments workshops or processing workshops being established. Even the armaments used by the city guard had to be acquired from other cities.

The current Brettel City has experienced a few large and small battles, becoming an iron bastion-like stronghold. Anyone who wanted to attacked

Brettel City had to think twice about whether they had the ability. Once safety was ensured, as Brettel City was rich in resources and manpower, the establishments of armament workshops would follow naturally. After landing on Mount Silk, Han Shuo scanned the mountain through his mystical demons, viewing the scale of operations of the armament workshop on Mount Silk. He nodded inwardly, knowing that with this armament workshop, the soldiers in Brettel City no longer had to worry about armor.

Without informing Adleman, Han Shuo entered the mine alone, casually strolling straight into the depths of the mine. When he reached the area where he previously met the stone men, he saw that a few large wooden signs were erected, with the words “No one is allowed to penetrate deeper to mine” written in large font.

It seems like Adleman and the others had remembered Han Shuo’s instructions by heart. They had forbidden anyone to disturb the area surrounding the place of extreme metal and instead send people every once in a while to collect the ore placed by the stone men as Han Shuo instructed. This way, it didn’t harm the harmonious relationship and benefitted both sides.

When Han Shuo entered the place of extreme metal, the first thing that entered his eyes was the golden rays of light from the sparking golden pillar. The elite metal zombie constantly transmitted messages to Han Shuo while some of the spirits which were training within the place of extreme metal fluttered around Han Shuo, narrating the situation during the time he was away.

“Alright, I got it. No one will come here and touch this place. You can still train here in the future but you still got to do some things for me.” Han Shuo said to those spirits.

“We are very willing to serve you!” the spirits replied Han Shuo.

Without replying further, Han Shuo directly went to the area where the elite metal zombie was. Same as the previous occasions, Han Shuo removed the array that was converging the metal essence energy and

released the elite metal zombie.

As dazzling golden light filled the area, the elite metal zombie who wore a golden armor appeared. The elite metal zombie who was set free suddenly arrived before the huge golden pillar, pressing both hands onto the golden pillar. Two sources of energy of common origin suddenly converged together.

As Han Shuo watched attentively, the golden pillar that extended to the sky began to shrink bit by bit until it became a short golden rod which the elite metal zombie caught and started to brandish.

Han Shuo was stunned. Only now was he certain that the metal attribute treasure that has been nurtured for countless millions of years was indeed the same as the weapon of a mystical character in his world. It was a golden cudgel that could change size at will and had the weight of a mountain.

The elite metal zombie held the golden cudgel in its hand. As the elite metal zombie was refined with pure metal essence energy, the energy in its body made it compatible to control the golden cudgel. Apart from the elite metal zombie, even the current Han Shuo would find it extremely strenuous to wield the golden cudgel and simply be unable to display the true might of the cudgel.

As the elite metal zombie wielded the metal attribute treasure effortlessly, it was filled with excitement. As it had just evolved into the elite metal zombie, it didn't have a very high intelligence. It could only express his joy of being reborn repetitively to Han Shuo.

"Alright, stop playing around. You can only grow faster if you go to that place!" Han Shuo chuckled as he remarked, chanting an incantation to summon the little skeleton from the netherworld.

When little skeleton appeared from the other dimension and saw the glistening elite metal zombie, his Purple Demon Eye sparkled. He sent Han Shuo a message, "Thank you, father! We now have another brother!"

"Hehe, bring him back with you." Han Shuo said with a smile.

“Father, why does Little Metal and Little Fire both have weapons but Little Earth, Little Wood, and Little Water doesn’t?” The little skeleton didn’t leave immediately as Han Shuo intended, and instead looked at the golden cudgel on the elite metal zombie’s hand and inquired.

Little Earth, Little Wood, Little Water, Little Metal, and Little Fire? Han Shuo stared blankly for a moment but regained his senses shortly after. “It seemed that the little skeleton had given them names. Not bad. Since they possess intelligence, they were no longer simply undead creatures and should have their own names.” Han Shuo thought in his heart.

“The places of extreme fire and extreme metal have existed for way longer than the other three places of extreme elements. After millions of years, they naturally nurtured fire and metal attribute treasures. The other three places of extreme elements have only existed for ten thousand years, hence they have yet to reach the conditions to nurture treasures.” Han Shuo explained to the little skeleton.

“In that case, couldn’t there be other places that could nurture such weapons? I can sense that the weapons Little Fire and Little Metal have seemed as though they were forged specifically for them and their strength is greatly increased by those weapons. I want to find such weapons for Little Water, Little Earth, and Little Wood!” The little skeleton transmitted.

Han Shuo trembled when he heard what the little skeleton said and he immediately came to his senses. That’s right, the Profound Continent is so huge. There might be other places of the five elements. Perhaps those places might be able to nurture earth, water, and wood attribute treasures! Han Shuo thought inwardly, becoming more optimistic after he was reminded by the little skeleton.

“Thanks for the reminder, I will keep that in mind!” Han Shuo smiled as he said to the little skeleton. He then began chanting an incantation, preparing to send the little skeleton and the elite metal zombie back to the netherworld.

Just as the little skeleton and earth elite zombie were about to disappear,

the little skeleton transmitted a message, “Father, I chose a name for myself. My name is Han Hao!”

# Chapter 432: Gaining another mystical skill

After the elite metal zomple and the little skeleton were sent back to the netherworld, Han Shuo immediately left Mount Silk and returned to Brettel City.

This time when he returned to Brettel City, Han Shuo did not say much nor did he find out more about Brettel City's situation. He only went to look for a few people in charge and talked with them for a while, explaining that he was about to train for a period of time.

While Han Shuo wasn't around, Jack and the others had managed Brettel City excellently. Brettel City grew more prosperous with each passing day and everything was developing smoothly. After the twelve mystical demons surveyed the situation, Han Shuo understood that he simply didn't need to not worry about the situation in Brettel City.

Now that Lawrence was on the verge of gaining authority over Lancelot Empire, Han Shuo believed that given his relationship with Lawrence, Lawrence definitely wouldn't treat Han Shuo's subordinates in Brettel City shabbily. Han Shuo knew his importance to Lawrence from Sabakas and Karel's words. This was precisely why he would feel at ease to train in seclusion.

Once he ensured everything was in place, Han Shuo entered the secret room within his mansion in Brettel City and used the teleportation array to go to the Cemetery of Death.

The Cemetery of Death was filled with dense deathly aura throughout the year and was as dark and dusky as before. Han Shuo headed directly to the location where he had buried the elite earth zombie and discovered that under the nourishment from the place of extreme earth, the concaved chest of the elite earth zombie no longer looked that unsightly. It seemed that the place of extreme earth, which had nurtured the elite earth zombie, was indeed extremely effective in healing its injuries.

As soon as he entered the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo immediately connected with dark dragon Gilbert. From Gilbert's calm messages, it seemed that there currently shouldn't be any situation within the Valley of Sunshine that Gilbert couldn't handle. Hence, Han Shuo told Gilbert that he would be spending a long time to train.

Han Shuo was currently in the separate demon realm of the nine levels of demonic magic. Whether he could break into the carnal realm would depend on whether he could assimilate the enormous amount of energy within his body and if he could comprehend the frame of mind needed for the carnal realm.

As demonic practitioners paid more attention to forging the physical body, their lifespan was much longer than swordsmen and magi of this world. Even for Han Shuo who was in the separate demon realm, as long as he wasn't killed or suffered from cultivation deviation, he could easily live for a few hundred years.

Perhaps it was precisely because time was of abundance to demonic practitioners, that they would spend a lot of time during each seclusion. The duration of seclusion differed based on one's realm. Demonic practitioners of higher realms would require longer periods of time of training in seclusion.

Han Shuo had planned to stay in seclusion for an extended duration this time. After he had arranged all worldly matters properly, he then truly entered the so-called state of seclusion by demonic practitioners.

He sat cross-legged on the ground covered with white bones within the Cemetery of Death. Han Shuo settled his mind down, dispelling the miscellaneous thoughts from his brain. He could feel the frightening killing intent that filled every part of his body, rapidly revolving the demonic yuan energy within his body and directing the enormous amount of energy within his body toward the demon infant.

This was a process that used quite a lot of time and energy. Fortunately, Han Shuo had an astonishing endurance and would persevere once he set his mind on something. From the moment Han Shuo sat cross-legged on



the ground, he no longer moved, simply focused on the thought of completely assimilating the enormous killing intent within his body, entering the deepest layer of meditation.

The Cemetery of Death was indeed a good location for training. With the existence of the barrier, there was simply no one who could discover its existence. As there was no other person within the Cemetery of Death, it was absolutely silent, which was extremely suitable for a demonic practitioner like Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo began to train without any stray thoughts, time already had no meaning to him. Han Shuo's consciousness gradually became empty, without any thoughts. It was to the extent that he even forgot his own existence, as though everything had stilled, including his own consciousness.

A demonic practitioner had two types of entering demonhood, classified as active and passive. The active form of entering demonhood was like what happened a few days ago, where the demonic practitioner would sink into a crazed massacre. During that period, the demonic practitioner's heart would only contain the primal desire to kill ruthlessly, possessing the madness to destroy everything. The demonic practitioner in that state would have absolutely no idea what he or she was doing, and also not be able to feel pain. One's strength would indeed be more frightening than usual.

However, this active form of demonhood was extremely dangerous for a demonic practitioner. With a single slip, the demonic practitioner would permanently fall into demonhood, never regaining his consciousness and becoming the purest killing machine.

Previously when Han Shuo entered that state, he had a brief moment of soberness prior to entering demonhood. Due to the hatred buried deep in his heart, he had identified sacred knight Blount as his target. Furthermore, the previous time Han Shuo entered demonhood was purely due to him being unable to control the energy within the Demonslayer Edge while attending to the killing intent within his body at the same time.

When the energy that caused Han Shuo to enter demonhood was released through Han Shuo's crazed attacks, the energy that didn't originate from Han Shuo's body disappeared permanently, allowing Han Shuo to gradually regain his consciousness.

If the previous time he entered demonhood wasn't caused by external energy, but was instead due to some kind of stimulation which caused his consciousness to enter demonhood and the demon infant to have the intention of slaughter, he wouldn't have been able to recover so easily.

In contrast to the harmful active demonhood, the passive type of demonhood was a state that demonic practitioners were most willing to enter. The self-forgetting state of demonhood would allow a demonic practitioner to not have any stray thoughts and was extremely beneficial to a demonic practitioner's training.

However, this type of demonhood was extremely hard to enter. Some demonic practitioner would never enter such a state in their entire life while other innately talented demonic practitioners would enter it many times at fortuitous moments. These people would usually become formidable characters of the demonic path. They were extremely skillful, had high perseverance and possessed great knowledge.

In Han Shuo's case, this wasn't the first time he entered demonhood. For an unknown reason, he had once again entered this mysterious state. It was as though the whole world including himself had been discarded from his mind, leaving his consciousness totally empty.

Han Shuo no longer had any concept of time. He just sat cross-legged in the Cemetery of Death in a selfless state, while a snake-like strand of black electricity circled across his body as a frightening aura emanated from his body.

Thick blood-red fog flowed out from his pores and curled around Han Shuo. The fog was then inhaled by Han Shuo through his nose into his body, forming a cycle.

After an unknown amount of time, Han Shuo was awakened by a wave of crisp pitter-patter noises. When he came to his senses, he suddenly felt

that the demon infant in his body had become a vortex, continuously revolving at high speed, releasing strands of energy into his limbs, bones, and meridians.

The energy filled every corner of Han Shuo's body, further refining his already otherworldly strong body. Strands of energy surged within Han Shuo's body and a familiar tearing pain appeared once again, as though countless daggers had stabbed his body.

As one's demonic arts improved, one's body would be tempered repeatedly by the sudden rise in demonic yuan energy, so as to allow one's body to adapt to the circulation of the qualitatively changed demonic yuan energy, causing one's body to reach the same realm as one's cultivation.

Having experienced this a few times previously, Han Shuo was already used to the pain from strengthening his physical body. When the energy released by the demon infant seeped into Han Shuo's limbs and bones, he could even sense that his bones were the first to react. His bones that have been refined by black resolute crystal and was now tempered by the energy from the demon infant seemed to suddenly change peculiarly. This originally iron-like bones seemed to have incited something strange when the strands of energy from the demon infant had seeped into them. With a thought, Han Shuo suddenly flung out his left hand. In accordance with his thoughts, his left hand unexpectedly lengthened by ten centimeters.

Han Shuo was stunned. Shortly after, he punched and kicked toward the sky. Han Shuo discovered that he could actually lengthen part of the bones in his limbs with his thoughts. His iron-like bones had gained a mystical flexibility.

What was particularly surprising to Han Shuo was that he could actually control the lengthening and shortening of his bones!

In other words, whenever Han Shuo threw a punch, his arms could suddenly stretch if he wanted to. If he was in close combat, such a miraculous ability to stretch his arms and legs would definitely catch his opponent off guard to great effect, causing his opponent to be unable to defend effectively.

Moreover, Han Shuo could faintly feel that ten centimeters weren't the limit. It seems that with practice and a further increase in his strength, it could improve further. Han Shuo was ineffably appalled when he thought about what this meant. Such a mystical ability was simply something no human could possibly achieve.

There didn't seem to be such a mystical ability within Chu Cang Lan's memories. A demonic practitioner's physical body could be very powerful and unnatural. At its most powerful state, even severed arms could be regrown. However, there was no knowledge of an ability where the limbs could be so flexible they could lengthen and shorten.

Han Shuo carefully thought for a moment and understood that this was perhaps because the little skeleton's black resolute crystal and the demonic magic's tempering had caused a mutation. He thought inwardly, every demonic art was created by man and wasn't always the same and instead evolved with training.

Other than his bones becoming flexible, Han Shuo's inner organs, as well as his flesh, was further strengthened. His meridian channels, in particular, had expanded by a shocking amount after being tempered this time around. The circulation speed of his demonic yuan energy was much faster than it used to be.

After examining his body with his consciousness, Han Shuo discovered that although his physical body had been strengthened, he still seemed to be a step away from the next realm and had not reached the carnal realm. However, Han Shuo could feel that he was extremely close to the next realm. As long as he had a moment of enlightenment, Han Shuo would immediately enter the carnal realm.

However, the practice of demonic magic was as such, where each realm was extremely profound. Comprehension could not be forced. The strength of Han Shuo's body was sufficient, and his demonic yuan energy was also enough for him to break through to the next realm. As long as Han Shuo could comprehend the carnal realm, the demon infant will immediately mutate, and his consciousness will advance to the carnal realm.

Han Shuo gently exhaled, smiling bitterly as he sat down cross-legged again. He carefully went through Chu Cang Lan's remnant memories. Unfortunately, even though Chu Cang Lan's memories was complex, it didn't contain definitive information about the comprehending the carnal realm.

Han Shuo realized that he would still have to depend on his own comprehension. Everything was ready and it all depended on his understanding of the next realm of demonic magic.

"Father, I've already recovered completely!" When Han Shuo was pondering silently, he suddenly received a message from the elite earth zombie.

Han Shuo was startled for a moment but came to his senses soon afterward. He turned around and realized that the naive elite earth zombie had left the place of extreme earth and was looking at Han Shuo from a short distance away.

The originally dented area on the elite earth zombie's chest had returned to normal. It looks as if the elite earth zombie had indeed fully recovered.

"Very good, you've finally recovered. Next time, we will kill that bastard. I promise!" Han Shuo looked at the elite earth zombie and said solemnly.

"I know, Father has grown even stronger now." The elite earth zombie transmitted.

"Alright then, I'll send you back first. I'll spend some time to research on a method to freely enter and exit your world. I think that soon after you return, I will be able to meet you all in your world." Han Shuo smiled as he looked at the elite earth zombie and said.

"Ok, I miss my brothers as well. Father, please hurry and enter our world. There are many interesting things in our world too." The elite earth zombie transmitted.

"Yes, I know!" Han Shuo replied and then sent the elite earth zombie back to the netherworld.

After sending the elite earth zombie away, Han Shuo didn't continue

pondering the issue of the carnal realm and instead started to examine how to utilize the skeleton staff to freely enter and exit the netherworld.

A serene luster gem and a black resolute crystal had separately been extremely beneficial to Han Shuo's mental strength and physical body. Such beneficial items that only existed in the netherworld had aroused his interest. It also caused Han Shuo to understand that the netherworld filled with undead creatures, there was similarly many unusual treasures.

Most importantly, the little skeleton and the others were in the netherworld. The little skeleton had even named itself Han Hao, indicating that the little skeleton's intelligence was becoming higher. Other than his skeletal figure, he was already the same as other highly intelligent lifeforms, possessing his own consciousness and could think clearly and make his own decisions.

Han Shuo was extremely concerned and also extremely curious about the little skeleton and the others. Only by gaining the ability to freely enter and exit the netherworld with his soul, could Han Shuo gain a greater understanding of them and even help the little skeleton and the others to advance faster.

# Chapter 433: Undead Creature in the Dead Sea

Practicing necromancy was similarly quite exhausting. However, Han Shuo was able to grasp the spell pertaining to letting his soul freely travel to and from the netherworld rather quickly.

Perhaps it was because Han Shuo had already experienced entering the netherworld twice and also had detailed descriptions on how to use the skeletal staff to travel to and from the netherworld, Han Shuo took less than half a month to grasp the spell which allowed one's soul to cross into the netherworld.

During this half a month, the little skeleton, elite earth zombie, and the others could often sense Han Shuo's presence in the netherworld. However, as Han Shuo still couldn't master a precise location, he would often find himself extremely far from the little skeleton and the others.

Every time Han Shuo entered the netherworld, he could immediately sense the messages the little skeleton and the others were transmitting to him. As the auras of the little skeleton and the others grew increasingly stronger and clearer, Han Shuo could feel their pressing thoughts to meet him. However, Han Shuo, who was constantly studying the necromancy magic meticulously, wasn't in a hurry to reach the area where the little skeleton and the others were.

It was until a long time had passed that Han Shuo truly mastered the method of shuttling his soul to the netherworld. With necromancy spells and the assistance from the skeletal staff, Han Shuo could descend into the netherworld with a single thought and could rapidly return to the Profound Continent from the lifeless netherworld by sensing his physical body.

After mastering the necromancy spell, Han Shuo spent a few more days to research on how to accurately arrive at their location by utilizing his connection with the little skeleton and the others.

The bodies of the little skeleton and the others were marked not just by Han Shuo's blood essence, they were also marked by dark seals. Whenever Han Shuo entered the netherworld, he could clearly feel the existence of the little skeleton and the others. After numerous adjustments to the skeletal staff and spell based on this connection, Han Shuo was finally able to succeed in arriving beside the little skeleton a few days later.

"Father!" the little skeleton said gently when Han Shuo landed beside him.

The little skeleton, fire elite zombie, and water elite zombie were on top of the bald mountain. And behind the little skeleton stood an army of densely packed undead creatures. These creatures included the three evil knights, the bone demon, and the mummy lord Pharaoh. Even more hate warriors, zombie warriors, and skeletal warriors filled the bald mountain.

Under the dusky grey sky, hundreds and thousands of gargoyles flew around in every direction. It seemed like they too were part of the little skeleton's undead army.

Looking ahead, a vast, black sea could be seen below the bald mountain and it stretched all the way into the horizon. Within this lifeless and pitch-black black sea, there were numerous severed limbs and bones floating on the surface. It was just like another cemetery for the undead creatures and was full of dense deathly aura.

Several enormous auras hid within the vast black sea, as though they were secretly observing everything. Han Shuo could sense just how terrifying those few existences were. When he looked at the little skeleton and the others who were ready and waiting, Han Shuo suddenly realized what was going on.

It seems that the little skeleton had ill intentions when he led his undead army over to this location.

"Father, you can reach us accurately now?" When the little skeleton saw that Han Shuo only glanced around after landing beside the little skeleton, the little skeleton couldn't help but repeated his question again.

Many sounds of breaking and snapping were heard. Under the



manipulation of Han Shuo's consciousness, several bones were forcibly removed from the bodies of around ten skeleton warriors. He then manipulated a dense deathly aura to rapidly strengthen these bones, making them tougher. In just a short while, Han Shuo had forged a white skeletal body.

"When I leave, I'll return all the bones I took from their bodies." Han Shuo said to the little skeleton.

"They should be honored to have their bones used by Father. These low-rank skeletal warriors will only obey commands and don't have much intelligence. Their bones are not that tough. If Father wants a good skeleton body, I can help you find some better bones," the little skeleton said to Han Shuo.

"There's no need for that. Once I figure out the mysteries behind the transportation matrix in the Cemetery of Death, my real body will be able to enter this world. By then, my physical body will be in the Netherworld and no other bones will be more suitable for me." Han Shuo explained to the little skeleton.

"That's right. Father's physical body is extremely strong. Even a bone dragon's bone, the strongest bone in this world, is not as durable as Father's bones." The little skeleton nodded in agreement.

Howl... While Han Shuo and the little skeleton were chatting, a terrifying howl suddenly sounded from within the boundless Black Sea before them, as though a terrifying undead creature was issuing a challenge to the little skeleton.

The little skeleton's Purple Demon Eye suddenly shot out a ray of dazzling purple light. The purple ray appeared solid, piercing through space and actually flew directly towards the direction of the howling. It carried an extremely frosty and ruthless aura.

Boom! Boom!

Suddenly, a series of explosions could be heard coming from the origin of the howling. The deathly stillness of the black sea water suddenly looked as though it was boiling, with a few dark pillars abruptly shooting

up towards the sky.

A hideous, octopus-like creature with a colossal body and sharp bone spurs grown on its tentacles, floated to the surface, revealing more than half of its body. It looked up and said angrily, "Petty existence, you dare to challenge my might?! Do you think you can defeat me today?"

Following the octopus-like creature's emergence, countless grotesquely shaped creatures slowly appeared. These undead creatures looked very similar to other commonly seen undead creatures. It's just that perhaps because they had been under the black sea for too long, they don't look the same as ordinary undead creatures.

The creatures that appeared included skeletal warriors, zombie warriors, hate warriors, and even powerful high-rank creatures like evil knights. However, these creatures had fins on their body, appearing extremely strange. There were also undead creatures which looked totally different from those which Han Shuo was familiar with. They had obviously evolved from some species of fishes found on the Profound Continent, and also possessed an ugly figure.

"Tumoja, the vast area of the eastern dead sea will also be my territory. If you pledge allegiance to me, I shall let you live!" the little skeleton said loftily to the weird looking undead creature, Tumoja as he rode on his bone demon which had the ability to fly.

"Ha, you shameless skeleton. You have lost to me time and time again. With your strength, are you worthy of my service?" Tumoja sneered, not fearing the little skeleton.

"It seems that you are seeking death!" the little skeleton shouted and guiding the bone demon he was riding to fly toward that area.

The elite water zombie who had been standing still took the lead and dashed towards the Black Sea. Before it was even reached the sea, the elite water zombie began to display its remarkable ability. Under the manipulation of its power, the seawater suddenly split apart before him and miraculously formed a passageway directly to the seafloor.

The undead army brought along by the little skeleton were currently

advancing with the elite fire zombie towards the exposed seafloor where the elite water zombie stood. Strands of bizarre energy formed naturally around the elite water zombie as the surging black seawater surged continuously, crushing many creatures within the seawater.

When the enormous army from the bald mountain reached his side, the water elite zombie took the lead and headed straight toward the depths of the black sea. Under the elite water zombie's control, the surging black waves split open voluntarily, forming a path which they could walk through.

"Tumoja, do you see that? My brother can manipulate the water of your Dead Sea. You are no longer able to rule this region. But as long as you pledge your allegiance to me, you will still be the hegemon of this dead sea. Otherwise, if you force me to act, I'll make you pay," the little skeleton rode on his bone demon, flying high above the elite water zombie as he showed disdain for Tumoja, urging it to surrender.

While the little skeleton flew towards the sea, Han Shuo had also got on the little skeleton's bone demon. As he looked at the towering little skeleton, who was advising the undead creature beneath to surrender, he suddenly realized that the little skeleton had indeed evolved to become more and more human-like.

In the past, the little skeleton wouldn't be so talkative, simply using pure strength to subdue the opponent. The act of using words to convince the enemy to surrender would only be done by high-rank creatures which possess intelligence.

However, Tumoja was clearly a formidable existence that was unwilling to be ruled. It paid no heed to the little skeleton's persuasion at all, obviously unconvinced that the little skeleton had the strength to defeat it.

When the little skeleton realized that Tumoja failed to appreciate his kindness, a violent light flashed from within his Purple Demon Eye. His three-meter-long bone spur suddenly moved. The dense deathly aura above the dead sea started to rush toward the bone spur in the little skeleton's hand. An aura of death began to spread from the little skeleton.

“Puny Tumoja, you shall pay the price for your stupidity!” The little skeleton’s thought spread through the whole region as he rode his bone demon and charged toward that undead creature in the Dead Sea.

# Chapter 434: Struck Down From Within

In terms of body mass, even with the flight capable Bone Devil available, the Little Skeleton was no match for the creature from Dead Sea, Tumoja. However, when Little Skeleton charged towards Tumoja, his demeanor was incredibly formidable, and that caused Han Shuo to be very much surprised.

When Little Skeleton rode the Bone Devil with Han Shuo and charged towards Tumoja, the army of the undead, led by water elite zombie and fire elite zombie, clashed with those oddly shaped creatures belonging to Tumoja in the Dead Sea. For the water elite zombie who have the ability to manipulate the power of the Dead Sea, fighting in such a location was piece of cake with enhanced lethality. The seawater would constantly surge and roll, therefore, not only was the seawater unable to get close to the army of the undead, it even caused some visible damages to Tumoja.

Followed closely behind the water elite zombie were the fire elite zombie, holding a Fire Lotus. One by one, clouds of fierce blazes blossomed from the Fire Lotus. Those blazing flames seemed out of this world in the netherworld which was gloomy and cold throughout the year. It was also frighteningly destructive against the undeads.

It was especially effective against those undeads which had constantly dwelled in the depths of the Dead Sea, which had grown accustomed to the ice-cold temperatures of the gloomy seawater. Whenever the fierce flames got near, their body would weaken and they would go soft at the knees. And by the time the roasting flame of the Fire Lotus entered they bodies, these undeads were all like ice cubes in a hot pan, rapidly melting and evaporating away.

The reason Little Skeleton brought water elite zombie and fire elite zombie over to the battle this time around, was because the two posed the greatest threat towards the undeads in the Dead Sea. The water elite zombie, being able to manipulate the element of water, and the fire elite zombie, containing astonishing amount of heat, both held superior advantages over these Dead Sea creatures.

With just a little effort of the water elite zombie and fire elite zombie working together, the undeads in the Dead Sea suffered heavy losses and retreated in defeat little by little. With the water elite zombie and fire elite zombie as generals fighting for Little Skeleton's forces, Little Skeleton did not need to worry about the war below him at all. He'd place all of his concentration on the boss of those sea creatures, Tumoja.

The three meter long bone spur on his hand which had contained an enormous amount of the aura of death, shot towards Tumoja in the blink of an eye, something akin to a silver lightning.

The undead creature seemed to be aware of how terrifying the bone spur on Little Skeleton's hand was. When it saw that the bone spur will soon arrive on its body, which was floating on sea more than halfway above the surface, it suddenly vanished into the depths of the Dead Sea without a trace.

The bone spur which Little Skeleton tossed let out a lighting flash at the area where Tumoja was, and shot deep down. Streams of water in the region suddenly shot up into the sky, and series of explosion followed, seemingly that there were explosions under the seawater.

"Auu....."

Tumoja's angry roar could be heard coming from the depths of the Dead Sea. Judging from the extremely resentful voice, Han Shuo could tell that Tumoja were wounded by the Little Skeleton's bone spur. Otherwise, it's scream wouldn't be filled with so much rage.

"This undead creature doesn't belong to our world. Its soul was destroyed in an unusual way, and therefore it appeared in our netherworld. It absorbed large amounts of the aura of death in our world, and then formed its body in this Dead Sea.

I know this fella's presence early on. I had challenged it three times previously, but because my strength was too weak, I had to let it off all three times. But now, I'm confident that I can finish him, all because his improvements are not as quick as mine," Little Skeleton explained slowly for Han Shuo as he turned a deaf ear to Tumoja's roar from the abyss.

“It didn’t came about naturally from this world?” Han Shuo stared blankly but quickly asked afterwards.

“Yep, just like you, Father. Some existence with powerful soul from other planes of existence could come to this world due to some very extraordinary reasons. However, it’s very rare to find any person who could travel freely between two worlds like Father. This fella’s soul couldn’t return to its world after coming here, and so it lived in the Dead Sea.

But its soul should have been very powerful previously. After coming to this world, it formed a new body for itself after fusing the energy found in here. The change not only happened to it alone. Those undead creatures which stayed surrounding the Dead Sea, tempted by its energy, all became some outlandish, weird undead creatures, and lived in the Dead Sea with it,” Little Skeleton explained for Han Shuo.

Powerful beings from other planes of existence, due to some extraordinary reason, its soul arrived at this world. It then adsorbed the energy in netherworld to forge its body, and turned into some undead-like existence. Han Shuo thought for a moment, and soon realized something.

From Little Skeleton’s explanation just then, Han Shuo learned that the netherworld contained not only undead creatures which came about naturally from the aura of death, but turned out to also have some outsiders which mutated here and took their niches. That seemed to be the case. Perhaps if Han Shuo couldn’t freely enter and exit the netherworld, given his powerful soul, there was a possibility for him to have turned into a formidable undead creature in this world .

“Whoosh....”

The undead creature in the Dead Sea named Tumoja, while Han Shuo was still pondering, suddenly emerged from the Dead Sea with its enormous body completely revealed.

Its body indeed looked like the octopus which Han Shuo knows. An oval body, with tentacles all around it. The only difference with an octopus is that this creature named Tumoja was way more hideous and fierce-

looking. Sharp bone spurs, a characteristic signature of netherworld creatures, seemed to filled every surface available on its body.

On its oval-shaped body, covers a layer of black-coloured armor which glitters with black light. The armor seemed extremely hard and sturdy. Right in the middle of its oval-shaped body there were two pupils around the size of a few fists. Below the eyes were a huge mouth filled with dense, white teeths like that of a shark. The sharp teeths seemed to be able to chew apart any object no matter how hard it was.

“You wretched thing! Today I will destroy you completely!” Tumoja roared. Its enormous body filled the sky and it’s tentacles began to flutter about. Unexpectedly, it began to float up from the the surface of the Dead Sea bit by bit, charging straight towards Little Skeleton.

“You fool. Leaving the Dead Sea now only ensures your death!” Little Skeleton yelled lowly. But this sentence could only be heard by Han Shuo.

A white lighting suddenly flew out from the depths of the ocean, and landed on Little Skeleton’s hand in the blink of an eye. It was the three meter bone spur Little Skeleton regularly used.

Afterwards, without waiting for Tumoja’s superfluous words, Little Skeleton and Bone Devil charged towards Tumoja. The seven wing-like bone spurs on Little Skeleton’s back suddenly fluttered everywhere in the sky. When the seven bone spurs moved, Tumoja’s pupil rapidly flickered as well. He was seemingly aware of the frightening power of the seven bone spurs, and wanted to return to the depths of the Dead Sea.

“Now that you’ve come out, don’t think of going back!” Little Skeleton’s thought spread through the area.

The seven bone spurs whizzed towards Tumoja. It roared angrily, and disorderly swung about its thorn tentacles, attempting to fend off the seven bone spurs that suddenly flew out from Little Skeleton’s back.

But as for Little Skeleton who had long learned how to steer the seven bone spurs with Law of Activating Magic, was even more fluent and adept in controlling the seven bone spurs by now. Those large tentacles fluttering around constantly, simply couldn’t intercept any of the seven



bone spurs shooting towards it.

Bright, black coloured sparks shone on top of the Tumoja's oval body, caused by the seven bone spurs piercing into Tumoja's armor-like body. Riding on the Bone Devil, Little Skeleton brought the Bone Devil underneath the enormous body of Tumoja, and together, Little Skeleton and Bone Devil attacked Tumoja's abdomen right above their heads.

Therefore, if it wanted to enter the Dead Sea again, Tumoja from the Dead Sea, must first eliminate the threats of Little Skeleton and Bone Devil beneath its abdomen, otherwise it's vulnerable belly would be exposed to the enemies.

"Despicable sinister thing, how could there be existence like you in the netherworld!" Tumoja roared loudly. It then extended its humongous tentacles towards Little Skeleton and Bone Devil, wanting to either strangle or stab Little Skeleton and Bone Devil to death.

A series of magical incantations were recited, and bone spears one by one materialized in thin air. They flew from Little Skeleton's side and towards the sky, striking those extended tentacles above him. At the same time, Han Shuo gathered his mental strength, a Soul Shock magical spell was released. The Tumoja roared wildly as if suffering from a heavy strike. After a boring groan, its enormous body began to violently rock.

"Thank you, Father!" Little Skeleton said and gave the Bone Devil a slap. His body shot high up into the sky, and actually reached above Tumoja's heavily armored oval body in the blink of an eye.

Tumoja had its spirit and soul upside down thanks to Han Shuo's Soul Shock spell. Little Skeleton took advantage of its current state by suddenly grabbing a bone spur and stab it into Tumoja's eye. When Tumoja opened its mouth for another thunderous roar, Little Skeleton made a move. During Tumoja's ghastly screams, Little Skeleton shot into its abdomen like electricity, disappeared.

The Bone Devil, who had been given a slap by Little Skeleton, flew downwards while carrying Han Shuo on its back. However Han Shuo could still clearly see Little Skeleton break inside into Tumoja's body, which

filled his heart with astonishment. He had no idea why Little Skeleton would go into Tumoja's body.

When Han Shuo was still shocked, something even more peculiar suddenly happened!

The Tumoja which Little Skeleton bored into, suddenly trembled its body violently. Those bone spurs which Little Skeleton left sticking on the surface of Tumoja's oval body, all ruthlessly pierced inwards, and the tearing caused some jet-black, ink-like liquid to leak.

"Damn it! Get out! Get out there!" As Tumoja violently struggles, it incessantly roared like usual.

However, Han Shuo could clearly feel that Tumoja's vigor grew weaker and weaker. Even its enormous body slowly shrunk and withered.

On the contrary, for the Little Skeleton inside Tumoja's body, Han Shuo sensed that its presence grew stronger and stronger. It was as though the energy in Tumoja's body had all taken in by him.

This process continued for a very short duration. Just as Han Shuo got slightly distracted, Tumoja's shrinking body suddenly swell up like a ball being filled with air. Those bone spurs which was pierced on Tumoja's body, sparkled with Purple Demon Light before Han Shuo. Strands of bizarre energy were drawn out from Tumoja's body by the bone spurs.

"Splat..."

Tumoja's rapidly inflating body reached its limits before suddenly exploding. Its thorn-filled tentacles that once flutter about in the sky, four out of five of them fell apart when its body burst. The Little Skeleton inside Tumoja's body was dyed with a later of ink. His spotlessly white skeleton looked like black crystals.

"I surrender. I'm willing to pledge my allegiance to you!" The Tumoja which had its body blown into pieces, finally gave up on resisting. It transmitted its thought of surrender from its disintegrated oval body.

"Your body have shatter into pieces. With your condition now, you have no more use to me!" Little Skeleton replied to Tumoja's message of

surrender. He then pierced the seven bone spurs on Tumoja's internal body, and through the connections with the seven bone spurs, like veins and arteries, he sucked away all of the enormous soul energy from Tumoja's body.

Tumoja's humongous body rapidly melted away at speeds invisible to the naked eyes. With just a moment of effort, the energy in body of Tumoja was sucked away by Little Skeleton, leaving nothing behind. Not a trace of its soul was left in the netherworld. It had completely vanished from this world.

After destroying Tumoja, the seven bone spurs returned to the back of Little Skeleton. When the seven bone spurs re-attached to Little Skeleton's back, unexpectedly, a membrane as thin as cicada's wing grew between the bone spurs. Nobody knows why, but perhaps it was when they were used as flow channels to transfer energy, the flow of energy caused mutations to the seven bone spurs. If Han Shuo didn't pay special attention to it, he might have missed the new feature added to Little Skeleton.

With the existence of the thin layer of membrane, and the seven bone spurs stuck out from his back, they now look even more like his wings. The Little Skeleton, who had just killed Tumoja, his pitch-black body began to fall towards the Dead Sea. The seven bone spurs on his back rocked for a moment, and immediately restored his balance. He steadily fell into the seawater of the Dead Sea.

After hanging out in the depths of the Dead Sea for a moment, Little Skeleton suddenly surfaced from the seawater. The black ink on his body was washed away, restoring the pure white appearance of his skeleton. Its texture was extremely dazzling. His demeanor grew even stronger and heavier. Even as Han Shuo who was a great distance away from Little Skeleton, he could sense that within the region, Little Skeleton's strength is above that of every other undead creatures there.

Han Shuo then knew, that in this entire eastern part of the Dead Sea, there was no longer any undead creature stronger than Little Skeleton!

# Chapter 435: Tree of Souls

“Father, come with me!” After flying out from the Dead Sea, Little Skeleton transmitted a message to Han Shuo.

Without waiting for Han Shuo to react, the Bone Devil which Han Shuo was riding on moved when it received the message. It made a circle with Han Shuo on top of it before flying towards Little Skeleton’s location.

“Whoosh”

Little Skeleton landed on Bone Devil’s body. After Little Skeleton got onto Bone Devil, it flew straight down towards the sea. Within the blink of an eye, it had fallen into the Dead Sea, continuing its downward path.

The skeletal body which Han Shuo forged by solidifying the aura of death was extremely tough and durable, but Little Skeleton and Bone Devil’s skeletal bodies were even better than that of Han Shuo. They were not afraid of being corroded by the corrosive seawater. It was just that their rate of sinking to the abyss of the Dead Sea was slightly slower due to buoyancy.

Down in the depths of the Dead Sea, It was all dark and pitch-black. Using their eyesight was basically useless down there. Both Han Shuo and Little Skeleton used their senses to feel their way forward. Also, Han Shuo’s consciousness was exceptionally strong. Even though he came to the netherworld from another plane of existence, his consciousness could still clearly map the surrounding scenes.

At this depth under the ocean, there weren’t many undeads that existed. The deathly still Dead Sea also didn’t host many unique plants. Other than the pitch-black seawater, there was nothing that especially caught Han Shuo’s attention.

“Where are we going?” Han Shuo asked Little Skeleton.

“In the depths of the Dead Sea grows a very special plant. The reason I wanted to conquer the eastern Dead Sea, other than dealing with Tumoja, is to get my hands on that plant,” Little Skeleton replied.

When Little Skeleton explained so, Han Shuo's curiosity immediately peaked. He no longer thought of the netherworld as a desolate, cold, and barren world. Ever since he experienced the benefits of consuming the serene luster gem and the black resolute crystal, Han Shuo realized that the netherworld was also a miraculous place.

Under this deadly seawater of the Dead Sea, Han Shuo did not sense the presence of a single plant. Little Skeleton explained that the reason he constantly aimed Tumoja in his crosshair, was actually to obtain a unique plant in the Dead Sea. That itself tells Han Shuo that this plant in the Dead Sea must be extremely rare and precious, otherwise Little Skeleton would never be willing to spend such considerable cost.

"What plant is it? What's so special about it?" Han Shuo immediately questioned.

"Pop! Pop!"

All of a sudden, strange sounds arrived from a distance. Han Shuo's consciousness could clearly sense that many undead creatures were rushing towards them. Although these creatures' presence were much weaker in comparison to Tumoja, it is still higher than those low ranking Dead Sea creatures that fought in the battle just then.

Little Skeleton did not immediately reply Han Shuo's question. Obviously, he too had discovered the rapidly approaching undeads. The originally dim Purple Demon Eye of the Little Skeleton, suddenly exploded with brilliant purple light rays. A kind of sinister and bewitching bizarre energy suddenly emanated from the center of Little Skeleton.

"I have killed Tumoja. You all will acknowledge allegiance to me, or vanish forever like Tumoja. Your choice!" Little Skeleton's powerful message was so commanding, it fused with the current, and it traversed far and wide into the distance.

At that moment, Han Shuo found that the approaching Dead Sea creatures, all looked like creatures which mutated from certain fishes found in the Profound Continent. There were some telltale features of the undeads on these creatures' bodies like bony outgrowths, while having

fish scales-like body structure. They looked very peculiar.

It was obvious that the powerful message which Little Skeleton transmitted caused an enormous impact on those strange looking Dead Sea creatures. Those undead creatures which were charging with great momentum, suddenly stopped heading towards Little Skeleton when the message was broadcasted, and they began communicating with each other.

“You all have no choice. Without Tumoja, you don’t pose any threat to me. Immediately surrender, and pledge your allegiance to me. Otherwise your only path will be disappearing forever!” Little Skeleton pressured them.

“We are willing to serve you!” Without letting Little Skeleton wait for too long, those Dead Sea creatures yielded to his might. One by one, they swore to serve and acknowledged allegiance to Little Skeleton. For as long as the soul brands from Little Skeleton exists, they will never betray him.

This was a common phenomenon in the netherworld. Once the boss was eliminated, the victor would usually be able to assimilate the forces of its opponent. It’s proper and to be expected as a matter of course for low level undead creatures serve the high level ones; there’s no such thing as loyalty or betrayal in the netherworld.

“Very good. Take me to the Tree of Souls you are guarding!” Little Skeleton transmitted.

“Master, please come with us!” those Dead Sea creatures respectfully turned around and lead Little Skeleton and Han Shuo to an even deeper area under the sea.

“Father, under this eastern part of the Dead Sea, there’s an unusual plant called Tree of Souls. It produces fruits called Pearl of Souls. Consuming it will make us possess wisdom. For Little Earth, Little Gold, and the others, it can make them evolve faster. However, wisdom will only develop on high level creatures, and only high level creatures could digest those experiences which increases one’s wisdom. For creatures like zombie

warrior and hate warrior, the Pearl of Souls would have had no effect on them even if they consumed it," Little Skeleton explained to Han Shuo.

"Plant that could raise one's wisdom. What was going on?" Han Shuo asked immediately as shock rose in his heart.

It seems that Little Skeleton wasn't able to answer this question very clearly. After Han Shuo asked the question, Little Skeleton's Purple Demon Eye flickers for a while before he replied, "I'm not sure either, as I've never seen a Pearl of Souls. I've only learned about them from hearsays. As for the specific details, we'll find out after we go there and take a look."

Han Shuo was extremely curious, but after hearing what was said, he didn't follow up with further questions. He continued to focus on getting a glimpse of the surroundings with his consciousness, while silently guessing how the Pearl of Souls could increase an undead's wisdom.

After a short while, the group of undead creatures leading Little Skeleton and Han Shuo arrived at a region with dense black, ink-like water. All sorts of chaotic energy of souls abruptly shot out everywhere and in all directions. The disorder firmly grasped on Han Shuo's consciousness.

Han Shuo was startled. It was the first time that his consciousness had met with such energy. The restrictive power it has on his consciousness made Han Shuo feel extremely unwell. However, as Han Shuo had trained proficiently in Demonic Magic for many years, he had learned some insights on the use of his consciousness. Suddenly, his consciousness severed all connections with the surrounding like a sharp knife.

Those energies which flooded into Han Shuo's mind were immediately purged or cut off. Not a single bit of soul energy could affect Han Shuo. When he turned his head to the side, he saw that Little Skeleton and Bone Devil too were staring blankly at their place. They seemed to be frozen by the energy of the souls.

By means of his connection with Little Skeleton, a ripple of thought suddenly charged toward Little Skeleton. After the thought from Han Shuo's consciousness entered into the dazing Little Skeleton, he immediately responded, and his Purple Demon Eye shone brightly. That

blank state of mind was swept clean. Then, through his connection with the Bone Devil, Little Skeleton too injected his energy into the Bone Devil.

After being woken by Little Skeleton, the Bone Devil's enormous body shook slightly, and it immediately broadcasted its thought.

"Master, these newcomers didn't warn you about the situation here. It seems that they were harboring malicious intents!" while Bone Devil roared with rage, it flew towards a Dead Sea creature not far from it. Before the Dead Sea creature could react, Bone Devil had chewed it into powder.

"Master, please forgive us. We thought that if you could kill Tumoja, it must be very easy for you avoid the energy surrounding the Tree of Souls. We are very sorry that we did not remind you in advance." Those Dead Sea creatures were utterly horrified, and hurriedly apologized to Little Skeleton.

"Fine, pardon them. Humph, I believe you guys wanted to test out my strength huh! I will let it pass this time. If anything like this happen again, I will let none of you continue to exist in this netherworld," Little Skeleton said.

Following Little Skeleton's command, the Bone Devil stopped its vigorous pursue. The Dead Sea creature did not fight back but constantly begged for forgiveness. At that moment, the ink-like black sea water suddenly disappeared. The scene of a big tree made of some brown branches intertwined together appeared, its roots buried deep under a field of rocks, with ten something fist-sized oval-shaped gray fruits hanging on this unique big tree entered their mind.

One could vaguely see that the seawater surrounding the big tree is grey in color. Spirit energy which looked like segments of memories flooded all around the huge tree in an chaotic manner. It looked as if wisps of them floated into the center of the big tree. Perhaps it was one of the nutrients that the tree needed.

"Around the Tree of Souls were some floating energy of memories which the Dead Sea adsorbs. The Tree of Souls condenses those emotions and



memories into itself, and then forms the Pearl of Souls. These Pearl of Souls can be directly consumed. It will make some dumb high-ranking undead creatures obtain great wisdom.” The Dead Sea creatures explained to Little Skeleton.

“Father, these are the Pearl of Souls. It is said that it could increase one’s wisdom. You should try it!” Little Skeleton explained to Han Shuo.

With great curiosity, Han Shuo walked towards the Tree of Souls, and plucked a Pearl of Souls and dropped it into his consciousness. He then used the energy of his consciousness to smash and remove the hard shell of the fruit.

All of a sudden, all sorts of messy, chaotic emotions, along with some memories and realizations, suddenly rushed deep into Han Shuo’s mind. The Pearl of Souls was filled with great amounts of experiences. Nobody knows if it came from netherworld creatures. Among these experiences, many were unexplainable by Han Shuo, with some portion of it containing novel ideas Han Shuo never heard before.

While Han Shuo’s mind was still in a big mess, suddenly, a flash of memories about exercising control over one’s desires and unrestrained indulgence jumped into his mind. Han Shuo, who was distressed about the hard to breakthrough Carnal realm, fell into a foolishly paralyzed state, as though he was receiving enlightenment.

# Chapter 436: Suddenly Realizing It Had Been Three Years

Under the depths of the Dead Sea in the netherworld, Han Shuo suddenly gone silent, and his body turned still and didn't budge at all. It was as though he had sunk into the deepest sleep, with no signs of life.

Little Skeleton stared at the unmoving Han Shuo who was standing on Bone Devil's body. In that moment, he had no clue what he should do. However, he could sense the strong presence of Han Shuo's consciousness, which he understood that this meant Han Shuo was still alive.

"Master, what's going on?" Bone Devil asked Little Skeleton.

The Bone Devil which was forged by Little Skeleton using tough and durable skeletal remains, had followed alongside Little Skeleton for a very long time. It intrinsically feared of Little Skeleton's formidable strength. It understood that perhaps Little Skeleton had yet to become the most terrifying being in the netherworld, and yet, it also knew that Little Skeleton's strength would constantly increase, and he will grow stronger and stronger. He will surpass more and more powerful creatures.

However, Bone Devil's master, unexpectedly also has a mysterious father. Han Shuo, having originated from another plane of existence, made the Bone Devil felt extremely curious about it. It couldn't understand how could a mighty existence like Little Skeleton would have Han Shuo as its father.

"This is not something you should ask!" Little Skeleton replied. He circled a few rounds around Han Shuo who was on Bone Devil's body, while looking up and down at the motionless Han Shuo. He seemed to be studying what in the world Han Shuo was doing.

After a while, Little Skeleton gave Bone Devil a pat and instructed, "Alright. Just look after him for the time being. There's no need to worry about other things."

"I will, master!"

In the netherworld that has no concept of time, after some unknown amount of time, Han Shuo's consciousness moved, and his soul traversed through a spacetime wormhole, and immediately arrived at the Cemetery of Death in the Profound Continent. But he still sat there upright, motionless.

Although his body was motionless, the consciousness and demonic yuan in his body was churning wildly. The enormous energy stored within his body was being unceasingly condensed where his demon infant was located. While the demonic yuan was being continuously condensed, the demon infant became more and more distinct. It was as though a magical brush was slowly painting a beautiful picture. Even its pores and fine hairs were clearly visible.

After a lengthy period of time, the demonic yuan in Han Shuo's body was condensed by the demon infant. The speed at which it circulates in his body were similar to that of lightning. The minutest details of Han Shuo's baby infant grew even sharper and more pronounced.

As Han Shuo had received enlightenment, the consciousness and demon infant in his body started to transform noiselessly. Breaking to the next realm would mean a dramatic rise in strength for Han Shuo, which'd meant that he'd possess even more remarkable abilities, which implies that Han Shuo could realize even more of his wishes.....

After a really really long time, Han Shuo awakened from his deep meditative state. A pair of abstruse eyes sparkled with glistering lights. Whenever he focused his attention and gazed at something, his eyes would appear to be flowing with electric current. It would make people involuntarily feel a palpitating pressure.

Compared to the last time, Han Shuo's body did not undergo many changes. Only Han Shuo himself understood where those changes came from. Without needing to rely on his mystical demons to survey the surroundings, with just his consciousness, not a thing within a radius of a few li around him could escape from his observation. Han Shuo and Gilbert's connection grew clearer by tenfold. Han Shuo could also clearly feel that Little Skeleton was pleasantly surprised even though he was in

another dimension. In an instant, Han Shuo discovered that his consciousness had a completely different sensation than it used to be. He joyously appreciated the extremely novel and odd sensation.

Han Shuo was happy to find that his body was not the same anymore. Now that he has entered the Carnal Realm, all kinds of desires rose from the innermost part of his heart, as though it was urging him to quickly achieve his desires, and let those cravings which were buried deep in his heart for many years to be liberated.

Again, Han Shuo spent some time to adapting to the new state of his body. And only after he succeeded in practicing a few secret demonic cultivation, he finally opened the boundary of the Cemetery of Death, so that the Black Dragon Gilbert could enter.

“Master! My great master, you have not summoned me for three years!” As soon as Black Dragon Gilbert entered the Cemetery of Death, he yelled loudly towards Han Shuo.

“What?! Three years?!!” Han Shuo was greatly shocked and yelled lightly.

“That’s right. In fact, it had been precisely three years and four months. Counting from the day you said you will begin practicing till today, was three whole years and four months. During that period, you did not once make contact with me. I couldn’t even feel your existence. Honorable master, what kind of martial skills were you practicing? How could it be that it felt as though you had vanished from this world, and even I couldn’t sense your presence?” Gilbert asked Han Shuo in astonishment.

Three years and four months! Han Shuo was flabbergasted by the long duration of time. He never thought that he had spent so damn long on this secluded training.

Han Shuo himself felt as though it’s only been a few months time, and never anticipated that time would unwittingly pass so quickly. Entering demonic stupor and the moment of enlightenment while entering Carnal Realm, it was during these two periods which Han Shuo couldn’t feel the tiniest bit of the passage of time.

However, what’s for sure was that, it was exactly those two periods

which he had spent the most time on. Three years and four months time was like a snap of the fingers for Han Shuo. He didn't feel that there was anything unusual about it, but he knew what it had meant for a regular person.

"Gilbert, how are you guys getting by during the three years?" Han Shuo hastily asked the Black Dragon.

"Be at ease, we have been very well. At present, the Valley of Sunshine already fell into the control of our Soul Destroyer mercenary band. Laureton of the Cairo mercenary band had been killed by Trunks, and a portion of their members defected to our mercenary band, and a group of berserkers left the Valley of Sunshine for good.

The House of Menlo and Rainbow Sickle mercenary band too were crushed by us. Only the orcs tribe and certain small tribes survived outside the Valley of Sunshine. However, tribal chief Katar of the orcs tribe had also expressed his allegiance to Trunks. At this present time, Trunks is already the one who maintains the order in the valley.

Surrounding the Valley of Sunshine, Janet's bandit group held the greatest influence. Only with the existence of Janet's bandit group, the merchants in the Valley of Sunshine would rely on Trunks even more, and our business grew bigger and bigger too. Nowadays, Trunks and Janet are planning in secret, getting prepared to deal with that Grand Duke from Kasi Empire," Black Dragon Gilbert explained to Han Shuo.

After Black Dragon Gilbert stated his account, Han Shuo was pleasantly surprised at first. But shortly after he thought for a moment, he felt that the development rate of Trunks' Soul Destroyer mercenary band was somewhat inconceivable. He couldn't help but creased his brows and asked, "Originally, just Laureton's Cairo mercenary band alone was at least as rich and powerful as the Soul Destroyer mercenary band. In addition to this, there were House of Menlo and the Rainbow Sickle mercenary band. How could Trunks take control of the Valley of Sunshine so rapidly?"

"Oh, there's lots of reason for this. All I know was that Miss Phoebe

invested a lot of gold coins into Soul Destroyer mercenary band. In addition, Brettel City had previously sent people to assist Trunks during crucial moments. Other than that, that Dark Grand Magus from Calamity Church always helped us in the dark without seeking our approval. Furthermore, Emily provided a lot of intelligence. And owing to your triumph over the sacred knight of the Church of Light, countless mercenaries who have non-ordinary abilities all joined us. Regardless of timing or geographical conditions, the Soul Destroyer mercenary band was dealt with a favorable hand. Trunks too, was a leader with brains and courage. He seized control of the Valley of Sunshine in just three years.”

After listening to his explanation, Han Shuo suddenly noticed that Trunks indeed held all the advantageous factors. On top of that, Trunks went through a near death experience, which caused him to become even more ruthless and unflustered. There was indeed a fair explanation for how he could wipe out every enemy factions and power from the Valley of Sunshine in three years time.

“Not bad. Trunks did well. Oh right, how’s the current situation in Lancelot Empire?” Han Shuo immediately asked about the current state of the Lancelot Empire after praising Trunks.

“Lawrence became the new king to the Lancelot Empire. He’s a fantastic king. Under his rule, armed rebellion in Lancelot Empire were quickly resolved. Before any foreign nations could invade the Lancelot Empire, Lawrence stabilized the internal affairs, and intensified the strength of the military.

Oh, right, Lawrence was very attentive of the Brettel City. As the Brettel City nowadays has its own magical transportation matrix, an unending stream of supplies from various cities moves into the city. Numerous residents too willingly live in the city. The war lunatic named Dorcas, was currently the hottest general in the empire. During these three years, Dorcas had been restless, and constantly conduct arson, murder, and looting against the seven grand duchies. He has sought countless riches for the Brettel City.

He’s the same as Firenze, a battle lunatic. There was never a day which

he did not infringe on the seven grand duchies. However, this fella was extraordinary in controlling the attack strength. Even till now, the seven grand duchies have no plans to unite and attack Brettel City.....”

After listening to Gilbert’s presentation, Han Shuo understood the current situation of the Lancelot Empire to some extent. From Black Dragon Gilbert’s words, Han Shuo knew that all the people and forces who allied with him, were put into important positions thanks to Lawrence’s wield of political power. Lawrence deeply valued Han Shuo existence. He did not treat Han Shuo’s people unfairly because of his absence, but roped them in with great effort.

# Chapter 437: Changes

Three years' time is neither long nor short, but it is enough for a city to transform a lot. The originally poor Brettel City had long turned into a prosperous city residing in the eastern part of the Lancelot Empire.

With Brettel City as their center, the five surrounding mines founded many weaponry and protection gear workshops. Various kinds of civilian and military weapons were forged from those five mines. Not only was the production more than enough to meet the demand for soldiers and civilians in Brettel, they were further exported to the seven grand duchies and every major city in the Lancelot Empire.

While walking along the streets of Brettel City with Gilbert, Han Shuo gazed at the unending flow of people and the dazzling lineup of shops which were packed throughout both sides of street. He found it difficult to imagine that this was the dilapidated city not too long ago.

This time when Han Shuo and Gilbert returned to Brettel City, they did not utilize the transportation matrix in the Cemetery of Death. Instead, they went there through the transportation matrix in Zajoski City. Han Shuo wanted to try out the transportation matrix in Brettel City and check if it were any good. As for the results – Han Shuo was very satisfied.

“Master, the magical transportation matrix just now, space sacred magus Sabakas personally came to Brettel City to deploy that. It can connect to any city within the Lancelot Empire. Rightfully, we could use the transportation matrix in Cemetery of Death to come to Brettel City. But why must you take the longer route?” Black Dragon Gilbert asked Han Shuo.

“Nothing much. It's just, I know how important a large-scale magical transportation matrix is to Brettel City, and so I wanted to personally check out this magical transportation matrix. Hehe, I know Brettel City's rapid growth was inseparable with the existence of this transportation matrix,” Han Shuo replied with a faint smile.

“Master, you are very right in that regard. This transportation matrix



really made a huge difference. After His Majesty the King's vigorous assistance and backing from Miss Phoebe's merchant guild, all sorts of talents have been pouring into Brettel City through it. The soldiers within the city are all able-bodied and strong. Whenever any group from the seven grand duchies tried to invade us, they would be defeated by the forces in Brettel every single time. The security here has been guaranteed," Black Dragon Gilbert explained slowly to Han Shuo beside him.

After reaching at the Brettel City, Han Shuo released the twelve Mystical Demons, and had them moved around the whole Brettel City, taking in the whole scene of the current Brettel City at once. He had a completely new understanding of Brettel City three years later.

The four sides of the city wall were erected with magic crystal cannons, along with all kinds of large-scale destructive equipments which were clearly visible everywhere. The moat surrounding the city gates had been deepened, and could defend against a cavalry regiment's assault. Some sharp fences were set up on top of the city wall. It wouldn't be easy for anyone to intrude.

A few pointy magic towers stood tall on the city walls. Dense and thick magical elements constantly lingered around the spire of the tower. This kind of magic tower could be powered directly by a magical creature's core, and can also be operated by a magus' mental strength, taking in the magical element found everywhere in the continent and use it as an attack.

Compared to magic crystal cannons, these magic towers were a class better when it came to flexibility and destructive power. Now that two magic towers were set up for each and every one of the four city's gates, Han Shuo could nearly imagine the expression on the invaders' faces when they saw the magic towers.

On top of the four city gates were soldiers with shining armor and weapons. Han Shuo could tell that they were not ordinary just from the brightness of their weapons and armor. The fully equipped soldiers carried a steady look, obviously warriors with blood of iron that had been nurtured by war. The demeanor they gave told that there must have been

many who had died by their hands.

After the mystical creatures made a few rounds, the scenes of a few city districts all fell onto Han Shuo's eyes. He walked shoulder to shoulder with Gilbert all the way to the city lord's mansion. While listening to Gilbert's descriptions, Han Shuo had a tranquil and calm smiling expression on his face as he was very satisfied with the current situation in Brettel.

And finally they arrived at the city's lord mansion. The grand and wonderful mansion was brimming with prestigious grandeur as compared to its previous state. The mansion's walls had been broadened and erected much higher than before. Han Shuo only took one look, and it was clear to him that the present day city lord's mansion had been rebuilt once more. It seems that countless gold coins must have had been consumed.

Although the city lord's mansion had increased in size, the guards keeping watch of the mansion's front door were still the same familiar faces. Two arrogant and energetic looking guards, with their heads high, vigilantly scanned all around with their eyes. By the time Han Shuo walked towards the entrance with a smile, one of the guards suddenly trembled, and he stared blankly at Han Shuo.

The guard stared blankly for a while, and out of nowhere, he kneeled towards Han Shuo with one knee and bowed in salute. With an extremely emotional tone, he shouted, "Lord Marquis, you have completed your training?"

"Lor.....Lord Marquis, oh my! Lord Marquis have returned to the city!" The other guard also recognized Han Shuo. When he heard his colleague's words, he couldn't help but turn his head to take a glance, and discovered Han Shuo had really appeared. He shrieked wildly with joy on the spot.

With a smile on his face, Han Shuo nodded and said, "Yes, Drucker. I'm back."

The guard who was named Drucker was originally from the first batch of soldiers in Brettel City. At that time, he was extremely self-abased and as thin as a bamboo. But now, his body was tall and sturdy, filled with an

imposing, solemn quality from head to toe. He was a different person compared to what he used to be, regardless of how you viewed it.

“Lord Marquis, you actually still remember my name! Oh my! I’m too emotional now. My Lord, you truly are a brilliant and awesome Lord!” When Drucker heard that Han Shuo correctly pronounced his name, he got so emotional that he started to talk incoherently.

“Alright alright, I’m going in!” After Han Shuo saw that Drucker’s voice became louder and louder as he felt more emotional, Han Shuo waved his hand and walked into the mansion house.

“Lord Marquis is back!, Lord Marquis is home!” Another guard immediately gave a loud yell as soon as he saw Han Shuo step foot into the mansion.

After this guard’s announcement, the whole city lord’s mansion suddenly turned frantic. All kinds of clamoring sounds could be heard from within the mansion. Outside of the house, a few horses suddenly darted out, heading towards few separate directions in great hurry. Inside the mansion, old butler Kallas hurriedly came out to greet Han Shuo. He seemed rather emotional as well.

Last time during the civil unrest in Ossen City, Han Shuo notified Kallas the butler beforehand, and so he brought a group of servants to escape from the heat. By the time tranquility had been reinstated in Ossen City, Kallas did not continue to stay in Ossen City, but came to Brettel City without hesitation, and began to take care of everything for Han Shuo in the city lord’s mansion.

After a moment, Kallas the old butler arrived in the front of the door. As soon as he got there, he bowed in salute towards Han Shuo and greeted, “Welcome home, Lord Marquis.”

“Hehe. Alright, alright. Let’s talk inside,” Han Shuo replied with a smile.

While on the way inside, Kallas the old butler unceasingly arranged those servants to have them prepare everything needed for a banquet. In passing, he explained to Han Shuo, “My Lord, during the three years you were away for practice, Lord Jack became a Viscount, Lord Dorcas became

a Count, and a few others were also bestowed with nobility. The few lords who originally temporarily stayed at the city lord's mansion, were all granted mansion houses by His Majesty as they were all nobles. However the few lords' mansions are not far from the city lord's mansion. I have instructed people to invite them here. I reckon they will all be here in abit."

Three years time can change a lot of things. Lawrence obviously knew how to curry favor from Han Shuo. Thus, Jack, Dorcas, and a few other who have close relations with Han Shuo, each got bestowed with nobility. With that, because of their nobility, they naturally need not continue staying in the city lord's mansion. Besides, these people have parents and families of their own too.

Han Shuo nodded and smiled as he replied, "His Majesty indeed treats us very well."

"Yes. Brettel City could develop so rapidly was all because of His Majesty's utmost support. But with that said, Lord Jack and Lord Dorcas' governance were also inseparable. The two Lords are both great characters. Only with the two in charge of military and administrations, Brettel City could happily enjoy triumphant progress all the way." Kallas did not forget to praise Jack and Dorcas.

Han Shuo had learned all these from Gilbert's mouth, and he had some knowledge of Jack and Dorcas' achievements. With the two wielding the authority in Brettel City, one in literary and another in military,

Jack's handing of the government affairs and finances made Brettel City's economy and all sectors grew more and more prosperous. And Dorcas, wielding the military power, not only did he arranged Brettel City to be invulnerable to attacks, he even vigorously went on the offensive against the seven grand duchies, and looted much goods from them.

Of course, before he officially began training, Han Shuo told Dorcas certain things about seven grand duchies through Jack. With regards to Helen Tina of Helon Duchy and Burt Zili of Boulet Duchy, the latter which Calamity Church secretly controls, Dorcas knew what was going on.

It was also because Helen Tina and Burt Zili's assistance in the dark, that Dorcas could so skillfully and easily attack the seven grand duchies. Not forgetting that he could leave so easily after looting.

The existence of the two who harbor malicious intents, made the seven grand duchies unable to truly form an alliance, and they only could look on helplessly as Brettel City grew more and more powerful. The warhorses purchased from two countries made Brettel City possessed a real knight regiment. Outfitted with finely made weapons, armor, and protection gear, the knight regiment lead by Dorcas became the most terrifying troops amongst the seven grand duchies.

The duo, Jack and Dorcas, one in literary and another in military, tightly held together the power over Brettel City. In addition, Dick from the Dark Mantle, with the backing of huge fundings, lead the forces of the Dark Mantle to cover the whole of the seven grand duchies like a web of spiders. He provided accurate and vast intelligence for the duo. With the three working together, not only was Brettel City invulnerable to attacks while constantly expanding, it became a truly secure and formidable mega city.

"Through Brettel City, many goods from the seven grand duchies circulated to the Lancelot Empire, while a certain goods from the Lancelot Empire also made their way into the seven grand duchies. A lot of aristocrats in the seven grand duchies endorsed the culture of our Lancelot Empire.

Hehe, although we are a hostile enemy with the seven grand duchies, the merchants, however, place profit before everything else. Brettel City always treat merchants with open arms, therefore many merchants from the seven grand duchies simply don't care about their Grand Duke's constraints, and keep continuously working together with us to circulate commodities and supplies....." Kallas' explanations and understanding of the situation was different from Gilbert's emphasis on main points, and he further explained about the economics and politics in detail for Han Shuo.

"Haha, Bryan! This damned scoundrel finally returned!" a loud and clear

shouting came from the outside. Jack chuckled while carrying a shy young lady as he walked inside with ample vigor.

Three years had passed, and little fatty Jack turned into big fatty Jack. His weight increased in parallel to his grandeur. Owing to his grasping the power over Brettel City and being thought highly of by His Majesty the King, that cowardice and timid Jack had long vanished. The Jack now has an imposing aura on his body, characteristics of people who occupy leading positions.

Han Shuo had been friends with Jack for many years. As soon as he heard the familiar laughing of Jack's voice, a comfortably warm feeling rose in his heart, and welcomingly walked towards Jack. While looking at his suit of well tailored nobility clothing, Han Shuo smilingly yelled at him, "Hehe, little fatty now turned into big fatty! Not bad at all. It seems that you certainly ate well for the last three years!"

"Get lost! You brat, how could you stand aside and do nothing for your own city, and handed over all the things to do to us, and got me so exhausted! Now that you are back, not only did you not console me, you even said that I got fatter. Where's your humanity?!" Jack cursed smilingly after he gave an angry glance at Han Shuo.

"Who's this?" Han Shuo asked with a smile after shooting a glance at the shy, young girl beside Jack.

"This is Jessica. I've mentioned about her to you before!" Jack proudly introduced her and winked at Han Shuo.

"Oh! I remember it now! Hehe, nice to meet you!" Han Shuo recalled that the reason Jack wanted to stay in Brettel City, was because of this girl named Jessica. Now that Han Shuo saw that Jack got the beauty he wanted, he truly felt happy for Jack.

When Jessica faced Han Shuo, she obviously was somewhat reserved. She shyly and respectfully saluted Han Shuo, and in a somewhat dreaded voice said, "Greetings to Lord Marquis!"

"My Lord, you have finally returned!" Dorcas walked towards him from the outside. There wasn't much changes compared to the younger Dorcas,

it's just that even more mark of hardships could be seen on his face, and it was obvious that he was more steady and experienced.

Dick, Faulke, and a few leaders from the mountainous region arrived in succession, and everyone assembled together. With butler Kallas taking care of them, they went into the banquet hall and drank as much as they liked. The few characters who were in charge of everything in Brettel City, explained the situation for Han Shuo once again.

# Chapter 438: Delia's Hintings

Everyone at the party happily chatted with each other, with Dorcas and Jack presenting the current situation of Brettel City in detail. Naturally, Dorcas and Jack would reveal certain issues which wasn't public knowledge to Han Shuo, hence they told him the whole truth.

Gilbert must have had frequented Brettel City often in these last three years, as he seemed very familiar with the people here. He was talking cheerfully and wittily with Dick and the others, while putting a straightforward smile on his face, which seemed very calm.

From the words of Dorcas and Jack, Han Shuo became even more aware of the difficulties met by Brettel City. He realize that beneath the unbounded grandeur exterior, crisis secretly awaited Brettel City as well.

The Lancelot Empire had achieved stable internal politics. With Lawrence weiding the power, and after some purging, sounds of the rebels could no longer be heard in the Lancelot Empire. Therefore, it wasn't domestic problems that the Lancelot Empire was confronted with, but it was threats from the few surrounding nations.

Brettel City, being the easternmost major city, also faced threats from foreign cities and empires similar to the Lancelot Empire. As Brettel City grew stronger and stronger in their ability to threaten the seven grand duchies, with exception of the two duchies of Helen Tina and Burt Zili, the other five duchies made more and more frequent contacts with each other. Their fighting against each other also quieten down.

Other than the seven grand duchies' menace, the Brut Merchant Alliance, geographically separated from Brettel by the seven grand duchies, was also eying Brettel City covetously. On one hand it was because Han Shuo had killed Celt, the commander of Brut Merchant Alliance's Redbud Knights. On the other hand, Brettel City's existence severely threatened Brut Merchant Alliance's interests.

Prior to Brettel City growing so prosperous, overwhelming majority of supplies which the seven grand duchies needed were bought from the Brut



Merchant Alliance. Certain specialties of the seven grand duchies was exclusively traded to the Alliance. The huge profit margin which Brut Merchant Alliance obtained from the seven grand duchies made a lot of merchants become filthy rich.

However, thanks to Brettel City's rapid development, those merchants from the seven grand duchies, who put profit before everything else, began to make frequent contacts with Brettel City. On top of that, most of the goods from Brettel City were far cheaper than those from Brut Merchant Alliance. More and more merchants from the seven grand duchies renounced their collaboration with the Brut Merchant Alliance, and began establishing cooperative connections with merchants within Brettel City.

Hence, Brut Merchant Alliance's interests had surely suffered damage. Brut Merchant Alliance is a country jointly controlled by big merchant guilds, and it goes without saying that the merchants in that country treasure gold coins above all else. Thus, Brut Merchant Alliance viewed Brettel City as an enemy, and started to secretly back those five grand duchies, with the intention to assist them in eradicating the menace that is Brettel City.

Unlike the seven grand duchies, the Brut Merchant Alliance, administered by multiple big merchant guilds, is one of the wealthiest nations on the Profound Continent. Not only that they have a mightily strong army, they also hold plentiful war equipments. Their strength was not in the least inferior to that of the Lancelot Empire. With the backing from this country made of united merchant guilds, Brettel City would obviously be met with a lot of trouble.

"Brut Merchant Alliance, Brut Merchant Alliance, hehe. That filthy rich country. I have yet to have make any moves against them, but unexpectedly, they are getting ready to take care of me. Interesting, very interesting!" Han Shuo laughed coldly after listening to Dorcas and Jack's presentation.

"Bryan, we need to be careful with this Brut Merchant Alliance. They are very much like the Lancelot Empire – a very powerful nation. With merely just our forces in the newly established Brettel City, we are absolutely no

match against them,” Jack advised Han Shuo when he saw the exuberant ambition on his face.

“Alright. You big fatty. Just take good care of your administrative tasks. The lord’s ambitions are beyond what you could imagine,” Dorcas gently groaned after shooting a glance at Jack.

“I’m very clear about Brut Merchant Alliance’s real strength. Hehe, but Brut Merchant Alliance too are facing powerful enemies all around them, and so they won’t put all their attention on our side. Now, all we gotta do is figure out how to take care of the seven grand duchies. For the time being, no need to worry about Brut Merchant Alliance,” Han Shuo said with a faint smile.

“Lord Marquis, you’ve grown stronger and stronger!” While Han Shuo was conversing with Jack and Dorcas, Delia praised Han Shuo with a lovable smile while approaching him with a glass of dark red fine wine in her hand. She had an exotic gloss on her beautiful face. This beauty from the mountainous region had become a military officer who is brave and good at fighting.

Delia, who had a long and slender figure, wore a light-purple long skirt tailored to be skin-tight with a girdle. The mermaid-tail-like long skirt made her slender and perfectly straight legs give off a sense of beauty. The moving curves made the chiefs from the mountains linger a little longer in the hall, with their saliva threatening to burst forth out from their mouth.

With a faint smile, Han Shuo held up high the glass in his hand towards Delia, and courteously replied, “You are overpraising me.”

“Haha, Delia oh Delia. There are so many talented and handsome mountainous men pursuing you, but you had been aloof to them all this time. Could it be that you have been waiting for this guy all along?” Jack teasingly said to Delia as he chuckled. It seemed that Jack had grown close to them during the past three years.

Delia pursed up her lips and gently laughed, and only after lingering one round on Han Shuo’s body with her eyes, that she replied Jack, “Lord Jack indeed has great insights, you have found me out. Hehe!”

“Eh? So that’s the case. Haha, but Delia, you’re going to get disappointed. This brat has lots of ladies around him, so perhaps you have no chance for that anymore. You must have heard of those three powerful ladies. Bryan wouldn’t dare to continue his womanizing ways anymore,” Jack said to Delia in all smiles.

“Well, not necessarily. For a man like His Lordship, I believe that as long as he has his mind set, perhaps no women could restraint him. Hee hee, my Lord, am I right?” Delia replied first Jack, and then asked Han Shuo and looked at him with her bright hot eyes.

Last time, during the way down from Mount Silk, Delia had revealed her true feelings to Han Shuo. Mountainous people are always outspoken and straightforward in temperament, and Delia was especially so. As soon as she settled on a target, she will strive to fight for it without a bit of secretiveness. Her work method was very straightforward.

When Han Shuo met with Delia again after three years’ time, he thought the Delia would had long found a sweetheart. But unexpectedly she was single even till now. Han Shuo faintly understood something through Delia’s spicy hot gaze. The sexy and wild Delia, who remained to be the number one beauty of the mountainous people, had some hard-to-describe temptative power on Han Shuo, who had now advanced to the Carnal realm.

“Ahem! I don’t just set my mind on just anyone,” Han Shuo said with a faint smile as he looked Delia, who had her eyes fixed on him.

Jack who was originally joking with Delia, at that moment, he couldn’t help but took a careful look at Delia. The Jack now had been tempering in political circles for three years, and so with one quick look with his vicious eyes, he could see the fire in Delia’s eyes. All of a sudden, Jack realized that the mocking joke he made just then was actually the truth.

While in his heart he was admiring Han Shuo’s luck, Jack couldn’t help it but feel worried for Han Shuo. He was well aware of a certain event that happened in Ossen City last time, and he also understood the backgrounds and capabilities of the three women. And besides, Jack knew

that Han Shuo certainly isn't someone who is well-behaved. With Delia's own superior qualifications and her recklessly tempting Han Shuo, Jack need not to think to know what will happen.

As the most beautiful woman amongst the mountainous people, Delia is an influential figure in the hearts of mountainous people in Brettel City. If there comes a day that she had disputes with Han Shuo and/or the three ladies of Han Shuo, that will certainly cause a certain impact to those mountainous people. As to how much of an impact it would be, Jack started to inwardly calculate that in his heart.

"Oh then, my Lord, how do you feel about me? Hehe, if your Lordship does have his mind set on me, I could never resist your Lordship's charm," Delia said to Han Shuo with a gentle smile, but her tone already carried a not-so-subtle hint.

"Ahem..... Ahem....." Dorcas made two light coughs. He then frowned in displeasement and said to Delia, "We are right in the middle of a conversation. If there's nothing else please go stroll somewhere else!"

Even for Dorcas, someone rather sluggish in this aspect, could tell that there was some other flavor in her talk. After getting a cue from Jack's eyes, he immediately came to his senses, and berated Delia.

Dorcas, as Delia's superior, held a supremely frightening power in the army of Brettel City. Even the usually bold and fearless Delia was somewhat afraid of him. When he saw Dorcas berated her in a displeased expression, she thought that they really have something important to discuss, and so she apologized to the three and left. But right before leaving, she turned her head to take another look at Han Shuo. Her eyes were completely filled with seductive provocation and enticement.

"Bryan, you now have a beautiful and tempting trouble. I don't know if I should feel happy or worried for you!" Jack waited until Delia left the three to themselves before he mockingly said to Han Shuo.

"Mind your own business, you don't have to worry about me. I know what's going on!" Han Shuo smilingly toasted to Jack, finished the fine wine that was left in his glass, and he then said to the duo, "I'm going to

leave Brettel City for a while to take care of a certain things. But it won't be too long."

"Go ahead, my Lord. Don't worry, we will manage the Brettel City well," Dorcas stated immediately in a respectful voice.

"You left for three years and there wasn't much trouble in Brettel City. The Brettel City now will still function even if you leave it. Just go ahead and do whatever you need to do," Jack said smilingly.

Han Shuo nodded and did not give them any lengthy parting speeches. He knew that with Jack and Dorcas there, Brettel City definitely will not suffer any sort of great calamity. Previously, sacred knight Blount who had heavily injured him and his earth elite zombie, managed to escape death. Now that Han Shuo is in Carnal realm, he had absolute certainty that he could kill Blount. Therefore, he decided to finish Blount as to take revenge for his earth elite zombie.

# Chapter 439: Revenge

Two days later, in one of the seven grand duchies, Bisli Duchy, Grand Duke Nehem Beige was praying in the largest church of the Church of Light within his dukedom.

This church was also the largest church found in Bisli Duchy, and it possesses a few thousand white priests and knights from the Church of Light. Around the grand hall, numerous disciples of the Church of Light were carefully guarding, protecting the safety of Nehem Beige who was praying inside.

As the Grand Duke of the Bisli Duchy, Nehem Beige had a majestic statue. After weiding the power of Bisli Duchy, Nehem Beige, who had been a follower of the Church of Light from the beginning, vigorously advocated the Church of Light in his dukedom, and made the people and nobles in the country believe in the God of Light, and to offer the God of Light their sincere beliefs.

As a Sky Rider himself, Nehem Beige's strength was out of the ordinary. Church of Light also dispatched numerous experts to protect him, while spreading the footprints of the Church of Light to every city in the Bisli Duchy. This made the populace of the Bisli Duchy more accepting of the good fortune from the God Of Light.

Nehem Beige was also one of the Temple Knights of the Church of Light, and had a fanatical faith in the God of Light. Every few days, he will come to this church in Bisli Duchy to pray, to feel the presence of the God of Light in this holy place, and to gain those divine energy he could personally feel.

Facing a statue as he piously kowtowed, Nehem Beige could feel the divine energy contained in his body to slowly flow. That kind of holy energy made him feel very comfortable. His zealousness towards the God of Light made him feel as though he possessed boundless energy.

All of a sudden, a strange noise entered Nehem Beige's ears. As he was carefully experiencing the God of Light's sacred energy, Nehem Beige

could keenly sense that a wicked energy was approaching. He immediately creased his brows and stood up from ground, and said to Red Bishop Katos some distance from him, "What's happening? It feels as though a wicked energy is approaching here."

Katos was sent by the Church of Light to Bisli Duchy to promote the mysterious teachings of the church. Katos was a very devout follower of the Church of Light, and a priest with extraordinary strength. But his expertise is in comprehending the teaching of the Church of Light. Like Nehem Beige, he too had a feverish dedication to the God of Light.

"That's right. Who the hell is the reckless heathen? So daring and headless to come here to throw away its' life!" Katos could also feel that a wicked presence was getting closer. However, Katos knew that the church has countless rigid defense capabilities, and therefore paid no attention to that puff of evil aura.

"Oh yes that's right. Even for someone from Calamity Church, wouldn't dare to plainly infringe on my Bisli Duchy. Any ordinary pagan who dares coming here will be met their own death!" Nehem Beige faintly smiled and agreed with Katos' statement. "Hehe, the church is very pleased with our accomplishments here in the Bisli Duchy. Next time when we return to the head church, we will be able to get even closer to the God of Light, and appreciate the boundless presence of the God of Light, and obtain even more divine power!" Katos said to Nehem Beige with a faint smile.

Although Nehem Beigh was the Grand Duke of Bisli Duchy, but privately at the Church of Light, his status is below that of Katos. Therefore, Katos doesn't show much respect towards Nehem Beige, and was very casual in his speech with him.

"Oh yes. Whenever I thought of holy energy filling my body, I will be very excited. It seems that we need to work even harder. Ai. What a pity that the big heathen named Bryan disappeared for a long time. Otherwise if we could kill him, our contribution will be enough for us to obtain even more divine power and holy water!" Nehem Beige replied to Katos.

Katos forced a smile, shook his head, and said, "I think you better stop

letting your imagination run wild. Even Lord Blount couldn't match that fella, so how could we handle him? This contribution is not something that we could obtain."

"Well, you can't say that for sure. Lord Blount is indeed powerful, but he was by himself after all, without company. Although our strength is not as powerful as that of Lord Blount, we still have Bisli Duchy on our side. Sometimes, the strength of a sea of people is greater than that of one Sacred Knight. I believe that if we knew where that heretic was, we might really stand a chance," Nehem Beige said ambitiously.

"Bang Bang....." Violent sounds suddenly came from the outside, as though the rumbling sound of thunders.

"Aaa.....aoo....." Miserable bawlings suddenly came from outside the door. Accompanied by the endless miserable shrieks that were shaking the boundary surrounding the grand hall.

Negem Beige and Katos gave a glance at each other, they both put on an expression overwhelmed with shock at the same time. The two knew just how many experts were present outside the grand hall, and also understood how incredibly hard was the boundary in that hall. With each wailing sound they heard, they could feel the light barrier, personally deployed by light Sacred magus Bordeaux from the Church of Light, was shaking. Their hearts were crammed with intense fear.

"Who the hell is that! This light barrier was personally deployed by Lord Bordeaux himself, who could make the barrier tremble that hard?" Katos said to Grand Duke Nehem Beige as his body trembled along with the surroundings.

"I have no idea. Our people are being massacred. We need to rescue them. The enemy must be very terrifying," Nehem Beigh replied and took out some discoloured armour from his space right. In a grave expression, he began to put them on.

"Plang!"

A crisp fracturing sound suddenly came from the very peak of the tall great hall. It sounded as though a drinking glass were smashed onto a rock



surface and shattered into pieces.

When Nehem Beige and Katos heard this crisp sound, an intense feeling of dread suddenly flooded their hearts. Nehem Beige, who was wearing the complete set of knight armour, suddenly yelled softly, “Good gracious! The defense barrier deployed by Lord Bordeaux was breached!”

“What to do? What should we do? The one who came has pretty much around the same strength as Lord Bordeaux. I’m afraid that the two of us cannot deal with this person!” Katos said to Nehem Beige in an incomparably frenetic voice. His face had turned pale in fright.

“For now we can only evacuate!” Nehem Beige was rather calm. When we finished his words, he stopped putting on knight’s armour, but hastily went towards a side door.

When Katos saw Nehem Beige was leaving, without the slightest bit of hesitation, he hurriedly followed behind Nehem Beige, wanting to rapidly leave the area through the side door. He had long forgotten about rescuing those disciples being mercilessly killed outside of the great hall.

A ‘Whoosh’ sound was heard, and a man’s shadow stopped at that side door just in time. He was looking at the two with a wide, gloomy, cold smile.

“You, who are you?” Nehem Beige stiffly paused his steps, looked at the imposing Han Shuo, and asked somewhat panically.

Nehem Beige had wielded the power of Bisli Duchy for many years, and had experienced countless large and small military campaigns. Given that basis, he shouldn’t have so humiliateingly lost his self-control. But this time when Han Shuo came over, those mournful, miserable shrieks never stopped sounding. Even the renowned barrier of the light Sacred Magus Bordeaux from Church of Light was broken. That really gave him a huge shock, and therefore he had forgotten himself.

“He’s Bryan. I’ve seen his picture before. He is that big heathen!” Behind Nehem Beige, Red Bishop Katos of the Church of Light, suddenly pointed his finger at Han Shuo and shrieked.

“That’s right. Hehe. I think that I heard someone said just now that he wanted to kill me to gain divine power. This is very interesting.” Han Shuo sneered and looked at Nehem Beige, and said, “Where is Blount? As long as you tell me where Blount is located, I will let you die comfortably!”

“Guards! Guards! Kill this heathen!” Nehem Beige suddenly shouted loudly. A shining long sword was suddenly pulled out by him. The shiny bright silver fighting aura violently shot out like he had well practiced it. Included among his fighting aura, it carried a divine energy. His demeanor seemed to be very much astonishing.

On the corner of his mouth, Han Shuo revealed a trace of cruel smile. He blankly looked at Nehem Beige as he charged forward right until he was right in front of him. Only then did Han Shuo not-so-urgently threw a punch.

The berserk energy burst forth, and a heavy pressure that was like a mountain enveloped the whole area. Even Katos who was far away felt heavy in his heart, with a feeling of wanting to vomit.

Rumbles....

This punch from Han Shuo made Nehem Beige’s fighting aura immediately scatter. The long sword was bent into an arch and fell onto the floor. The remaining might entered into Nehem Beige’s body. A series of crackle and rattle sounds emitted from his body. After the sound stopped, the bones all over in Nehem Beige’s body shattered, but his internal organs remained intact and undamaged.

Han Shuo grinned as he arrived before Nehem Beige, with one leg stepping on Nehem Beige’s chest, he unenthusiastically asked, “Speak, where is Sacred Knight Blount?”

“Pei! Heretic, I....”

“Krrrack!” Without waiting for Nehem Beige to complete his sentence, Han Shuo stomped him with one foot. His mighty leg directly penetrated Nehem Beige’s chest which had silver armor on it. By the time Han Shuo withdrew his right leg, Nehem Beige had stopped breathing.

# Chapter 440: Bloodbathing the Church

Having witnessed the merciless murder of Sky Rider Nehem Beige by Han Shuo, the Red Bishop Katos of the Bisli Duchy couldn't help take a few steps back, as the fear in his heart urged him to do so.

After shooting Katos a glance, Han Shuo moved towards him with great speed. Han Shuo had arrived in front of Katos before he could realize what had transpired around him. Han Shuo stretched forward his mighty hand as fast as lightning and grabbed Katos by the neck, hanging him in midair.

"Kaff, Kaff! Damnit, what da hell do you want?" Katos blurted out with difficulty. He used both his hands to grip Han Shuo's mighty hand, in a feeble attempt to ease the choking.

"Where is Blount located?" Han Shuo asked grimly as he held Katos' neck with one hand.

"Ugh, ugh....I don't know.....Really....." Katos replied, while his body was being hung in midair. He was twisting around with all his might, but unfortunately for him, he couldn't break free from Han Shuo's tight grip.

"Hehe, do you really think that I can't do anything to you if you decide not to talk?" Han Shuo said with a grim smile. Shortly after he said that, Han Shuo used his empty left hand and pressed the top of Katos' skull. Katos screeched miserably. Han Shuo exercised his five fingers, and forcibly stuck them into Katos' skull.

With this, Han Shuo used a secret technique derived from demonic magic called the 'Soul Searching Hand'. Five strands of gray smoke flowed out of his left hand along fingers and into his meridian channels. It then passed through Han Shuo's consciousness to obtain the memories stored in Katos' mind.

Being on the receiving end of the demonic magic, Red Bishop Katos was wailing like a banshee while struggling wildly. It was as though he was suffering from the most dreadful pain on earth. That was the kind of yelling that never failed to make one's blood run cold after listening to it.

Once 'Soul Searching Hand' was deployed, it will indeed produce an unimaginable amount of pain on the target whose soul was being searched. While performing the search, Han Shuo's five fingers were in constant motion inside Katos' brain. Such bouts of pain was not something an ordinary person could endure.

When Han Shuo used his secret technique to obtain the memories in Katos' mind, a puff of divine energy in Katos' body was immediately set into motion, rapidly converging at his forehead, attempting to resist and destroy the wicked energy within his brain. It's a pity that divine energy such as this was too weak against Han Shuo. Before it could fully converge, Han Shuo broke it up swiftly.

Under the effects of 'Soul Searching Hand', Katos' eyes revealed his lifeforce fading slowly, bit by bit. Moments later, his eyeballs rolled back and only sclera could be seen, and the inhuman shrieking disappeared. After his soul had completely vanished, he was left with a zero percent chance of being reborn.

After extracting his hand that was inserted into Katos' head, Han Shuo pulled out a spotlessly white handkerchief to clean his fingers which was covered in brain juice, and cleaned out the mess that had made its way to his legs. Only then, did he calmly walk out of the grand hall.

Outside the hall revealed a multitude of bodies strewn all over the floor. The Temple Knights and priests present were simply no match for an expert like Han Shuo. They were destined to be slaughtered eventually. But following these events, even more members of the Church of Light were going there, coming from different directions. A legion from the Bisli Duchy, stationed not far away, was also rushing to the scene after receiving the news.

Han Shuo surveyed the scene from an elevated position, and realized that this trip to the Bisli Duchy could be considered as having achieved its objectives. One of the rulers from the seven grand duchies, Nehem Beige of Bisli Duchy, was killed. The largest church belonging to the Church of Light had been bathed with blood. The position of the Church of Light in the Bisli Duchy will be met with unprecedented challenges.

As for Nehem Beige, a Temple Knight from the Church of Light, Han Shuo had originally planned to control him by having a mystical demon possessing his body. However, Han Shuo later discovered that holy aura was present in Nehem Beige's body, which had a world of difference in terms of nature compared to the mystical demons.

Only if Han Shuo could get rid of all the divine energy in Nehem Beige's body, that the mystical demon could possess his mind. But if there was no divine aura within his body, the people from the Church of Light would very quickly suspect an abnormality in Nehem Beige. Therefore, Han Shuo had no other choice but to take action and kill him efficiently.

There were still other churches of the Church of Light in Bisli Duchy, but comparing those with this church, those churches are obviously not on par. Besides, Han Shuo didn't have the luxury of time to clear all the churches of the Church of Light in Bisli Duchy one by one. Therefore, Han Shuo didn't linger any longer in Bisli Duchy, and immediately deployed the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens to fly away.

From Katos' memory, Han Shuo had obtained a lot of useful information. Katos' position in the Church of Light wasn't a low one. Han Shuo learnt of valuable pieces of information from Katos' memories, like the Church of Light's position, distribution and secret forces who operated in the dark. The Church of Light was an enormous religious organization. But what set it apart was the armed forces of this religious organization, who were extremely terrifying. Other than the great number of Light Priests and Temple Knights regiments, the Church of Light has three organizations who work in the dark, namely, Heresies Tribunal, Holy Angels, and Grace Believers.

These three organizations, Heresies Tribunal, Holy Angels, and Grace Believers, were secret forces serving the Church of Light unbeknownst to anyone. There were numerous experts in the three organizations. Several secret operations from the Church of Light were usually carried out by these three organizations. Compared to the Temple Knights, whose strength was known to everyone, these three dark organizations are much more formidable.

Only after learning of the true strength of the Church of Light, did Han Shuo realize why the Church of Light wielded such a powerful influence throughout the whole Profound Continent. While feeling apprehensive, at the same time, Han Shuo's intent to slaughter grew significantly larger. After experiencing his strength grow dramatically, Han Shuo felt that the Church of Light no longer posed as a threat to him. The transgressions they made these years, and the harm they did to the earth elite zombie, made Han Shuo realize that the enmity between him and Church of Light was something impossible to alleviate.

However, Han Shuo did not obtain any precise information about Blount from Katos' memories. All he knew was that after two years of rehabilitation in the Church of Light's headquarters, located at Oden Empire, Blount had fully recovered from his injuries obtain from the last time. As to whether the fully recovered Blount was still in Oden Empire, Katos had no idea.

Although Han Shuo couldn't obtain definite information from Katos, he still harboured a strong resolve to kill Blount. After giving it some thought, Han Shuo suddenly remembered about the existence of the Calamity Church. With that in mind, he flew towards the Boulet Duchy.

Last time, when the seven grand duchies attempted to form an alliance to deal with Brettel City, Han Shuo snuck in and learned of the real identity of the Grand Duke, Burt Zili, of Boulet Duchy. This summoner's meeting with the Necromancy Grand Magus Wolf, made Han Shuo aware that he originated from the Calamity Church.

Since Burt Zili was a key participant from the Calamity Church, perhaps he might be knowledgeable about the location of certain Sacred Knights, like Blount. Calamity Church and the Church of Light are arch-enemies, and therefore must be very mindful about each other's operations and movements. Being a religious organization as enormous as the Church of Light, the Calamity Church was indeed a target Han Shuo could make use of.

Boulet Duchy, Grand Duke Burt Zili's mansion. Han Shuo came in the dark.

Under the curtain of the night, underneath the Grand Duke's mansion, Burt Zili was sitting upright in an altar which had thick green and black smokes curling up around it. Surrounding the sinister and frightening Burt Zili were countless organs from magical beasts. The whole wicked altar was full of all kinds of organs from high-level magical creatures, which made the wicked altar looked like a strange magical beast pieced together with various kinds of flesh and organs.

At the middle of the altar, a rhombus shape was sketched using blood, which overflowed with strands of sinister and cold aura whenever Burt Zili's hands pressed among the air above it. Series of horrifying, inhuman-like howlings went through the middle of the rhombus drawing, giving people an intense palpitating like emotion.

"Oh....darling, come out, come out quickly!" Burt Zili softly yelled with a tender smile on his face. His two eyes were fixated on the middle of the rhombus drawing in the altar.

The rhombus drawing was the connection from this world to another world, the abyss of an infernal. As the horrible screams grew more and more intense, the smile on Burt Zili's face grew more and more charming. His two hands manipulating the empty space above the rhombus, repeatedly pulling the air upwards, as though he was pulling an invisible thread which raised a certain magical creature from it.

A lush green odd-looking hand which only had three sharp nails on it, with disgusting liquid stuck on its surface, slowly emerged from the rhombus. A gloomy and cold, nauseating aura was slowly emitted from the inside.

"Ha! Arise! Arise!!" Burt Zili got somewhat excited.

"Aooo!" a bewildering, mournful wailing sounded. Suddenly, a monstrous terrifying, lizard-like creature scuttled out from the center of the rhombus. It had thick green skin all over its body, covered with disgusting fluid. Its body was five meters long and had two tails. This stinky creature has a strong smell of fish on its body. It had two elephant like tusks and pointed teeth in its mouth.

As soon as it scuttled out from the rhombus, the magical creature shot towards a shadow outside the altar. Its four javelin-like, taper-sharp, devilish hands snatched at the shadow.

“Eh” a soft sound suddenly came from the shadow. Unexpectedly, a type of ruthless energy began to congeal midair. The rapidly approaching magical creature froze all of a sudden in mid-air while maintaining its fierce posture, as though it was being forcibly imprisoned by some kind of energy.

“Who’s there?” Burt Zili immediately cried out in surprise. He was overwhelmed with shock in his heart, and was somewhat gazing at the shadowy spot with fright, where the ‘eh’ sound came from.

Only Burt Zili knew of how hidden and tightly guarded this secret field which he practiced summoning magical creatures was. This person who silently entered this secret field obviously gave him an enormous shock. But what was even more shocking was that the high-level magical creature ‘Dejarka’ was halted and sat frozen in mid-air.

This high-level magical creature, Dejarka, possessed enough strength to kill a Great swordmaster, and its strength was at its peak formidability when it sprung into the air at high speeds. And yet, as it was before this person in the shadows, this powerful creature appeared to have no ability to resist, whatsoever.

As for how frighteningly powerful this person might be, Burt Zili simply dared not imagine!



# Chapter 441: Fawning

“Who are you!?” Burt Zili opened his mouth again. As he uttered these words, his attention was fully focused at the space in front of him, his pair of vicious eyes stared at the shadowy spot, and his body stretched taut. Burt Zili was ready – not to fight, but to flee at the right moment!

An expert who could effortlessly freeze a high-level magical creature in mid-air, in addition to breaking into his secret room without him detecting it, is someone he knew he was no match for. The reason Burt Zili could survive so many years in battle and live on till now, was all because of that accurate and precise ability to judge.

From the shadowy area in which the sound came from, a tall figure revealed themselves. Within the lush green, hazy lighting, that person made their way below the imprisoned high-level magical creature. With a somewhat astonished expression, he took a few glances at the creature that he stopped in mid-air, and then smilingly asked Burt Zili, “Did you summon this?”

Burt Zili who was highly cautious at the moment, took another step backward, and knitted his brows as he took in Han Shuo’s whole body. An awl-like weapon made its way to his left hand. With a gloomy voice, he asked, “That’s right. Who are you? How did you get in here? What do you want?”

“Hehe, the Calamity Church is indeed a really strong organization with a multitude of talented people. This other-worldly magical creature indeed has extraordinary strength. Being able to summon it means that you must have quite the talent in summoning techniques!” Han Shuo continued with a smile. He didn’t seem to mind Burt Zili’s vigilance.

“Who in the world are you?” Burt Zili asked for the third time. He couldn’t fathom Han Shuo’s intentions for coming here, he constantly thought of how he could leave this secret chamber alive. His eyes were twinkling as he glanced at the few gateways that would allow a swift exit.

“Don’t be afraid. I harbour no bad intentions towards you. I’m called

Bryan. You may have heard of me through Wolf. The reason I am looking for you is to find out certain information,” Han Shuo explained unhurriedly with a smile.

“Bryan? You are the lord of Brettel City? That Bryan?” Burt Zili softly shouted. He seemed rather shocked.

Han Shuo kept silent as he nodded his head. Conveniently, he took out his skeletal staff and waved it at Burt Zili who stood far away, thereby proving his identity.

Burt Zili confirming his identity, loosened up. His malicious and old face suddenly changed into a cordial smile, as he walked towards Han Shuo in large strides. “So we’re actually on the same side! You should have told me earlier! You really scared me!” said Burt Zili.

This Burt Zili carried a strange, nauseating smell on his body. Although he was enthusiastic in his walk approaching Han Shuo, it made Han Shuo feel some kind of discomfort. Han Shuo couldn’t help but take a few steps backward, and smilingly said, “You might want to send your magical creature back. It might die if it’s been trapped for too long.”

With a wave of his hand, a strand of demonic light flew out from Han Shuo’s palm. In the blink of an eye it fell onto the space where the high-ranking magical creature ‘Dejarka’ was suspended. After the strand of demonic light broke into its body, the weird magical creature resumed its fierce flight at high speeds.

“Return!” Burt Zili yelled hastily. Strings of long, tedious incantations were then spit out in rapid succession.

The magical creature, Dejarka, which resumed its charge towards Han Shuo baring fangs and brandishing claws, stopped its javelin-like sharp hands from moving, as though it was firmly grasped by some odd energy. It let out hissing sounds of unwillingness as it fell towards the center of the altar quickly and vanished within the rhombus diagram.

After withdrawing his high level magical creature, Dejarka, Burt Zili gave a few glances to the altar that stank to high heaven, forced a smile, then said, “This place is not suitable for us to chat. Come, we’ll talk

upstairs.”

“Sure!” Han Shuo agreed.

After a short while, Han Shuo and Burt Zili of the Calamity Church arrived at a luxurious lounge located in the Duke’s manor. There weren’t any redundant people guarding its surroundings. Burt Zili personally took out some fruits from the seven grand duchies and placed it on the table before Han Shuo.

“Wolf and I have been friends for many years. In fact, everything that I know or have learnt about you has been through Wolf. Hehe, we are all on the same side, so there’s no need to feel so reserved. If there’s anything you need, please don’t hesitate to ask. As long as it’s within my means, I will never refuse!” Burt Zili said with a smile after serving some uncommon fruits to Han Shuo. His manner seemed very friendly.

Han Shuo’s sudden appearance, in addition to his demonstration of imprisoning magical creature ‘Dejarka’ just then, caused an enormous shock to Burt Zili. Originally, when he heard of the necromancy Grand Magus Wolf’s description of Han Shuo’s strength, he thought that Wolf must be exaggerating. He felt that the young-aged Han Shuo absolutely couldn’t reach the heights that Wolf mentioned.

However, now after meeting Han Shuo in person, Burt Zili realized that Wolf’s description indeed was somewhat inaccurate. He was too conservative in his account of Han Shuo’s strength. The strength of a person who could suspend high level magical creature ‘Dejarka’ in midair with no difficulty, is certainly way beyond that of a Great swordmaster or a Grand magus.

It was exactly because of this that Burt Zili’s manner towards Han Shuo was so unusually friendly. The smile on his face even seemed somewhat humble as to curry favor with Han Shuo. If other nobilities of the Boulet Duchy saw that, it would be difficult for them to believe that this Burt Zili is the same guy who was feared as a Grand Duke.

Cheerfully chewing a big mouthful of fruits, Han Shuo appeared to be very calm and unruffled. It was only after he ate a bunch of grape-like blue

coloured fruits, that Han Shuo gave a soft cough, looked at Burt Zili who was sitting upright and still, and said smilingly, “The reason I specifically came to see you is to find out where Sacred Knight Blount is. You might had learned about the grievances I have with him. I don’t want to let him stay alive any longer.”

Burt Zili’s eyes suddenly shone. He confidently replied, “I happened to know the whereabouts of Sacred Knight Blount. He’s currently residing at the Brut Merchant Alliance, doing some detestable things for the Church of Light. The precise location should be Tariq City of the Brut Merchant Alliance. Oh right, they seem to be hunting after someone.”

Han Shuo knew that Calamity Church might be aware of informations about Sacred Knight Blount, because only an enemy would pay so much attention to the trails of a character like Blount. But still, Han Shuo didn’t anticipate that Burt Zili didn’t even need to get to Calamity Church to ask around, and could immediately inform him of the news about Blount. It seems that coming here was really the right decision.

“Thank you very much. I now know what I should do next.” Han Shuo stood up with a faint smile, and slightly bowed towards Burt Zili. It looked as if he planned to leave the place immediately.

“Hold on!” Burt Zili said hurriedly as soon as he saw Han Shuo about to leave without saying anything else. When Han Shuo looked back at him with a puzzled face, Burt Zili quickly continued, “Our dukedom will be your friend. No matter what or when, our duchy will always stand at the side of your Brettel City.”

“Thanks,” Han Shuo replied with one word, instead of stating any of his opinions about the matter. He proceeded on his way out by himself. When he reached the doorway, Han Shuo seemed to have remembered something. He stopped, turned around, and said to Burt Zili, “Oh, right. The Grand Duke of Bisli Duchy, Nehem Beige, and Red Bishop Katos have been gotten rid of by me. You can take advantage of the situation and make your moves against the Bisli Duchy.” “Rea.. really? You killed Nehem Beige?” Burt Zili shrieked right away as his face turned pale.

Han Shuo nodded his head and did not further explain himself. When Burt Zili was going to question about the details, he suddenly discovered that Han Shuo had disappeared without a trace under the cover of the night.

The pleasantly surprised Burt Zili, immediately began to gather all the major aristocrats within his dukedom in excitement. They had a secret military affairs meeting late in the night, and schemed on the best way of attacking the Bisli Duchy which had just lost its Grand Duke.

After Han Shuo left Burt Zili's manor, he directly flew towards the Brut Merchant Alliance. He deployed 'Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens' to its fullest, and streaked across the sky like a shooting star.

Brut Merchant Alliance and Brettel City is separated by the seven grand duchies. At top speed, Han Shuo could fly a distance of up to ten thousand li a day. Using just less than half a day's worth of time, he arrived at Tariq City, which was located at the southwest of the Brut Merchant Alliance.

Dark Mantle of Lancelot Empire could be found in every country. Sure enough, it could also be found in Brut Merchant Alliance. After Han Shuo arrived at Tariq City situated on the southwest of Brut Merchant Alliance, he left a message in the city center using the communication protocol of the Dark Mantle members. After waiting for probably half a day, a member of Dark Mantle in Tariq City came over.

In the prosperous city center of Tariq City, Han Shuo followed this member of Dark Mantle all the way to the local secret headquarters. After entering a mansion house through the back door, the member of the Dark Mantle who didn't even give one glance backwards finally stopped at the doorway. He then said to Han Shuo with a steady face, "Please allow me to see your identity medallion!"

Han Shuo took out the medallion that represents his status, and revealed it before his fellow member. When the member of Dark Mantle saw the two sun symbols on Han Shuo's identity medallion, he immediately got shocked, and his manner instantly turned to be incomparably respectful. He asked, "Please forgive me for not recognizing Your Lordship. May I

know who is Your Lordship?”

“I came from Brettel City!” Han Shuo replied smilingly.

“You, you are Lord Bryan?” that Dark Mantle member suddenly let out a light cry, and he then covered his own mouth so as not to startle someone with his shriek of surprise. His eyes were brimming with excitement and adoration when he looked at Han Shuo.

As he nodded his head, Han Shuo instructed, “Lead me inside. I want to meet the person in charge here!”

“Please come inside, please come inside. I will immediately go and inform that Your Lordship has arrived!” The member hastily brought Han Shuo all the way inside.

“Eh? It’s you. Why are you here?” All of a sudden, one of the three heavyweights of Dark Mantle, Cecilia, let out a yell in surprise. Standing at the front door of the house, she looked at Han Shuo with an expression of astonishment.

# Chapter 442: Complaisant

After about three years worth of time gone by, the beautiful looking Cecilia had learnt to live with a little more tranquility and calmness in her life, while losing a bit of her arrogance and unruliness. What remained the same was her pretty appearance and grandeur temperament.

Nowadays, Han Shuo is more tolerant toward Cecilia as he used to be. This was partly due to her grandpa Sabakas, who personally deployed a transportation matrix for Brettel City, in addition to her change of attitude for not being so sarcastic all the time. Therefore, Han Shuo did not continue his mocking and ridicule towards Cecilia when met with her again.

“I have concluded my training and came to Tariq City for some personal matters. Long time no see! How’s your grandpa doing?” Han Shuo asked Cecilia, as he still held certain respect towards space sacred magus Sabakas.

Cecilia revealed a faint smile when she heard Han Shuo ask about her grandpa, and replied, “Thank you for your concern, my grandpa is doing well.” Looking around, Cecilia noticed that Han Shuo was travelling alone, and she continued, “Come, let’s go inside for discussions.”

From Cecilia’s attitude, Han Shuo could tell that she wasn’t prejudiced against him like she used to be in the past. This was a good development in Han Shuo’s eyes. Given his current strength and status, Han Shuo wouldn’t have felt the slightest bit of fear when facing the space sacred magus Sabakas, let alone Cecilia, who became one of the three heavyweights by relying on Sabakas.

However, since everyone here was members of the Dark Mantle, in the service of the Lancelot Empire, plus Sabakas could have been said as caring toward Han Shuo, it would be ideal if Han Shuo could get along well with Cecilia. No good would come to either of the parties if a dispute really erupted.

Thus, when noticing that Cecilia’s approach towards him had changed,

he gladly trailed behind her and entered the inner section of the mansion.

When he stepped inside, it felt as though the sky and earth had spun, and space was turned upside down. By the time Han Shuo came to his senses, he realized that he had arrived at a serene, harmonious courtyard. Other than Cecilia, there were a few other members from the Dark Mantle in the courtyard. They seemed to be Cecilia's subordinates. Each and every one of them were sitting on round stone stools and were discussing something.

"Let me introduce you to everyone, this is Lord Bryan, fourth Dark Sun envoy of the Dark Mantle. You must have heard of him before," Cecilia said to the Dark Mantle members. As soon as Cecilia entered the place, the faint smile that was on her face just then immediately vanished, and was replaced with a solemn face and a tone of voice which only a superior held.

However, before members of the Dark Mantle came over to greet him, Han Shuo himself actually got a shock. Puzzlingly he asked Cecilia, "Since when did I become a Fourth Dark Sun?"

"Last time, during the civil strife in Ossen City, you assisted His Majesty the King in crushing the rebels, and furthermore, you succeeded in repelling two enemy sacred-grade experts. These contributions were cited as the reasons for your promotion. Oh, right, you disappeared three years for training, so perhaps you weren't informed about this. You may upgrade your identity plate when you return to the Dark Mantle headquarters," Cecilia explained sternly for Han Shuo. She doesn't seem to be joking.

Fourth Dark Sun! In such a huge and powerful organization like the Dark Mantle, every promotion can be said to have been an extremely difficult feat. Han Shuo would never have anticipated that he would climb so quickly to this position. This would also mean that throughout the whole Dark Mantle organization, only the three heavyweights could bind him.

Han Shuo understood in his heart that the reason he could become a



Fourth Sun envoy so rapidly, was partly due to his achievements in the civil war, but more significantly, it was because of his good relations with Lawrence, and old astrologer Madam Grace's judgement of him.

"Oh! No wonder!" Han Shuo exclaimed smilingly.

"Greetings, my Lord!" After Cecilia introduction, all the Dark Mantle members at this place wore either a fawning or envious face. Each and every one of them greeted and bowed their heads towards Han Shuo.

"Alright, that's enough. Sit down guys," Cecilia said as she waved her hand. When she saw that the people went back to their seats promptly, she pointed at a place beside her and said to Han Shuo, "Lord Bryan, here's your seat."

Han Shuo sat there without hesitation. He knew that the Dark Mantle is a strict organization, and they pay close attention to where a person sits. More often than not, the seatings are arranged by their ranks. In the Tariq City branch, Cecilia is by right the highest ranked member there, and right beneath her is the rank, Fourth Dark Sun, which Han Shuo possessed. So naturally, his seat was right beside her's.

"Oh right, is there something that you need to inquire about, since you visited this branch?" Cecilia suddenly asked Han Shuo after he took his seat.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo replied, "I heard that sacred knight Blount of the Church of Light is currently residing in Tariq City, so I came here looking for him. If anyone knows where Blount is hiding, I hope that you can tell me."

When Han Shuo spoke, his eyes scanned around through everyone sitting there. Involuntarily, his glances gave off the feeling as if he was looking down on weak, tiny ants. All of a sudden, every Dark Mantle member present felt as if Han Shuo was the actual person in charge there.

As the person responsible for certain matters for the Empire, and one of the three heavyweights, Cecilia unexpectedly, seemed like a subordinate under Han Shuo's command. This feeling was extremely odd, but at the same time, exceedingly natural.

Even Cecilia herself felt that inexplicably strange feeling. All Han Shuo did was simply sit down and speak. He did not make any unusual movements when he talked, but inevitably became the center of everyone's attention. It had nothing to do with his status or his rank in the Dark Mantle.

"Sir, I know that sacred knight Blount had been spotted in Tariq City around half a month ago, but I have no idea as to whether he is still in Tariq City!" A Dark Mantle member stood up from his round stool and answered Han Shuo respectfully.

"Thank you. Do you know why he came to Tariq City?" Han Shuo asked with a faint smile.

"I think I know!" When this Dark Mantle member showed a dark face, Cecilia suddenly turned her head and said to Han Shuo. "It should be related to the reason I came here."

"Oh? What was it?" Han Shuo creased his brows and asked attentively.

"Outside of Tariq City, there's a canyon named Tarrag. Tarrag Canyon is similar to the Dark Forest of Lancelot Empire, an exotic place where magical beasts run rampant. All this while, Tarrag Canyon had been considered an off-limits area by the Brut Merchant Alliance. Other than some of the true experts, an average person would never dare venture into Tarrag Canyon.

Approximately three months ago, some experts who were cultivating in Tarrag Canyon, claimed that they had been attacked by some strong magical beasts, and were driven away from Tarrag Canyon. It is common knowledge that most super-ranked magical beasts live alone, and it's rare to find those that live in packs. This caught the attention of many different forces. I came here specifically, to investigate about this," Cecilia explained for Han Shuo.

With a doubtful face and creased brows, Han Shuo looked at Cecilia and asked, "What does this have to do with Blount? Could it be that Blount came here to investigate it as well?"

"No. Blount and his Church of Light members seem to be hunting for

someone. This person should be a big heretic which the Church of Light determined, otherwise they wouldn't have sent Blount to personally set out on the campaign. The person also seems to be aware of the strange phenomenon in Tarrag Canyon. So with nowhere else to escape, this person pushed their luck and got into Tarrag Canyon. Probably hoping that the peculiarity of Tarrag Canyon will cause Blount and his party to abandon their pursuit.

However, the Church of Light always considered themselves as the spokespeople for God in this world, and naturally wouldn't care about the monstrosities in Tarrag Canyon. After they discovered that the big heretic entered Tarrag Canyon, Blount and his party made their way in there half a month ago. But since then, there had been no further news about it," Cecilia slowly explained as she looked at Han Shuo.

"So that's what it is!" Han Shuo realized what was going on, and immediately joyfully said to Cecilia, "Thank you for the information. Alright, I'm done here. You guys may continue your discussions. I'm going to take a trip to Tarrag Canyon."

"My Lord, please be careful. Tarrag Canyon is an extremely unforgiving place. We have lived in Tariq City for many years, and are aware of the mysteries surrounding that place. Even the lightning sacred magus Reynold Dila of Brut Merchant Alliance was stranded in there for a long time. After Reynold Dila learned about the abnormal behaviour of the creatures, he even forbade some adventurers from entering Tarrag Canyon. He, if anyone, should know about the dangers hidden in there!" The Dark Mantle member who reported information about sacred knight Blount to Han Shuo just then hastily warned Han Shuo.

"Thank you for your reminder. I will be careful!" Han Shuo thanked him with a smile, although he did not take it to heart.

Han Shuo, being in the Carnal Realm now, had the confidence to defeat any sacred grade experts. In demonic arts, breaking through to the next realm always meant many folds increase in strength. If he were to fight against sacred knight Blount and earth sacred magus Dempus again, Han Shuo had absolute certainty that he could kill them both.

At this moment, sacred grade experts were no longer formidable opponents against Han Shuo who had just entered the Carnal Realm. Even for a demi-god existence like the Ancient Lizard King, Han Shuo, who just underwent an unprecedented rise in confidence, would have the nerve to directly contend against him. Han Shuo believed that there weren't many things in existence found in the Profound Continent that could harm him, and therefore he did not have the slightest bit of fear for the Tarrag Canyon.

## Part 2

"Bryan, are you going to Tarrag Canyon?" Cecilia suddenly asked.

Nodding his head, Han Shuo replied, "Yep, I'm going there to meet Blount. That guy injured my friend the last time we met. I will not allow him to live in this world any longer."

"Well then, is it too much to ask for you to enter Tarrag Canyon with us? We are preparing to uncover the secrets of Tarrag Canyon. We are all members of the Dark Mantle, serving the Lancelot Empire. Going in there with you gives us a better sense of assurance. Furthermore, we can help you keep a lookout for news regarding sacred knight Blount's location. What do you say?" Cecilia looked at Han Shuo with a pleading gaze as she sought for his approval.

His wild, impressive performance in Ossen City last time left a deep impression in Cecilia's heart. Although after the event, Han Shuo did clarify that the reason for his dramatic increase in strength was because he borrowed some other people's energy, but that kind of immense strength made Cecilia feel that it was just an excuse Han Shuo made to be modest.

Once he returned from his three years of training, he immediately said with incomparable confidence that he wanted to kill sacred knight Blount. Even without giving it too much thought, Cecilia could tell that Han Shuo's strength must have had advanced further. Otherwise, he wouldn't have made such claims.

To have an expert such as him accompanying them into Tarrag Canyon,

will add a large amount of assurance to the safety of Cecilia and her party.

But now, given Han Shuo's current status and strength, even the King of the Lancelot Empire would have to meticulously curry favor and rope him in. Therefore, if Cecilia wanted to trouble Han Shuo, her tone would of course need to be endearing, instead of summarily and arrogantly giving orders like before.

After looking at Cecilia who was in a pleading expression, and the newly brightened eyes of the Dark Mantle members, Han Shuo hesitated for a moment, but finally nodded and said, "Alright!"

With the existence of his mystical demons, Han Shuo didn't need the Dark Mantle members' help to scout at all after arriving in Tarrag Canyon. The members were actually of little use for Han Shuo. But still, he is a fellow member of the Dark Mantle. Including the fact that he obtained the information he required from them, Han Shuo found it embarrassing to refuse it outright, and therefore he reluctantly accepted the request.

"Thank you. We still in our preparation phase, and will set off to Tarrag Canyon tomorrow, early in the morning. Erm, if you're tired, I can show you where you may rest," Cecilia earnestly thanked Han Shuo with a very faint smile on her beautiful face.

"Okay. Please prepare a secret room for me. I will be resting for a while!" Han Shuo gladly accepted. After the hostility between him and Cecilia was extinguished, the attractive looking Cecilia suddenly felt that much more pleasing to the eye. Thinking back on the overbearing Cecilia in the past, and comparing that to her current accommodating attitude, Han Shuo felt a sense of satisfaction.

"Follow me!" Cecilia walked towards a stair that led upwards. When he stepped inside, he had that giddy feeling as though the earth and sky were spinning again. The next thing he knew, he found himself in a room made of stone. "Rest well. I will go and get ready!" Cecilia said smilingly. As soon as her lovable body moved backward, she completely disappeared from this stony room.

In this Dark Mantle branch at Tariq City, they were able to utilize some

wonderful space refraction magic. Although Han Shuo couldn't understand it, he could still destroy the boundary by means of brute strength. After arriving at the room made of stone, Han Shuo used some stones found there, and with some wood carved with peculiar symbols, he laid out a grimace shaped magical array around the room, and finally took out his skeletal staff.

As he finished his incantation, Han Shuo closed his eyes. His soul traversed through layer upon layer of space-time tunnels and emerged in the desolated land of departed souls.

On the summit of a lofty, rocky mountain, the earth elite zombie, wood elite zombie, fire elite zombie, metal elite zombie, and water elite zombie all lined up to form an arc. In the center of the five elite zombies, stones were swept along the ground, and sand whirled about it. Five colours of earthy brown, woodish green, fiery red, golden yellow, and watery white beams, violently shot out in every direction. Whiffs of raging, chaotic energy were released from bodies of the five elite zombies. Earthy brown, fiery red, and golden yellow combined with one another in a bizarre manner.

Every time the energy of three colours mixed together and converged, it would form dreadful rumbling sounds, and fomenting the chaotic energy the region in their center, fueling the formidable might of this Great Formation of Divine Corpses and Five Elements. A series of explosions came from its center, even the majestic, huge mountain seemed to be trembling uncontrollably.

The Five Elements – metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, exist in every plane of existence. The elite zombies, as they were nurtured and formed by the Five Elements, could skillfully manipulate the Five Elements. The Great Formation of the Divine Corpses and Five Elements could fuse the powers of the Five Elements, increasing the strengths of the five elite zombies, greatly.

In the center where the fusion of energy happened, chaotic energy shot out everywhere and in all directions. However, at the moment only earth elite zombie, fire elite zombie, and metal elite zombie could fuse their

powers together. As for wood elite zombie and water elite zombie, they couldn't merge their powers with the three at the moment.

Riding on Bone Devil, Little Skeleton stood proudly on the empty space above the lofty mountain. He was acting as though he was a general, carefully reviewing his soldiers as he looked at them practicing the Great Formation of the Divine Corpses and Five Elements, constantly monitoring any variation in the chaotic energy the five produced. Occasionally he would intervene and suppress energy that shot towards the ground in order to avoid having his palace located not far away to collapse from the quake.

A spiritual connection suddenly leaped into Little Skeleton's soul, and his purple demon eye suddenly brightened. He stared at the distorted empty space before him, which looked like ripples of water, layer upon layer whose wrinkles were undulated. From there, a mighty soul emerged.

"Father, why did you come here?" Little Skeleton was somewhat surprised as he asked Han Shuo, whose spirit had just descended.

"I came to see how their practice is going." Han Shuo unfolded his consciousness to cover the five elite zombies below him, who were tirelessly practicing the Great Formation of the Divine Corpses and Five Elements, and observed the changes of the chaotic energy in their center.

"Little Earth, Little Gold, and Little Fire could fuse their energy together. Only Little Water and Little Wood couldn't get the hang of it. Father, did you come here to tell them what they should do?" Little Skeleton said to Han Shuo.

"No. The Great Formation of Divine Corpses and Five Elements were imprinted deep into their souls the moment they were born. The Five Elements is an innate skill of theirs, and I'm incapable of guiding them. It can only be done through their own practice and comprehensions," Han Shuo replied. After a few thoughts, with his attention focused on water elite zombie and wood elite zombie, he said, "Those two have yet to figure out the technique after spending so much time. Perhaps it is because they have not yet evolved to a certain stage!"

“That could be the case. Of the five, Little Earth was the first to appear. Little Fire and Little Gold have things that they could use to help them. Those two things seem to have helped them evolve faster. That might be why the three could master how to fuse the energy so quickly. Little Water and Little Wood only appeared later on, and didn’t have anything that could help them evolve faster, therefore even until now, they couldn’t proficiently put their innate skills to use!” Little Skeleton said to Han Shuo.

“Oh, right, how about the Pearl of Souls from the Tree of Souls. Have you given it a try? How were the results?” The reason he could make a breakthrough into Carnal Realm was all thanks to the efficacy of one Pearl of Soul. Therefore, when Han Shuo recalled about the wonderful Tree of Souls, he couldn’t help but asked Little Skeleton.

“Of course. They all took one Pearl of Souls from the tree. It is indeed beneficial to increasing our wisdom. It’s just that the Tree of Souls needs a long time to bear fruit, therefore it is temporarily out of use for the pearl fruits needed to help Little Water and Little Wood to evolve faster,” Little Skeleton replied somewhat helplessly, not knowing how to help water elite zombie and earth elite zombie.

“Well, it seems that I got to try and find a way to refine some medicinal pellets. To evolve naturally like this takes a rather long time,” Han Shuo replied after thinking for a moment.

“Father, with just the three of their energy fusing together, this Great Formation of Divine Corpses and Five Elements already is terrifying enough in power. Even for a powerful Bone Dragon, I believe that it will be annihilated once it is trapped in there!” Little Skeleton replied.

“Yep, I know the score. But once the five powers are combined, their might will be even more terrifying. In addition, as the five evolve and become stronger, the power of the formation will also further increase in strength. I look forward to even more surprises they will bring me!”

“Father, they will not disappoint you.”

“Alright, I have to leave now. Look after them and don’t let any mishap happen. Also, pay a little extra attention when they are practising the



formation. They must not be reckless and careless in their practice.

“Understood!”

After seeing that Little Skeleton understood his instructions, Han Shuo did not continue to stay in the netherworld. He recalled his soul to where it was before and arrived at the Profound Continent.

Sensing for a while, Han Shuo saw that he still had some time to kill. He decided to continue his meticulous study of the three necromancy boundaries he found out in Cemetery of Death – Boundary of Fear, Boundary of Weakness, and Boundary of Aging. In fact, he actually made some progress during his intensive study, and gained some insights and understanding towards the topic.

It was precisely because of his habit of studying all the time that Han Shuo could progress so rapidly, and reach substantial heights in both fields.

Whenever he delved into solving a difficult problem, time would always pass rapidly unbeknownst to him. Suddenly, Han Shuo felt that the formation deployed around him trembled slightly, waking him up from his contemplation.

“Bryan, we can head out now.” Cecilia’s voice suddenly arrived in Han Shuo’s ears.

“Ok!” Han Shuo got up, conveniently putting away the rocks and bewildering woods around him, and walked outside the room.

# Chapter 443: Boundary of Weakness

The Tarrag Canyon of the Brut Merchant Alliance is a restricted area. Any ordinary man could only dream of entering such a place. Just like in the Dark Forest in the Lancelot Empire, only the most willed of adventurers would ever dare venture into its depths.

Owing to the abnormal behaviors of the magical beasts in Tarrag Canyon some time ago, many eager traveller has been driven away. With the addition of warnings of lightning from sacred magus Reynold Dila of Brut Merchant Alliance, everyone kept a distance from Tarrag Canyon.

The followers of the Dark Mantle under Cecilia ventured into the Tarrag Canyon with Cecilia and Han Shuo leading them. They discovered not a trace of a single soul having ever set foot there. The Canyon was eerily tranquil.

The hills of the Tarrag Canyon were far more uneven compared to the likes of the Dark Forest of the Lancelot Empire, with a swamp at its every crevice.

“In the recent days, countless forces have dispatched their people to catch a glimpse of activity within the Tarrag Canyon. But the magical beasts that resided there seemed to have gone mad, and with that, increasingly violent, causing countless deaths and driving many more away from the Canyon,” Cecilia groaned in annoyance, her voice almost shaky as she dragged along.

Behind her were twelve Dark Mantle members directly under her control. She usually brought these twelve members of Dark Mantle with her wherever she went. Amongst them were magi, swordsmen, knights, bandits and archers. Together, they formed a complete team.

These twelve worthy subordinates were carefully handpicked by Cecilia herself. Over the course of years working together they have forged a certain harmony that only the most in-sync of teams could emulate, and, through even the most of dire times, emerged the victor. Furthermore, with the addition of the formidable Han Shuo there was no denying the

power possessed by this team.

“Dame, why is it that there has been no trace of human intervention our whole way here?” Tiaru the bandit asked solemnly with caution as he examined the area.

Throughout the journey, Tiaru was focused only on scouring the place, not unlike a monkey as he scouted in every direction, providing the party with timely information. Despite having travelled deep into the canyon for half the day, they hadn’t met a single team of adventurers, nor anyone at all entering the Tarrag Canyon for that matter. The situation was baffling.

According to the scouts of the Dark Mantle, several adventurers had, in the past few days, entered the Tarrag Canyon. It would have made sense to have come across at least a few of them.

“I have no idea. Perhaps they have ventured far deeper into the canyon. Perhaps we should pick up our pace,” Cecilia replied without much thought. Her gaze, intentionally or otherwise, landed on Han Shuo, who was walking behind them.

Ever since they entered the Tarrag Canyon, Han Shuo had remained silent. He had merely followed closely behind their backs, and would, from time to time, study an enormous magic book. He didn’t seem the least bit concerned with the dangerous endeavour of descending into the Tarrag Canyon.

And indeed, that was quite simply the case.

Just when Cecilia woke him up in his secret room, Han Shuo began to delve into the enigma that was the Boundary of Weakness, and was perplexed with certain difficulties of the magic. He continuously withdrew magical tomes from his space ring, and studied and pondered on the subject assiduously.

Ssssss... A creature was approaching from afar.

Tiaru the bandit creased his brows, and sprung from a large tree straight towards another. He grabbed onto the branch of a slender willow tree and continued towards the source of the noise to figure out what was

happening.

“It seems as though some magical beasts are coming. We must be careful, large hordes of magical creatures are difficult to handle. Hopefully we won’t be so unlucky this time!” Cecilia said to her subordinates as she withdrew a staff specially made for priests.

Han Shuo, who was in deep thought about how the Boundary of Weakness causes enemies to grow mentally and physically weak, had actually heard the ‘Sssss’ noise approaching well before the rest did. Without the need for mystical demons dispersing in every direction, Han Shuo managed to detect several hundred magical beasts drawing closer and closer to them with his consciousness. These hundred or so magical beasts approaching were of assorted ranks, mostly ranks three or four. The most powerful of them were just three first-tier magical beasts. There was an absence of any super-ranked magical creatures present in the wave, therefore Han Shuo felt no obligation for concern on his part.

The bandit, who had earlier swung away past the willows, had just then springboarded himself into the air off a branch, and landed firmly before Cecilia. “The beasts are approaching in the hundreds. They seem to be coming for us!” Tiaru reported in a low voice.

“Prepare for battle. These magical beasts shouldn’t be too hard to handle!” Cecilia ordered decisively. Soon after, they had begun to set up trap boundaries. The archers, magi, and swordsmen assumed their positions, with the magi and archers in the very middle, as they drew their weapons, defending the grounds.

Sitting in the center, Han Shuo creased his brows, and temporarily laid down his monstrous book. He looked at Cecilia, who was instructing her subordinates to deploy defense boundaries, and asked, grinning faintly, “Need any help?”

“Thanks, but we can handle this for now!” Cecilia replied, confident that she could deal with this group of magical beasts.

Han Shuo nodded his head and without speaking further, continued to study the magical book in his hand, titled ‘Necromancy Magic’, trying to

make sense of the marvels and the deployment of the Boundary of Weakness.

Not only could the Boundary of Weakness make all those that entered it feel frail and fatigued, it also had paralyzing and incapacitative effects on one's soul. This is because the Boundary of Weakness is assembled by two segments of incantations – one aimed at the enemy's physical body, and the other at his soul.

However, to fully unleash the true wrath of the Boundary of Weakness, one must master perfect a balance of power against the flesh and soul. Failure on either flesh or soul means failure entirely. Han Shuo had practiced for a long time, but still had yet to grasp it. He was unable to perfectly put together the two incantations, and therefore unable to deliver a true Boundary of Weakness.

Han Shuo realized, reading the book, that the crux of every living being is its soul. To maim one's soul would be to, in turn, maim one's body. If one were to feel mentally feeble and weak, his body would reflect it and begin to lack strength. By such reasoning, Han Shuo concluded that the point of attack is to cripple the soul. As soon as the soul perceived itself to be weak, the physical body would also weaken. Han Shuo knew then that he was progressing in the right direction, but needed a moment to digest all the information and truly master it. He racked his brain, hoping to see the light.

As Han Shuo slowly wrapped his head around it all, hundreds of magical beasts of the Tarrag Canyon rushed forth. They seemed to be able to detect the scent of humans. Their pupils were scarlet red as they roared violently, charging straight at Cecilia and her people.

"These beasts are mad!" Cecilia shouted softly. The magical staff she was waving shot out silvery lights that sprinkled onto the five swordsmen at the forefront, providing them with strength and enhancing their powers.

Multiple incantations sounded beside Cecilia as the fire magus, lightning magus, and water magus chanted along. Fire Snakes slithered off

with vigour, strobes of lighting bombarded through the sky, and tree roots shot out of the ground like pointed stakes, all aimed at the pack of magical beasts rushing towards them.

As the spells came down, havoc wreaked over the flock of beasts. Many lower ranking creatures immediately lost all fighting capability when hit by the wave of magic. Only some first, second and third rank magical beasts could withstand this wave of magical attack, owing to their resilient bodies, and continue to storm ahead.

Two archers released torrents of arrows with admirable composure. After streaking through the vast sky, one after another, the arrows landed clean into the beasts with a swoosh, killing each one of them. Not a single miss.

Under the double-barreled attack of the magi and archers, a third of the magical beasts had collapsed for good before they could even get close. Some of the more powerful magical creatures that were closest to the area could release magic and poisonous fluid. Creatures like the Frost Eagles and Medusa began spewing frost and venom.

Cecilia ceaselessly performed all sorts of auxiliary spells on her fellow comrades, while the three mages deployed boundaries to block incoming attacks. The traps that were set up in advance were also deployed, and the magical beasts fell into a pool of blood one after another.

It must be said that Cecilia and the Dark Mantle members beside her had great rapport and coordination with each other. In the previous ten days, due to the team's cooperation, a great majority of the magical beasts were killed using spells or arrows before they could come anywhere near them. And if any of those creatures did manage to get close to them, they would have been met by five unwavering swordsmen defending the front, ready to deflect any approaching enemy at any given time. It looked as though this battle really wasn't much of a problem for Cecilia and her team.

At that moment, Han Shuo gazed at the magical beasts, still charging fiercely, unafraid of death. Han Shuo seemed to have had an epiphany of

sorts, and urgently chanted an incantation. The chilling element of death that hovered through the air suddenly converged, and formed a ring around the flock of magical beasts.

All of a sudden, the high-ranking magical creatures which were charging forward became strangely sluggish. It was as though they were collectively hit by some powerful anesthetic, slowing them down to half the speed.

“I did it!” Han Shuo gasped in pride and amazement. He was shocked to see the magical creatures within the Boundary of Weakness become so lethargic.

All of a sudden, Han Shuo felt an enormously mighty presence sneak towards them. He squinted, spying on it.

# Chapter 444: Beating up a Sneaky Attacker

Cecilia and the others were fully focused on dealing with the magical beasts attacking them. Only high-level creatures remained. Rushing forward, they released poisonous fluids and magical spells unceasingly, skills that they are undoubtedly born with.

It had initially been somewhat of a challenge to Cecilia and her party defeating the beasts. However, after Han Shuo's Boundary of Weakness came down, the magical beasts slowed down tremendously in an instant. Cecilia and her team managed to then catch their breaths, regather their mental strength and take advantage of the situation to deploy some magical spells, enveloping the remaining magical beasts in an abyss of suffering.

The meatshields at the frontlines who had been standing upright all the while, dedicated to guarding the area, withdrew their javelins and darted them straight at the beasts, who were yet crawling into range, bodies and souls exhausted by the Boundary of Weakness, impaling them.

"Thank you!" Cecilia shouted to Han Shuo, who was a distance away.

"No problem! That was nothing," Han Shuo replied with a faint smile.

Even without the help of Han Shuo's Boundary of Weakness, Cecilia and her party would have managed to fend off the flock of magical beasts, but it would not have been nearly as simple. There was simply no way the knights and five swordsmen could have come out unscathed as they did had it not been for Han Shuo.

A swordmaster wielded his imposing weapon of choice as he marched into the field of corpses. He stripped the magical cores off several high-ranking magical creatures one by one. Delighted, he exclaimed, "What a harvest we have here!"

"Don't bother with cores under rank three, they aren't worth nearly enough gold coins. Besides, we better hurry out!" Cecilia instructed from a



distance.

“Yes my Lady, I won’t be long,” a second swordmaster named Karey replied, raising his voice as he strode away towards several magical beasts that had earlier been met with rather violent deaths.

Han Shuo furrowed his brows, sensing someone lurking in the shadows. It was zooming nearer by the second, headed straight for the swordmaster furthest away from everyone else. The figure emitted a queer but powerful aura. Han Shuo was certain that once the figure got close enough to the swordmaster, the outcome would be certain death.

A sudden thought struck Han Shuo. With a tighter consciousness, he became transfixed on the being hiding in the lush undergrowth. Han Shuo was standing beside Cecilia when he was reduced into a lump of black radiance, then simply disappeared without a trace.

Cecilia noticed that someone beside her was missing and abruptly turned around confused. “What? Where’s Bryan?”

Meanwhile, swordmaster Karey, who was unwittingly collecting magical core of medusa, suddenly heard a faint rustle, setting him on edge. Without a second to spare, an orb of green smoke had rolled over to him. The green smoke engulfed him before he could react, like being swallowed whole.

In an instant, Karey felt as though his body was being clasped firmly in an enormous hand, from which there was no escape. With such tight pressure against his chest, he hadn’t even the breath to call for help, and could only watch as they receded deep into the shrubbery through the cloud of green smoke, farther and farther away from Cecilia and the others. Karey was brimming with fear without a clue what was going on. He dreaded unknown, but there was nothing he could do. He would not budge and could not speak. Karey grew sullen, his heart gradually sinking.

“Don’t worry, I’m right beside you. We have to find out where this thing is taking you!” chimed a familiar voice.

Karey beamed. It was Han Shuo. Through Cecilia, Karey had heard of the frightening power he possessed. And now, having witnessed Han Shuo

trail them undetected, Karey was reassured. Han Shuo was everything Cecelia described and more.

The tremendous orb of green smoke rolled along carrying Karey with it. Only after nearly half a dozen li further into Tarrag Canyon did the smoke begin to slow down as they approached a muddy ground. All of a sudden, the once static sludge began to generate an immense pulling force, drawing Karey into it.

Han Shuo, who had been trailing along, extended his five right-hand fingers, and out of them stretched five infinitely fine strobes of green light. With his eagle-like claws, he slashed at the sludge like a beast.

The mass of soggy ground blew up. Bit by bit, sludge skewered the sky above it as the ground began to tremble.

Karey was startled by all the rumbling, all the while knowing he was done for, there was no escaping this. But at that moment, the restraints on his body loosened. Han Shuo stood grimly before him, green lights still shooting from his fingertips. Karey regained mobility and attempted to break away from the smoke surrounding him. The lump of green which had held him so tightly seemed to have lost its grip completely.

As a swordmaster, Karey wasn't too weak himself. He crept out in a flurry, hopping off the protruding sludge, which now resembled pillars, and escaping to the shore.

"Show yourself!" Han Shuo yelled towards the sludgy ground as he stood imposingly above it. The lights from his fingertips faded away.

Just after Han Shuo reclaimed his explosive energy, the ground settled. The sludge stakes plunged back into the ground, revealing a human figure glazed head to toe with mud.

"Who are you?" asked the figure, her weak voice creaking, almost like a rusted hinge.

Han Shuo was in disbelief. The voice he was hearing, it was undoubtedly that of an elderly woman. The figure was burrowed deep within the shrubbery, her face all the while obscured from Han Shuo as he

approached the sludge.

“Who are you? Why did you attack me?” Karey retorted before Han Shuo could reply.

In a swish, the figure flew off high into the sky, and dove downwards at Han Shuo like a bird of prey ready to scoop up its next meal. She did not answer, and instead cursed, “How dare you meddle with my business! You mischievous child! I will slaughter you!”

Streams of green smoke poured from the old woman through seven apertures, who looked simply menacing. Her appearance was very much like that of the foulest of spirits imaginable.

The green smoke in the air seemed to waft through the air randomly, but it was in fact drifting rapidly at Han Shuo. It began to move several times as fast just as it approached Han Shuo, effortlessly trapping him. The green smoke bore through Han Shuo’s body by the pores of his skin.

The old woman followed several steps behind the smoke flowing from her eyes and nostrils. As soon as the wisps of green smoke had attached themselves to Han Shuo, she began to let out the most repulsive laugh. A wave of strange energy burst out from her palm, and with it she cursed Han Shuo.

Strands of green smoke entered Han Shuo’s body, a sensation of millions of ants devouring his flesh and blood from the inside. Han Shuo’s consciousness could render clearly every last abnormality on his body. When he saw that the old woman was covering him with her palm, Han Shuo snorted coldly, and the demon infant within his body began its suction.

The energy that entered Han Shuo’s body, like a whale taking in water, flowed straight through him into the demon infant. After two rotations, a strange substance, apparently nutrition for the demon infant, formed. Only now did the old woman’s palm reach the top of Han Shuo’s head.

Her eyes filled with shock and bewilderment. The old woman seemed to have felt the unusual movements of the energy through Han Shuo’s body, and cried out in terror. She attempted to flee as quickly as she could.

Han Shuo was right beneath the old woman and began to smile. He looked up at her within arms reach, and threw a fist. In a flash, the knife-like demonic yuan poured into the old woman through the center of her palm. It destroyed the strange energy that had been brewing on her palm like a massive, earth-shattering dragon, and continued straight through her guts.

A stream of blood gushed from the woman's mouth. She had been struck flying up to the sky. Her face was in pain, her heart filled with regret. Damnit, why did I provoke this guy? After evading the Church of Light all these years, in spite of everything, because of a single moment of foolishness I'm just going to die at the hands of some stupid demon? And all for nothing, she thought, sighing.

Before the old woman's body even landed, Han Shuo flew over at lightning speed, and firmly grabbed her by her sludgy, tangled hair. A whiff of demonic yuan flew into her body, and subdued her. He then carried her, descending to the ground.

They had only dealt blows face-to-face once, but already was she heavily injured and captured alive. Unable to resist, the old woman's heart filled with dejection and sorrow. She had no idea what the hell was wrong with the world. This young man could actually be more frightening than those of the Church of Light, who had been hunting her for many years. This was unacceptable.

For this ferocious old woman, Han Shuo could show no mercy. He dragged her by the hair towards less muddy waters, and shoved her head into it. A few scrubs later, the sludge which had coated her face was mostly gone.

"Speak. Why are you attacking us? Who are you?" Han Shuo demanded coldly, tossing her aside to pull out a clean handkerchief for all the scum on his hands.

# Chapter 445: Same as Heretics, but Big Differences!

Much of the sludge on the woman's face had not gone away with the dirty water, leaving her barely less filthy than before. But, finally, after a little help from Han Shuo, her complexion could at least be distinguished.

She appeared to be in her fifties or sixties, hair of ash-grey, long and tangled. The carving knife known as time had left a confluence of wrinkles like ravines on her face, and her skin thin, inelastic and lacking any radiance. Her eyes carried the only distinguishing color on her, a rare green tainted with unresolved resentment.

Her green eyes fixed on Han Shuo, inspecting him as he raised her. At only what seemed like twenty years old, Han Shuo couldn't have possessed such pinnacle strength, whether in cultivating magic or martial arts. However, there he was, having just defeated her simply, without room for any resistance.

Pa! A slap flew across the old woman's face. Han Shuo yelled, "I'm talking to you!"

When it came to Han Shuo, there was no respecting anyone who would mount a sneak attack on another so indiscriminately, not even for an elderly woman. Besides, with those green eyes, she looked none too virtuous anyway.

She awoke abruptly at the slap, her heart loaded with fury, and exploded at Han Shuo, "Little demon, you can kill me, but you will not humiliate me!"

"Shut up and answer my question or you'll suffer!" threatened Han Shuo impatiently as he glared at the old woman. He turned to Karey who was walking towards him, and said, "This old hag left a trail behind for a reason. Cecilia and the others must be on their way. Go and catch up with them."

"Alright. I am forever grateful for your Lordship's rescue. Your humble

subordinate shall engrave this in his heart!” Karey bowed at Han Shuo, and finally left.

“How did you know about the markers?” the old woman questioned, though she was unable to move.

“Did you really think your foolish trickery would escape my discerning eyes?” asked Han Shuo sarcastically, “Now speak! Why did you bring us here? What are you planning?”

The green eyes glowed up like strange lights. She has checked her body in silence, and attempted to move with her own power.

“Stop wasting your energy you old fart! You cannot escape!” Han Shuo scolded, staring at her coldly. He was confident that she could not escape.

“Hm,” he scoffed. He got behind the woman and began to caress her back with his mighty hands.

“What are you doing? What are you doing?! I’ll talk! I’ll tell you everything! Please, spare me!” The old woman was frightened to the bone. She could no longer maintain a steady mental state, and began shouting involuntarily. Much to his surprise, she sounded like she was on the verge of tears

“I beg you, please spare me. I’m old. I could be your grandmother. You wouldn’t do this to your own grandmother! I’m just an ugly-”

“Shut the fuck up. What is the matter with you? I don’t have such unconventional fetishes!” Han Shuo shouted. Filled with rage, he pulled back his mighty hands, raised a brow, and asked her in a deep voice, “You have the body of divine favor?”

“Ye... yes. So what?” She had been relieved to hear that Han Shuo wasn’t trying to violate her. But after his last question, she was shocked, and muttered, “How did you know that?”

Han Shuo was about to answer her, but shrugged instead. He raised his head and stared into the distance, then smiled grimly. “I’ve searched high and low for them, but unexpectedly, these men came sending themselves to my doorstep!”

Han Shuo stopped interrupted. He sensed a twenty-strong envoy headed their way. They were men of the Church of Light, experts of mixed professions. And their leader happened to be Han Shuo's own mortal enemy, sacred knight Blount. They were approaching the area following the trails.

Just as his consciousness detected the arrival of these men, several mystical demons swooped over to eavesdrop on their conversations.

A little while later, Han Shuo's gaze fixed on the old woman. With a faint smile, he chuckled, "So you are the big heretic that Blount is after! Elizabeth, did you plan to kill Karey, and shift the blame on the Church of Light? You drew us here so we would confront them? Very smart. Very smart indeed. You sinister cunning old thing, surely not a good thing."

"How did you know that? Who in the world are you? How is it that you know everything?" Elizabeth looked at Han Shuo petrified. Her body trembling, she continued, "You obviously already know the answer, so why ask? What do you want with me?"

"Hush now," he snickered perversely. "They are discussing their reasons for hunting you. Let me listen." Han Shuo pursed his lips and gestured at Elizabeth to stay silent.

"What, what do you want?" Elizabeth's heart was filled with doubt. This unfathomable young man before her had surprised her quite enough. She had no idea where Han Shuo came from nor what he was up to. A sense of unknown danger lingered with her, an unpleasant feeling, to say the least.

Minutes later, Han Shuo turned to face Elizabeth once more. He had on a sinister smile across his face. Nodding his head, he said, "Not bad, Elizabeth, not bad at all. Your unique body of divine favor can absorb the Church of Light's holy energy. It's no wonder the Church hasn't spared a pain to try to kill you!"

"You know it, you know it all. Fine, what do you really want?" Han Shuo had, by now, listed each and every one of her secrets. Elizabeth was certain it would be near impossible to escape from Han Shuo's palm, and consequently loosened up. She looked at Han Shuo calmly, with a face that

seemed to say 'do whatever you want to me, I don't care'.

"Such an interesting body of divine favor. Very interesting. Hmm, we are both heretics being hunted by the Church of Light. Perhaps we needn't be so unfriendly towards each other!" Han Shuo said with a slight grin.

"You, you hold grudges with the Church of Light as well?" Elizabeth was in a perturbed state of mind. After an unceasing suspension between hope and despair, that cool, composed attitude of hers had long gone without a trace.

"That's right, just like you! A big heathen on the run from the Church of Light." Han Shuo beamed at Elizabeth, and continued, "However, that was a long time ago. Now we are not so similar. I am the hunter, and Church of Light is the prey! Hahah, we both are heretics, but with big differences!"

Just after uttering those words, 'whooshing' sounds began, and several human shadows landed. They were priests of the Church of Light. Two magi that had deployed floatation spells were now hanging in mid air. One of them, oozing with arrogance, said to Elizabeth below, "You shall not escape today!"

The hissing noise crescendoed as more and more people approached. Within the blink of an eye, a group of Temple Knights led by sacred knight Blount arrived by the light priests, and swiftly surrounded the area where Elizabeth was.

Attention gathered on Elizabeth. Han Shuo, who was directly facing Elizabeth, happened to have his back towards sacred knight Blount. In addition to this, as Blount was fully focused on the limping Elizabeth, he had failed to notice that the lofty figure before him was the same one that had left him heavily injured three years prior.

Elizabeth could not move at the slightest, and looked on helplessly as experts from Church of Light surrounded her. She grew anxious, what felt like flames licking at her eyebrows. With regards to Han Shuo's declaring himself the hunter and the Church of Light the prey, Elizabeth evidently did not buy it, and pleaded, "Release me! I'll bring you along to escape through the sludges, otherwise we will die here!"



“Elizabeth, you have murdered countless pious followers through the years. Church of Light has been after you for four odd years, but has never been able to fully surround you. But this time, this time we shall see how you manage to escape!” sacred knight Blount chuckled as he looked at Elizabeth. After recovering from his injuries, he still appeared very much calm and unruffled.

Shit shit shit, I’m going to die here, Elizabeth thought when she saw Han Shuo remain unmoved, while those of the Church of Light tightened around them bit by bit, totally cut off her opportunity to escape. Her heart was eventually crammed with a feeling of despair.

“Huh? Elizabeth, you’re acting rather odd today! Don’t you usually flee as fast as the wind? Why aren’t you running away today? Could it be that you want to fight us to death? Hahah. With Lord Blount here, you must be courting death!” said the first magus to Elizabeth calmly.

“Enough nonsense, take her down!” sacred knight Blount yelled, pacing towards Elizabeth leisurely.

All of a sudden, a concentrated aura of death could be sensed from outside of the encirclement. The expression Blount’s face flipped and he immediately dropped his foot to look around. He discovered that an innumerable amount of undead creatures had surreptitiously encircled them.

Only at that moment did sacred knight Blount shift his attention to the person whose back he had faced all along. The imposing view of Han Shuo’s back became oddly familiar. This peculiar familiarity gave Blount an intense feeling of unease. Blount abruptly gestured for the members of the Church of Light to halt, and said to Han Shuo in a deep voice, “That friend over there, we seem to have met somewhere before!”

“Of course. Of course we’ve met, Lord Blount!” Han Shuo said in an evil grin and finally turned around, his piercing eyes stuck on Blount.

# Chapter 446: Killing the Enemy

Even after three years, when Han Shuo's voice sounded again, sacred knight Blount could tell exactly who this man, whose back he had been string at, was.

Blount's humiliating defeat in their battle all those years ago had undoubtedly left a lasting impression on him. For Blount, the fight ended most shamefully, truly the lowest moment of his life. For the three years that followed, Blount, who was still recovering from his injuries, could not help but think about Han Shuo. Now that Han Shuo stood right in front of him once again, Blount, a ruthless murderer with a particular aversion to infidels, was unable to control his expression.

"You!" yelled Blount in a voice dripping with hatred. Blount clasped a shiny golden spear tightly in the palm of his hand. His veins were popping out. His grip grew tighter and tighter, as though he were trying to break the spear in two. It was obvious how deeply rooted the hatred was in his heart.

Han Shuo nodded in acknowledgement. Carrying a sinister grin on his face, he said, "We meet again!"

"Lord Blount, who is this child?" The talkative magus was puzzled. He could not understand why a sacred knight such as Blount himself, one of majestic status within the Church of Light, would be acquainted with an obviously immature and inexperienced brat.

"You, you two know each other?" muttered Elizabeth, who was paralyzed under Han Shuo's foot and could do so much as twitch a finger. She looked at Han Shuo, bewildered.

"Hahah, of course!" Han Shuo replied, smiling ominously. Without turning his head, Han Shuo waved his hand and patted Elizabeth on the shoulder. Suddenly, the energy within her that shackled her body disappeared. "Your body of divine favor can absorb the sacred energy from their bodies. How intriguing. Today is your lucky day. Perhaps you may even get to absorb the holy energy of a sacred knight. Elizabeth, be sure to

seize the opportunity!” Han Shuo said to Elizabeth in a strange tone as she rose to her feet behind him. Han Shuo’s gaze was fixed on Blount.

Elizabeth stared at the sacred knight Blount who looked as though he was facing against a great rival. A thought suddenly occurred to her. She pointed at Han Shuo and said in an appalled tone, “You, you are that necromancer from the Lancelot Empire, aren’t you? I’ve heard about you before. You single-handedly defeated Blount and his men? Oh my! It really is you!”

Elizabeth, an infidel the Church of Light had been hunting tirelessly, surely kept with the news. And of course she would often inquire about those like herself, wanted dead by the Church of Light. The battle for Ossen City three years prior was the single greatest setback the Church of Light had suffered in recent years. The news of this event, propagated by certain parties with differing intentions, had spread across many countries.

News that the sacred knights, symbolic of the mighty presence of the Church of Light, suffered crippling defeat, spread like wildfire far and wide, as though the Plague spell in necromancy magic had been cast. For heretics suffering in hardship due to the Church of Light, this news was music to their ears. Any infidel with the slightest competency would know the name ‘Bryan’.

The men of the Church of Light who encircled Han Shuo and Elizabeth turned pale upon hearing Elizabeth’s words. Three Temple Knights stood closest to Han Shuo and were the first to charge towards Elizabeth, but before Han Shuo even made a move, the three subconsciously took a few steps backward, distancing themselves from Han Shuo, and returning to the circle.

“Him.... it’s actually him...,” the magus of the Church of Light asked Blount doubtfully, mumbling to himself as he stared frightened at Han Shuo. His voice diminished, as though he were afraid of arousing Han Shuo’s attention.

“Prepare to move! Forget about Elizabeth. Aim every attack at him!”

Blount softly yelled. Immediately after that he glared at Han Shuo, and said, "Three years had passed. I don't believe that this time you will be able to injure me again!"

As soon as Blount spoke those words, an enormous sacred aura escaped from Blount's body. The divine aura and his golden fighting aura fused together with perfection. The muscles on his body suddenly burst out glorious golden rays, giving him the appearance of a man cast in gold, a golden man, a truly awesome spectacle in the most literal sense of the word.

Han Shuo's pupils gleamed. Through the aura on Blount he could sense just how powerful he was. He discovered that in those three short years, Blount's strength had improved to some degree. His aura must have doubled by some miraculous transformation.

"This time, I will not injure you again." Han Shuo looked at Blount with cold eyes, and continued word by word, "I will kill you!"

Han Shuo grinned fiercely as his clenched fist shot at Blount.

As the golden spear in Blount's hand brandished with layers upon layers of golden light, Han Shuo used his right fist like a hammer. A radiant, cataclysmic energy congealed in his palm. A garish flash of red light shot violently out of his fist. After the light faded, a scarlet red fist the magnitude of a hill appeared out of thin air, descending rapidly onto Blount.

Blount was in great fear. He could feel the destructive power contained within the punch. The energy he had gathered in the last three years, gushed into the golden spear in his hand, turning him into a golden sun. He hurled the spear upwards at the gigantic scarlet-red fist smashing down on him. As the golden spear flew up in high speed, a chorus praising the God of Light could be faintly heard.

When the golden spear stabbed on the scarlet fist, a deafening rumble erupted. The radiance above their heads was enough to momentarily blind every spectator but the two themselves. The immense fluctuation of energy began to fan out violently in every direction. Elizabeth and the

members of the Church of Light ducked for shelter.

It was at this moment that the undead creatures who had been silently surrounding them seemed to have gotten a bugle call to mobilize and attack. Several members of the Church of Light were caught off guard and immediately drowned by the undead creatures. Amid their terrorizing howls, the chilling sounds of undead creatures crunching on human bones could be heard.

Only Elizabeth was excluded from the attacks of the undead creatures. But listening to the men of the Church of Light being eaten alive by the undead, she could not help but shiver. She was scared witless as she looked at Han Shuo, and thought in her heart that he was indeed the biggest heretic!

Han Shuo's mad laughter rumbled like a storm. "Blount, oh Blount, it seems that despite your efforts in becoming stronger, you will die here! No one can save you today!"

Of everyone there, Elizabeth was the most laid-back. The disciples of the Church of Light were surrounded by throngs and throngs of undead creatures summoned by Han Shuo. The creatures did not attack Elizabeth, and in that time she managed to recover from her temporary blindness and could once again see. She turned towards the direction of Han Shuo's voice.

However, all she saw was a strange banner of light closing in on Blount, formed by the scarlet fist. Han Shuo, howling with laughter, could hardly be seen as he rapidly revolved around Blount. The endless flow of pounding fists led to a clear indication that Blount was not alright.

Sacred knight Blount lacked any strength to fight back, and could only attempt to stand his ground and defend unwaveringly.

The sacred knight, even in his golden state and with far heightened power, groaned in anguish just as he had done before under Han Shuo's high speed bombardment. Trails of fresh, dark red blood ran from his nostrils and out the corner of his mouth, staining his golden armour. Not a bit of that composed, arrogant vigor could be found in him anymore.

What made Elizabeth even more astonished was that Han Shuo seemed to have yet to exert much strength at all. On the contrary, he looked like he could be doing this in his sleep, taking his time tormenting Blount.

Sacred knight Blount's body was convulsing in a fit, his spear waving in the air, as streaks of energy stung him like fire ants, the power in his hands were weakening by the second, and, as such, the speed at which he brandished his golden spear was growing slower and slower.

Peng! A punch broke through layers of spear shadows and Han Shuo quietly withdrew his fist. Sacred knight Blount's hand movements suddenly froze. A series of Pi Li Pa La fracturing sounds emitted from his body. Blount stood blankly before collapsing to the ground.

Under Elizabeth's dumbstruck gaze, out from the ground on which sacred knight Blount laid, a foolish-looking zombie warrior emerged. The zombie had on an unusual, earthy-grey armour. The hard ground was like water to him; he seemed to ascend from the ground without any hindrance.

Thud! Thud! Thud! When the strange-looking zombie warrior had completely floated out of the earth, it stomped on Blount's body in a mad rampage. Fresh blood spilled uncontrollably all over Blount's body as the life force in his face faded away little by little.

"Oi, Elizabeth, how about you hurry over and absorb the divine energy from his body before he's dead!" Elizabeth had still been in a daze, but upon hearing this she was beyond overjoyed.

"For me? Really?" she exclaimed like it was ecstasy, her voice still quivering. She gazed at Han Shuo from a distance away in pleasant disbelief.

"Of course. Only by absorbing the divine energy from this sacred knight will you qualify to be my slave!" Han Shuo said, smiling.

"Sla... slave?" Elizabeth was dazed again. Her brain was slow to comprehend everything she was hearing.

"Who sent you to my doorstep to provoke me in the first place? Hurry

up and decide! Die or serve me. Make your own choice!" GH groaned coldly.

After three seconds of silence, Elizabeth shot her hand up to declare her position. "I'm willing to be your slave!" she exclaimed, before flinging herself towards a dying Blount.

# Chapter 447: Implanting Demonic Blood

What a shame for sacred knight Blount. He had hoped that his three years of painstaking cultivation would allow him to exact his revenge on Han Shuo and finally clear that grudge. That he would, nonetheless, wind up even more pathetic than the last time was anyone's guess.

If not for the golden armour and divine energy protecting his body, sacred knight Blount would perhaps not have had to suffer so much pain. After all, any ordinary man who had been trampled by an earth elite zombie would indeed have died instantly, with considerably less pain.

Blount, however, was protected by the armour on his body, in addition to his fighting aura and sacred energy. Therefore, he did not immediately die when the earth elite zombie stomped on him repeatedly, but instead, let out harrowing squeals as he died. With the pain of both his physical body and spirit dejected and shrouding him at the same time, Blount hadn't even the strength to kill himself.

It was at this moment that the wrinkly old woman rushed towards him in excitement. With fear in Blount's eyes, Elizabeth pounced on him like a malevolent spirit, her sharp fingers directly piercing into Blount's neck, exposed and unarmoured.

All the divine energy, which Blount had received in exchange for his devout conviction, gushed from his body like water from a collapsed dam into that of the sinister Elizabeth. Elizabeth, who had earlier been beaten to the bone by Han Shuo, was restored of all energy.

Streaks of green smoke once again slithered in and out of Elizabeth's seven apertures like slender green snakes. Her green eyes glittered with wicked vigor, and a vicious look adorned her face, like a mentally deranged prison inmate. Her internal organs, which were unlike those of a regular person, ran like a brand new machine at maximum speed, absorbing and breaking down the divine energy from sacred knight Blount's body, and converting it into a strange energy that she could readily utilize.

While Elizabeth, deranged and thrilled, took in the divine energy, Han



Shuo appeared behind Elizabeth without warning. With one thought, his consciousness targeted on Elizabeth's body, taking a clear glimpse into its every minute movement.

Elizabeth's body composition was as different as could be compared to that of a regular person. If not for her human appearance, with an aura and body structure like that, Han Shuo would have never considered her human. In addition to the differences in skeletal structure and meridians, there were five fist-sized cyclones in her body. As Elizabeth digested the divine energy from Blount's body, these five cyclones revolved rapidly. They must play a crucial role in the process.

Thanks to the existence of these five cyclones, Elizabeth could absorb the divine energy in sacred knight Blount's body. But as for Blount's painstakingly cultivated fighting aura, the five cyclones had no effect whatsoever. It seemed that the only thing they did was act on the divine power in Blount, which he had apparently obtained through piety to the God of Light.

Han Shuo was very curious in his heart as he had never heard of a body of divine favor that could digest sacred power. It was no wonder the Church of Light wanted her killed. Han Shuo vaguely believed that this gifted body of hers was rather different from any ordinary body of divine favor. Perhaps there were some secrets hidden within Elizabeth that even she herself did not understand.

And soon, the divine energy was completely drained from the body of sacred knight Blount. With such might, even after having lost all his sacred energy, Blount would simply not die. His face was a grim, gravestone shade of grey as he stared blankly, awaiting death.

Elizabeth laughed in maniacal satisfaction. Pulling away her two hands from Blount's neck and dripping with blood, she gestured towards Han Shuo and thanked him, "Thank you, thank you!"

"You're welcome!" Han Shuo smiled grotesquely. He approached Elizabeth from the back, and extended his right hand. His middle finger stabbed into the back of her head. At the tip of his finger, a drop of dark red

blood essence cracked through his skin and shot into the blood vessels in the back of her head. Elizabeth shrieked as the blood essence of Han Shuo's demonic infant made its way into her brain.

His unoccupied left hand pressed gently on Elizabeth's back. A gust of wicked force of attraction was released. The strands of energy that had just purified through her five cyclones a moment ago gushed from her back. Not a moment later, Han Shuo had absorbed more than half of it.

"Master, I am your devout servant. Please, spare my life!" Her voice diminished as she begged. She was terrified. The energy she had absorbed from the members of the Church of Light were meant to enhance herself. It had never crossed her mind that that same sinister energy in her body could be absorbed by another. There was no way she could suppress the dread in her heart.

Much to her surprise, all that begging for mercy may have had some effect. After Han Shuo extracted a portion of energy that had been partially converted by the five cyclones, he began to shriek, and let go and ceased to touch her.

After removing his fingertip from the back of Elizabeth's head, Han Shuo patted her forehead, and said with a faint smile, "Human and magical beasts can form a master-slave contract, but between humans, it's somewhat inconvenient. Hahaha, you must have felt a little something extra in your brain, haven't you?"

"Yes....yes, master. What have you done to me?" The biggest heretic on Profound Continent had endless tricks up his sleeves. Who knew if this being was actually human or the devil. He was undefeatable.

"It's nothing, really. Just like the binding power of certain contracts, so long as you do not attempt to betray me, you need not worry about that thing in your brain. However, if you do have such thoughts, haha, your brain will end up just like his!" Han Shuo smiled wickedly, and his feet stomped on sacred knight Blount's head.

Pak! Like a blown up watermelon, fresh dark red blood exploded onto the ground, mixed with brain fluids, white and red.

“Master, your most humble servant would never do anything to betray you. You will witness your servant’s loyalty. I swear!” As she stared at the ruptured head of the sacred knight, she seemed to have seen her own inhuman state after crossing him. Without the slightest doubt of the validity of this wicked young man’s words, she kneeled before Han Shuo and submitted to him with no objections. She paid no heed to the red and white matter that smeared the ground.

“Very well. I see you understand,” Han Shuo said in satisfaction. After a short pause, he continued, “You can absorb divine energy from members of the Church of Light. This is very good.” He smirked. “As long as you follow me, I believe that your strength will definitely progress at an ever higher speed.”

“This old slave will remember her master’s kindness for the rest of her life!” Elizabeth professed.

“Alright, get up. There are still a few followers of the Church of Light over there that have yet to die. You may go and absorb all the holy energy in their bodies as well!” Han Shuo instructed Elizabeth, and began speaking to her in a gentle manner.

Without another word, Elizabeth bolted from Han Shuo’s feet like lightning. Strands of monstrous green energy flowed from her orifices, and she set out to deal with the Church of Light members who had yet to die.

Seeing Elizabeth’s conscientious work ethics, Han Shuo felt reassured. After diffusing a drop of his demonic blood in her body, if Elizabeth had any thought of betraying him, Han Shuo would be the first to know, and he would then mobilize the demonic blood in her brain to instantly kill her.

Furthermore, Han Shuo, who was able to absorb the energy from Elizabeth’s body directly, would naturally not allow any chance for her to possess a level of strength that surpassed his own. Such a dependable slave, and nevertheless an interesting body of divine favor, was of much use to Han Shuo. The earth elite zombie looked at the pile of mush that had once been the brain of sacred knight Blount, and blankly transmitted

to Han Shuo, “Father, is he dead?”

“Yes. He is indeed dead. However there remains energy in his soul, power that will prove useful to me!” Han Shuo answered. Shortly after, at a single thought, the Demonslayer Edge flew out from his nape. Blount’s soul, which had yet to dissipate, and which any ordinary person couldn’t sense, was suddenly sucked into the Demonslayer Edge.

During the last armed rebellion in Ossen City, the Demonslayer Edge had absorbed too much negative energy. Even then it could have been considered as being in hibernation stage, and had yet to fully pacify the negative energy. However, Han Shuo understood in his heart that this was crucial for the Demonslayer Edge. As to whether or not it could become an exceptional murder weapon, that depended on whether it could completely digest energy and form a ferocious soul.

Perhaps Blount’s powerful soul, after entering the Demonslayer Edge, would act as the main soul, and help the Demonslayer Edge speed up to evolve a ferocious soul.

After Blount’s soul was ingested by the Demonslayer Edge, it again concealed itself in Han Shuo’s body. Soon after, Han Shuo’s attention turned to the armour on Blount’s body, the weapon in his hand, and his space ring. A sacred knight of the Church of Light must have plenty of expensive treasure on him, right? Han Shuo thought.

Without the slightest respect, Han Shuo snatched the armour and golden spear from Blount’s body and placed it in his own space ring. The two pieces of equipment were the works of top-notch alchemists from the Church of Light, and one must have divine energy to use them to their greatest effect. Of course, Han Shuo did not have any allies in the Church of Light, but if he were to sell these items, he would without a doubt receive a good trade.

Blount’s space ring had been forcibly broken into by Han Shuo. Inside were several chunky books from the Church of Light, some loose gold coins, a couple of low-grade weapons, two simple, unadorned magic scrolls, and some thin yellow paper.

When he finished rummaging through Blount's belongings, and saw the contents of the thin yellow paper, Han Shuo's expression flipped.

# Chapter 448: Classified Documents

The tomes and scattered gold coins of the Church of Light inside of Blount's space ring did not catch Han Shuo's attention, and neither did the few knight weapons in there that were clearly far inferior to the one Blount had been wielding. However, there were two magic scrolls that did stand out; one was a space magic scroll for escape, and the other an earth magic scroll for creating a sort of earth shield. Each were meant for ensuring one's survival.

But what a pity it was that during the battle just moments ago, the series of attacks on Blount left him with no strength to retaliate. With Han Shuo bombarding Blount with punches left and right, he hadn't even the chance to activate a magical scroll, and was only released after the bones throughout his body were shattered.

The two magic scrolls were Han Shuo's for the taking. Though precious, however, they weren't incredibly rare. It was the few sheets of thin yellow paper, or more specifically, their contents, that really piqued his interest.

The Church of Light, the self-proclaimed most compassionate church on Profound Continent, was in fact conducting some rather shady business out of the public eye. From the thin yellow papers, Han Shuo found out exactly how Blount had managed to gather so much strength in the span of three years. As it turned out, this miracle owed to the blessings ceremony of Church of Light.

As the most influential religious organization on the Profound Continent, the Church of Light cared most about two things. One, to gain an abundance of pious followers of the God of Light, and two, to have pure-souled believers selflessly offer sacrifice. Through these official records, Han Shuo learned that once followers with pure souls sacrificed to the God of Light, the blessed would acquire even more divine power from the God of Light.

However, many of the pure-souled were not followers of the Church of Light. And ever so often, even the firmest believers of the Church of Light

would suddenly wake up to the realization that offering their souls meant certain death, and find that perhaps they weren't so willing to give up everything and surrender their souls. Well, it was at times like these that the Church of Light made use of certain means to compel them.

The proportion of people with incomparably pure souls was miniscule amongst humans. Blount's full recovery and huge increase in strength were paid for with the sacrifice of eighty-seven pure souls.

Those eighty-seven pure souls were secretly captured from various countries by the Church of Light by all kinds of dishonorable means. The thin yellow papers were application forms submitted by sacred knight Blount to the Church of Light to hold a sacrificial ceremony. On them were the hand signatures of the incumbent pope of the Church of Light, along with other high ranking members.

"No wonder. No wonder Blount could possess such power in such short time! Clearly, the Church of Light is none more ethical than the likes of the Calamity Church. From the outside they seem respectable, promoting all sorts of virtues and such, but what they do in the shadows is no different from the latter."

After making such a huge leap in strength, Blount must have thought himself immortal, so he stored the documents in the space ring. But who would have guessed they would now be in the hands of Han Shuo. Han Shuo understood that the documents contained the signatures of over half of the high-ranking Church of Light members, and what that meant.

Feeling apprehensive about this unusual method through which the Church of Light gained divine energy for its members, Han Shuo also felt a sense of extreme pleasure and thrill for having obtained such information that could be used against the Church.

"Hahaha, I bet the Calamity Church will be very pleased to hear about this! This document contains the signatures of the pope of the Church of Light and its high-ranking members. They shall make known the wrongs of the Church of Light through their own means," Han Shuo laughed to himself in victory.

“Master, the other members of the Church of Light are all dead!” Elizabeth’s face only revealed excitement. The five cyclones in her body were rapidly spinning as energy entered her shriveled body strand by strand.

Han Shuo very carefully held the sheets of yellow paper in his hand, and turned his attention to the surroundings. Just as Elizabeth had said, this party from the Church of Light, without a single light grand magus in their team, was all dead from the attacks of the undead.

Han Shuo squinted, and his consciousness made a round on Elizabeth’s body. By his estimations, Elizabeth had absorbed enough divine energy to allow her strength to double. However, even though Elizabeth had taken the divine energy from sacred knight Blount, she was still a long shot away from attaining the level of strength that Blount had possessed.

On one hand, this was because Blount’s mighty strength hadn’t relied solely on his divine energy. His fighting aura played the main role. On the other hand, after passing through the conversion cycles, the divine energy which Elizabeth could really utilize was reduced to only a fraction of the input.

After all, Elizabeth wasn’t a follower of the Church of Light, and couldn’t utilize the sacred energy. This was rather similar to Han Shuo’s situation; he needed to completely remove the dross energy from the enormous killing aura he absorbed, after which, all that was left would always be only a tiny portion of pure energy which he could utilize.

After absorbing all that sacred energy, Elizabeth’s strength would be barely enough to reach the level of a sacred swordmaster. Even without the demonic blood in her body, the strength she had currently possessed could pose no threat to Han Shuo. After examining deep into Elizabeth, he nodded and said, “Very good. You have done a decent job. I see there is yet raw divine energy in your body. Would you like a quiet place to digest it?”

“Thank you for master’s concern. My body will slowly convert this energy without the need to deliberately digest it,” Elizabeth replied immediately.



Nodding, Han Shuo did not continue talking, but cast his gaze in another direction.

Not long after, the Dark Mantle arrived with Karey's guidance. By then the undead creatures summoned by Han Shuo had completely vanished. There were only about a dozen bodies of Church of Light members remaining around Han Shuo and Elizabeth.

The disciples of the Church of Light died in a grotesque state. Sacred knight Blount's body became a mound of mush after his bones were shattered and body trampled. The disciples that had been partially devoured by undead creatures died in an even more appalling scene, with parts missing from their bodies. The metallic stench of blood lingered all around.

Cecilia and her party shot a glance at the scene and felt sick in the stomach. Fortunately the Dark Mantle were a rather resolute, hardy group, and did nothing to embarrass themselves before Han Shuo.

"Bryan, what happened?" Carefully avoiding the bloodstains on the ground, she made her way over to Han Shuo.

"They are the reason I came here this time. Hmm, with Blount dead now, it seems that my business here is settled!" Han Shuo said with a faint smile and he raised his head to look at the sky. He was thinking about paying Wolf a visit, and handing him some fascinating 'souvenirs'.

As a sinister organization with influence ranging the whole continent, it was most appropriate for the Calamity Church to do such things. Besides, they were a mortal enemy of the Church of Light, and would never let go of any opportunity to strike the Church of Light. The document in Han Shuo's hand contained the signatures of their highest leaders, including the pope. Once the Calamity Church exposed them, the clean image of the Church of Light would surely be tarnished. The thought left Han Shuo somewhat impatient.

"Sacred knight Blount is dead?" Cecilia's petite mouth dropped wide open as she stared bemused at Han Shuo. She could not believe what she was hearing.

“There, right under my feet. That headless body!” Han Shuo said coolly as he pointed at the unsightly Blount. The pool of fresh blood was still warm.

Cecilia’s expression went blank as she stood there, staring, utterly speechless. “Lord Bryan, that, that old woman, why is she here?” Karey asked, pointing at Elizabeth who stood respectfully behind Han Shuo. Karey had almost been killed by Elizabeth.

“From now onwards she will be my slave!” Han Shuo replied. After a short pause, Han Shuo said to Cecilia, “If there’s nothing else, we shall bid farewell!”

Han Shuo did not have much interest in the strange phenomena in the depths of the Tarrag Canyon.

“Erm... err...” Cecelia watched as Han Shuo was leaving, again speechless. She stammered as she filtered through reasons to make him stay, but could not think up an excuse.

All of a sudden, a rumble came from afar, the sound of a mountain collapsing in the depths of the Tarrag Canyon. The ground within a ten mile radius from the epicenter tremored like there was an earthquake.

Han Shuo, who had just been leaving, furrowed his brows, and discovered that herds and herds of magical creatures of the Tarrag Canyon were running desperately for the edges of the Tarrag Canyon. Among them were even a few super-ranked magical beasts.

“What’s going on? What’s happening?” Cecilia cried in shock as she looked in the direction of the sound.

“It came from deep inside the Tarrag Canyon. Something must have happened in there,” Karey blurted.

“Let’s have a look!” Han Shuo said to Cecilia. His curiosity had been evoked, and he no longer had the desire to leave.

“Thank you!” Hearing this, Cecelia’s heart was put at ease. “Don’t worry about it!” Han Shuo replied. He then turned his head and shot a glance at Elizabeth, and instructed, “Follow me!”

“Yes, master!” Elizabeth answered eagerly.

# Chapter 449: Going in Alone

Han Shuo, Elizabeth, Cecilia, and the rest were keen on finding out what was happening in the depths of the Tarrag Canyon. Even Han Shuo, who didn't tend to care much for miscellaneous matters like this, was interested and decided to join the investigation.

With their minds set on the task, Han Shuo led the team of over a dozen into the depths of the Tarrag Canyon.

Half an hour later, a herd of five or six hundred magical beasts of all kinds, with several vicious manticores taking the lead, hurtled towards the lot of them.

Following at the back of the herd were some weaker rank four and five creatures, while at the front were hundred high level beasts, about ten manticores taking the lead. Compared to the first wave of magical creatures that attacked Cecilia and her party, this wave was overwhelmingly larger.

The expression on Cecilia's beautiful face suddenly changed, and she ordered her subordinates to get into defense position at once, for the fear that the magical beasts would trample them into meat patty.

"No need for that. It seems that these magical beasts are fleeing for their lives. They're unlikely to attack us!" Han Shuo explained at ease. Through his mystical demons, he could see into the great distance. Three of those demons soared towards the depths of Tarrag Canyon, and discovered that they were not alone. Several other teams of explorers had made their ways past Han Shuo and Cecilia. He also observed that as the magical beasts dashed forward, they made no effort to attack the humans as they had previously done.

After hearing Han Shuo's advice, Cecilia hesitated for a moment, and shouted, "Alright then, let's stick together to avoid the beasts coming our way!"

At her command, the group of Dark Mantle members rushed to gather up with her. Only Elizabeth turned a deaf ear to Cecilia's words, and stood

firmly behind Han Shuo.

The so-called heretic to the Church of Light very soon realized that Cecilia was not particularly strong at all. Even with the aid of her twelve subordinates, Elizabeth did not feel that they could be of any sort of assistance. Having witnessed Han Shuo's terrifying strength, Elizabeth, the lesser heretic, had for a long time considered Han Shuo a man who could keep her secure.

Cecilia and her party soon discovered that Han Shuo was indeed correct. The herd of magical beasts that was charging over obviously had discovered the traces of the group of people when they arrived at the area. The beasts merely continued at their pace, passing by as though they had not noticed them.

"Huh? What's going on?" asked Cecilia as though she was talking to herself, but her eyes were on Han Shuo. One thing was for clear to Cecelia, Han Shuo definitely knew something.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo replied, "I'm not sure either. We'll find out when we get closer."

As soon as he finished those words, Han Shuo took charge and strode towards the depths of Tarrag Canyon, not at all concerned about the magical beasts zooming by. Elizabeth followed closely, lest she would fall behind.

"Let's move!" Cecilia ordered tactfully. Along the way, more and more herds of magical beasts ran out from the Tarrag Canyon, including some super-ranked magical creatures. Like the first batch of them, they did not waste any time attacking when they saw Han Shuo and the others, but were preoccupied solely with running away, as though they were running from some disaster.

All of a sudden, Han Shuo's body stopped moving. His three mystical demons deepest into Tarrag Canyon seemed to be blocked by a peculiar energy similar to boundaries. The mystical demons came to a halt, unable to move an inch forward.

"Stop!" Han Shuo yelled. The rest were jolted, and froze beside Han Shuo.

“What’s the matter?” Elizabeth asked.

Han Shuo’s brows creased intensely. His powerful consciousness expanded outwards. An invisible field undulated in the air, like ripples on the surface of water, with Han Shuo at the center. After his consciousness unfolded in all directions, every living thing around him was projected into Han Shuo’s heart.

When his consciousness arrived outside the region from which the three mystical demons were blocked, Han Shuo deployed his demonic arts; his consciousness changed into a form the energy could not detect, and easily broke in. He proceeded to venture deeper.

Within this region, the elements that filled the space between heaven and earth were all strangely absent. He felt not a trace of the elements of light, fire, water, or wind. Even the air was gone. The place truly felt like a vacuum, where one would be overcome by a dreadful sense of suffocation.

As his consciousness continued forwards, he suddenly felt a few enormous presences. These presences were as enormous as that of Ancient Lizard King Dagassi, and brought Han Shuo a profound feeling of threat.

Startled, Han Shuo’s consciousness no longer continued to explore deeper, and suddenly receded like a tide. Shortly after, he opened his eyes and said to Cecilia, “It seems that this time you must give up on continuing to probe deeper!”

“Why?” When Cecilia heard Han Shuo’s words, her heart grew apprehensive.

“I can feel that something peculiar happened in the deepest part of Tarrag Canyon. However, there are some beings of formidable strength present. Right, even for an expert like sacred knight Blount, there’s no doubt that he would have died if he had entered. So, if you are not looking to die, I advise that all of you evacuate immediately, just like those magical creatures,” Han Shuo told them as it was.

There wasn’t just one mighty presence in the depths of Tarrag Canyon. Otherwise, Han Shuo would have still had the guts to bring them deeper.

Given the fact that there were a few of those presences in there, Han Shuo could only ensure his own safety, and certainly couldn't attend to all of them.

"So you are saying that there are very powerful people in there?" Cecilia was greatly alarmed, and again questioned closely.

"I can't be certain if they are human or not. But what's certain is that they are very powerful presences. You will not be able to handle them!" Han Shuo explained. He turned to Elizabeth and instructed, "Go back to Tariq City. I will look for you after I take a look inside. I will be able to find you as long as you are in Tariq City. If you don't do as I say, you will be digging your own graves!"

Elizabeth grew frightened at the sound of that and replied, "Master, rest assured I shall be awaiting your return." Elizabeth did not stay any longer, and left immediately without a second glance at Cecilia and the others.

After Elizabeth left, Han Shuo shot a stare at Cecilia, and gave her a final warning, "I've said all that I ought to say. It's up to you to listen. But if you are to go in there, be forewarned that none of you will come out alive!"

As soon as he finished his words, not waiting for a reply, Han Shuo transformed into a strobe of black lighting, and faded towards the Tarrag Canyon.

It was only when even Han Shuo's shadow could hardly be seen that Cecilia shouted, "Hey! Can you bring us inside for a look," but obviously Han Shuo did not hear that.

"Dame, what should we do?" Karey looked on as even more magical beasts rushed out. Among them was a magnificent silver dragon of over ten meters. He felt a sense of mild apprehension, as it was obvious to him that if a super-ranked magical creature like the huge silver dragon had to make an escape, then there must have been something truly dangerous in the depths of the Tarrag Canyon.

"Dame, why don't we go back as well. Bryan would never lie to us!" Bandits had the innate ability to sense danger. Although he couldn't clearly sense the powerful existences deep in the canyon like Han Shuo

could, the stifling in his heart was too difficult to bear. With his many years of adventuring experience as a bandit, this sensation indicated the presence of some overpowering force.

When the bandit opened his mouth, Cecilia, as a fellow comrade for many years, finally turned around to look at the few, and finally her gaze landed on the bandit. In a solemn voice, she asked, "You felt something didn't you? I know that after so many years, your senses have always been accurate."

"Yes, my Lady. It is very dangerous in there. Given our strength, it is not advisable for us to enter," the bandit replied with haste.

"Alright then, we will retreat immediately!" By means of her many years of experience interacting with the bandit, Cecilia finally made a decision, and a wise one at that. She turned around and planned to return to Tariq City using their original route.

A dashing young man appeared on the spot where Han Shuo had stood like a ghost. He had silvery-grey long hair and donned a matching elegant robe adorned with large, embroidered lily flowers on its edges. He was empty-handed, and his feet hovered above the ground as he smiled and asked, "Excuse me, the young man who left here just a moment ago, who is he?"

"Wh... Who are you?" Karey was shocked at the eerie arrival of the young man. He didn't even know how he had gotten there. It was as though he had materialized out of thin air in the wake of Han Shuo's absence.

Cecilia took one look at the young man, and the tip of her brow twitched. "Don't know," she replied bluntly. "Come on. We will leave here at once."

She began to march away, somewhat frenetic and hurried. Although Karey and the others felt that something wasn't quite right with Cecilia they, as mere subordinates, did not question her, nor did they respond to the young man, but immediately followed behind Cecilia and left.

"What a bunch of uncultured children. Kids these days know nothing



about respect for their elders!” the bewitchingly handsome young man sighed grudgingly, as though he was lamenting the ways of the world. He then headed in the same direction as Han Shuo and into the depths of Tarrag Canyon like a ghost.

“My Lady, who was that person? It felt as though you knew him?” Only after sprinting into the distance, far away, and when Cecilia’s slightly slowed down, did the clever bandit open his mouth to ask.

“He is the protector of the current seven grand duchies, State Preceptor of the former Verdun Dynasty – Stratholme the old monster!” Cecilia replied with a bitter smile.

# Chapter 450: Twelve Round Spheres

Without the burden that was Cecilia and her gang, Han Shuo strided into the depths of the Tarrag Canyon. Along the way, he traipsed through throngs of magical beasts, mid-and high-level ones scattered throughout.

But when Han Shuo arrived where his mystical demons had come to a halt, he no longer saw a single magical creature. A pungent scent waft in the air where Han Shuo sensed no magical elements. Something was very, very wrong.

Surveying the scene surrounding him, all Han Shuo could see was the endless trails left by magical creatures all the way into an infinite distance, millions or billions of footprints. Apart from this, there wasn't much useful information. The few mighty presences he had sensed with his consciousness previously gave Han Shuo a sense of his own mortality.

On the plus side, Han Shuo had only himself to worry about, and with his current strength, he believed that even if he didn't manage to defeat the forces inside, escaping unscathed wouldn't be too much of a task, so long as he wasn't surrounded. It was self-confidence that allowed Han Shuo to venture in alone.

Wishing not to linger for extended periods, he entered the region. That strange energy that had thwarted the mystical demons did not have the same effect on an expert like Han Shuo. With a sway of his body, Han Shuo passed through the liquid-like defense effortlessly, and proceeded with his descent with the aid of the sensing capabilities of his consciousness.

Not a moment later, the State Preceptor of the former Verdun Dynasty, Stratholme, arrived at the region where Han Shuo had just been standing. Along the way, Stratholme the old monster babbled what sounded like gibberish to himself, and only ceased his blabbering as he paused outside the region. He let out a gentle gasp. The old monster had obviously discovered the energy field meant to hinder any average person. He waved his hand, and his left hand pressed on the empty air gracefully, as though

he was pushing open an incorporeal door. His body then drifted in through the air like a ghost, and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Not long after Stratholme entered, another person arrived. The lightly-built old man had bushy, snowy brows so long that they flowed to his neck. From the outer perimeter of the region, lightning pierced through the invisible defense like a sword, allowing him to intrude.

Then, yet another person, a delicate and dignified madame, whose body was wrapped in layers of mist, passed seamlessly through the defense.

Soon afterwards, several more teams of adventurers, who regarded themselves with decent strength, arrived as well. Their curiosity compelled them to delve into the area, but they were nevertheless forcibly prevented by the defensive shield. No matter how hard they tried, they could not break through the defense. All they could do was gaze into the air and lament their inadequacies.

Han Shuo, the first person to intrude, carefully concealed his presence, and his enormous consciousness went from overflowing to restrained. Instead of barging all the way forward like he had previously done, he first wrapped up his own body, and hid in the shadows of some colossally tall trees, pacing himself as he journeyed forward.

Not only was any elemental energy absent in this region, but even oxygen in the atmosphere was extremely thin. Utilizing his exquisite ability to exercise control over his body, Han Shuo closed all the pores on his skin, stopped his breathing and heartbeat, and had his demonic yuan slowly revolve around the demonic infant. As a consequence, unless one caught sight of Han Shuo with their own eyes, even one with the most outstanding strength would not be able to detect Han Shuo's presence through their perception.

Along the way, severed limbs of magical beast littered the grounds, which were further stained with various assortments of fresh, colourful blood from the magical creatures. It seemed that the mangled bodies lying around were all of high-ranking magical creatures levels two and above. Severed limbs of super-ranked creatures such as the dragon could be seen

everywhere.

Without needing much thought, Han Shuo understood that it was the tragic deaths of these high-ranking magical creatures that caused all the other magical beasts of Tarrag Canyon to flee. Indeed, if not for the countless dead high-ranking creatures, the other magical beasts which had lived their whole lives in the depths of Tarrag Canyon would never desert their home all so suddenly.

What was actually going on in there? Han Shuo got even more curious.

Doing his best to blend in with his surroundings, towering trees and thick shrubs, Han Shuo hiked for another ten minutes at a moderate pace, and finally reached the deepest part of Tarrag Canyon. Once inside, the scene of an endless, crystalline lake caught Han Shuo's eyes.

The water was so serene and pure that it looked like a huge mirror laid over the land, not even the teensiest ripple could be seen. This view of vast blue waters simply wasn't enough, however, to distract from the surrounding landscape of the countless carcasses of super-ranked magical creatures, all of which seemed to have died under the most inexplicably gruesome circumstances, and not a single one of which wasn't severely dismembered.

The brilliant hue that filled this great lake at the heart of the canyon resembled that of a sapphire crystal, refracting a resplendent blue under the gentle illumination of sunlight. The encircling sea of remains of super-ranked magical creatures left an exceedingly unsettling atmosphere.

Han Shuo concealed himself behind the lush leaves of a broad tree. His eyes squinted slightly as he looked over to the lake in the distance.

At the center of the huge mass of water was an isle of flat land. There stood dozens of humanoids whom Han Shuo did not recognize. They were densely packed on the island, all with the same solemn looks on their faces as they worshipped in the direction of a tall, pointed building that resembled an altar, located at the center of the isle.

If it weren't for their light-green skin, their python-like tail, and the pointy horns protruding from their foreheads to their napes, perhaps Han

Shuo might have regarded them as human beings.

However, with those three distinctive features, Han Shuo would never, ever view them as humans. The mouths of these humanoids let out peculiar buzzing sounds similar those of cicadas as they kowtowed to give worship to the altar.

This altar was similar to magical towers often used by a magus. At the top of the pointed altar laid the hearts of countless magical beasts, reeking of rotting fish alongside bright, clean magical cores. Four humanoids, likely the leaders of this troupe, each with a row of five pointed horns growing from their foreheads to their collarbones, stood at the four corners of the altar. They spoke in a mysterious language akin to the droning of insects as they threw hundreds upon hundreds of those hearts and cores into a giant, grotesque oral cavity filled with thick mucus at the center of the altar.

The four figures were the powerful presences that Han Shuo had previously sensed. As they stood within close range, even without his consciousness to expand and actively probe, Han Shuo could sense the formidable aura emanating from them. Han Shuo reckoned he could handle one of those creatures alone. But if all four of them were to attack together, Han Shuo could only attempt to escape.

After observing for a while, Han Shuo quickly discovered that the strengths of these creatures were entirely differentiable by the pointy horns on the top of their heads. Among the beings on the isle, the four at each corner wielded the most terrifying strength. Around the altar and below their feet, there were a dozen or more creatures with four horns on their heads, and they stood closest to the altar.

One would find less and less pointed horns on the kowtowing creatures the further he looked around the altar. The creatures situated at the outermost perimeter donned merely a single horn.

All of a sudden, an occurrence familiar to Han Shuo captured his attention.

At the peak of the pointed altar, suddenly, a wave of tentacles slowly

hoisted twelve round spheres the size of fists. One of those spheres emanated a pure aura of death, which caused Han Shuo to palpitate. It had never crossed his mind that an aura of death could be so pure.

In any plane where life was existent, there would naturally be such incidents as birth, senescence, illness, and death. As long as lives continued to end, the element of death would be present in that plane of existence. However, most creatures exhibited in addition a hideous mess of emotions like fear, rage, stubbornness, and resentment just before they met their ends.

It was precisely due to the presence of these emotions that the element of death could not be pure and on any plane of existence. Even in the netherworld where Little Skeleton resided, the element of death was always contaminated with chaotic impurities aplenty.

However, within the sphere, Han Shuo felt only the element of death in its purest form, no impurities whatsoever. On top of that, it contained an overwhelming amount of the element of death, and therefore proved an irresistible temptation for a necromancer like Han Shuo.

Instinctively, Han Shuo believed that the sphere could bring him immense benefits. If it wasn't for the exclusive control he held over his physical body, perhaps Han Shuo's heart would have begun beating faster from the excitement.

Han Shuo was thrilled. While he concentrated his attention on the sphere of death, he began to study the other eleven spheres using his consciousness.

After much surveying, Han Shuo was again shocked to the core. Of the other eleven spheres, seven of them contained elemental energy just as pure as the one containing death. These were namely light, darkness, wind, fire, water, electricity, and earth.

As for the remaining four spheres, although they did not contain pure elemental energy, they still contained some bizarre energy, one of which was the extremely rare energy of destruction. Another seemed to be a condensed form of fighting aura, constantly emitting different shades of

fighting aura from dark blue to golden. The last two were even more baffling. Their insides were flowing like the revolution of celestial bodies, which, after great amount of contemplation, Han Shuo felt were somewhat similar to the uncommon aura found on certain space magus and summoners.

Twelve round spheres in total. Generally dim and dull, brownish in colour. They looked rather unexceptional from a distance. Perhaps, only a figure at Han Shuo's level could understand just how mysterious, strange, and diverse the energies that these spheres contained were.

# Chapter 451: Origin Crystals

After the twelve round spheres had appeared in the middle of the altar, intense elemental energy of all sorts, suddenly filled up the area which was previously devoid of any energy.

Concurrently, the four humanoids who were on the altar, each bearing five horns on their head, quickly sped up pouring the huge amount of magical creatures' hearts and crystal cores into that big mouth.

There were thousands just like them worshipping the event under the altar. Their green eyes shone with excitement. They were not unlike the religious fanatics Han Shuo had come across, carrying a bigoted, unreasonably zealous attitude. Their bodies shivered slightly, whilst their droning sound gradually grew more and more energetic.

Han Shuo, hiding within the thick branches and leaves of a big tree, had a clear observation of everything happening in the big lake ahead. His heart held an uncontrollable desire to possess that ball which emitted the pure elemental aura of death, but still, Han Shuo was not one to behave rashly.

The odd-looking creatures bearing the five horns, all emitted aura which could rival in its formidability to that of the Ancient Lizard King, a demigod existence. If these four creatures were to join forces and circle around Han Shuo, Han Shuo was not certain that he could escape alive.

With eyes full of greediness, Han Shuo's gaze remained unwavering at the round sphere filled with the rich element of death. His mind stated to quickly consider all the ways and consequences of obtaining the sphere.

Suddenly, his senses projected three beings who were roughly similar in might. The appearance of these three beings who were slowly approaching gave Han Shuo an idea, his eyes light up with delight.

Han Shuo who had been very carefully hiding his body since the beginning, gradually glided towards the direction of the three whiffs presences, while quietly releasing a wisp of his own, concealed to which any ordinary person would have no means to discover.



Indeed, as he planned, the strand of presence Han Shuo had deliberately leaked out, immediately caused the approaching experts to sense it. With Han Shuo at the center, the three gathered together within a very short period of time. In the blink of an eye, one after the other, the three mighty beings, originating from the Profound Continent, suddenly assembled a short distance away from Han Shuo.

“Eh? It’s you! The old monster!” As soon as the old man with his eyebrows encroaching his neck reached the place, he let out a soft cry and stared somewhat astonished at the former State Preceptor of Verdun Dynasty, Stratholme.

“Reynold you little bastard! You’re not dead yet! Hehe, good, good.” the handsome, bewitching Stratholme, teased at the lightning sacred magus of Brut Merchant Alliance as he smiled delightedly.

The composed upper-class woman, enveloped in a faint hazy mist, was the last one to arrive. She shot a glance at Stratholme and greeted him in a gentle voice, “Stratholme, long time no see!”

“Elder sister Tiana!” Stratholme the old monster said smilingly after he bowed towards the upper-class woman wrapped in a mist in the distance.

This upper-class woman called Tiana nodded her head at the old monster in acknowledgement, and soon after turned to look at the smiling Han Shuo and asked in a puzzled face, “This is..?”

“Hehe, I’m a nobody. Erm, I came from the Lancelot Empire!” While Han Shuo was gracefully bowing at the three, his heart was filled with shock. He didn’t expect that the old man with the long eyebrows was the lightning sacred magus Reynold Dila of the Brut Merchant Alliance.

As a high ranking member of the Dark Mantle, Han Shuo was aware of just how renowned this old man was in the Brut Merchant Alliance. Even the leaders from the core merchant guilds that formed the Brut Merchant Alliance, had to be reverent and respectful towards this old man, and will absolutely not be unbridled in front of him.

And yet, amongst the three, such a character was the one with the weakest strength.

In contrast to Stratholme the old monster, and the upper-class woman named Tiana, Reynold the lighting sacred magus was considerably more inferior. No matter how formidable Reynold was at the sacred grade, he was merely a sacred grade expert.

But Han Shuo could feel the formidable aura of a demigod level expert from the body of Tiana, the upper-class woman, and Stratholme the old monster. Stratholme the old monster had a well-known reputation, and Han Shuo had heard of him time and time again. That this dirty old man who was the State Preceptor of Verdun Dynasty about a hundred years ago, could breakthrough to the demigod realm, is sufficient to illustrate just how terrifying his strength must be.

Stratholme the old monster whose appearance was inconsistent with his actual age addressed the upper-class woman as 'Elder Sister Tiana'. Although Han Shuo is one of the highest ranking members in the Dark Mantle, he had no idea who this upper-class woman was. But by inferring on how Stratholme addressed her, Han Shuo reasoned that this woman must be somewhat older than Stratholme.

"Lancelot Empire? Since when did the Lancelot Empire possess an expert of such youth?" Tiana was somewhat flabbergasted and she, in a puzzled face, looked towards the old monster Stratholme and lighting sacred magus Reynold.

"Bryan? Are you the city lord of Brettle City, that Bryan?" At first, Stratholme's brows were creased, but soon after he realized something and beam of glistening light shoot out from his eyes, landing on Han Shuo's body.

"That's right!" Han Shuo admitted.

"No wonder. It seems that rumors still possess some truth in them. I always thought that the Lancelot Empire exaggerated in saying that you forced two sacred-grade experts to retreat. Now it seems that there had indeed been such an incident!" the old monster said as he nodded.

When lighting sacred magus Reynold heard Han Shuo admit his identity, he focused his attention on Han Shuo. After carefully sizing Han Shuo up,

with a weird look on his face, he said, "So it's you. Hmm, what a brazen young man. Interesting."

"Alright, let's cut to the chase. I believe everyone is aware of the situation. For the time being, we don't have to worry about the whole sequence of events, but I presume that all of you know the nature of the twelve balls. The four fellas with the five horns, each possessed demigod like strength. None among the four of us have the chance to succeed by going in alone. Are you all interested in cooperating?" Tiana the upper-class woman interrupted.

"Of course! The sooner the better!" Stratholme the old monster was the first to concur.

Lighting sacred magus Reynold of Brut Merchant Alliance, not only nodded in immediate response, but he added further, "I'm aware of my capabilities. Of the twelve balls, I'm only asking for the Origin Crystal of Lightning. Moreover, I will be in charge of dealing with the aftermath!"

"Alright. After it's done, the Origin Crystal of Lightning will be yours. As for the both of you, we will divide the spoils according to our contributions. Any objections?" Tiana said solemnly as she looked at the old monster and Han Shuo. Naturally, she expects Han Shuo to agree to the proposal.

"I don't have any objections. I trust that elder sister Tiana will be impartial!" Stratholme replied in a relaxed manner as he shrugged. Immediately after that he turned to look at Han Shuo and asked, "What about you?"

Han Shuo saw fit to join forces with them. However, it seemed that all of them knew about the nature of the spheres, and only Han Shuo had no idea about their functions, even though he could sense the boundless energy within. Therefore, when Stratholme averted the question to him, Han Shuo replied awkwardly, "I have no objection either. It's just that, erm, honorable elders, what exactly are those twelve round spheres?"

All three of them simultaneously turned expressionless, as they took a double take at Han Shuo. Stratholme stared blankly for a while, and said

smilingly, “You don’t know?”

Shaking his head, Han Shuo honestly admitted, “I really don’t know.”

“Those are Origin Crystals of elements. After merging it with a magus’ soul, it will morph the soul into a Soul of Element, causes the magus’ affinity of the element to improve by a hundredfold, and reach a state where they will be most compatible with their elemental energy – a magus with Soul of Element could deploy magical spells instantaneously. Also, it will speed up a magus’ comprehension towards the understanding of the energy of same origin. Erm, in short, it comprises of a lengthy list of benefits!” Stratholme the old monster explained for Han Shuo forthright.

“The most important thing to note is that, only a magus that has formed a Soul of Element possesses the capabilities to become a god in their line of magic. Soul of Element and Body of Element are the foundations for a magus to become a god!” The upper-class woman Tiana added on top of old monster Stratholme’s explanation in a grave expression.

After hearing what both of them had to say, brilliant rays shot out from lightning sacred magus Reynold’s eyes like bite-sized lightning bolts were being discharged within his eyes. It was obvious that he was extremely thrilled.

Han Shuo, who was just as shocked, let out a soft cry. He finally understood why they were so excited and restless. Shortly after, he turned his attention to the twelve round balls far in the distance. After a short pause, he asked, “There are four balls without the presence of pure and intense elements. What about those?”

“Your are indeed attentive in your observations. Not all magic in this world is necessarily reliant on elements. Space magic and summoning magic are examples of that. Ok, the interior of those two spheres are in a nebula state. Those are the principles and profound comprehension towards space magic and summoning, and they can fuse with a magus’ soul to form Soul of Principles, which is somewhat similar to the Soul of Element. Soul of Principles could be used by a magus to further their understanding towards the mysteries of space or summoning, and it is

only by having a certain level of comprehension towards the mysteries of those principles, that a magus could truly become a god, instead of demigod!” the upper-class woman Tiana explained after she gazed at Han Shuo in an astonished manner, somewhat surprised at Han Shuo’s remarkable sensory.

“The last two balls. The one constantly radiating lights of fighting aura is suitable for swordsman and knights to use, and helps warriors like us, form a Soul of War. Again, it has different effects compared to the others, but in essence it is basically the same – allowing us to save a hundred or even a few hundred years worth of time, in making our souls to possess the foundations of becoming a god. As for the last sphere that carries the aura of destruction, er, only suitable for psychos. No sane person would ever touch that!” Stratholme continued.

“Let’s move, there’s no more time for chit-chat!” Tiana suddenly spoke. Right after she finished those words, an azure coloured staff appeared in her hand.

# Chapter 452: Demonic Blades

The azure staff materialized in Tiana's hand and immediately, the element of water came to life in the region, which had just regained a presence of elements. The dry air was now filled with moisture, while the blanket of fog that lingered around Tiana grew thicker.

"Reynold, take care of those in the outermost perimeter. You two get close to retrieve the Origin Crystal. I will deploy magic from the sides to assist the two of you. Tiana bluntly elected herself to be the leader, as the staff in her hand began to rapidly absorb the rich element of water in the region.

"Let's go!" shouted the old monster Stratholme in a low voice. A simple and unadorned longsword the width of about two fingers fell into his hand. Immediately after he spoke, he flew off a hundred meters away, charging straight towards the aliens, who were holding some sort of wicked ceremony.

Han Shuo was empty-handed. When he saw Stratholme suddenly on the move, Han Shuo reduced to a cloud of black light and followed tightly behind Stratholme. While in the air, Han Shuo's ten fingernails started to grow rapidly. Within the blink of an eye, they were a meter long. His frightening fingernails twinkled with the incisive gloss of the edge of a knife.

'Demonic Blades' was a demonic art that could only be practiced by one who had reached the Carnal Realm, as the body of a demonic practitioner could only prompt the sudden growth of demonic claws within the realm. Naturally, those in the demonic sect would not simply call their own fingernails, however long they were, 'claws', therefore they were dubbed 'Demonic Blades'.

After the meter-long fingernails were perfused with demonic yuan, the Demonic Blades truly resembled sharp blades, even somewhat sharper than some regular grade A weapons.

When Stratholme the old monster finally found the time to take a glance

behind, he was shocked by the bizarre changed on Han Shuo's two hands, wondering, is this kid even human? How are his nails sharper than the sharpest knives?

Buzz... Buzz...

The aliens in the midst of a procession immediately sensed some incoming danger. They let out an ear-piercing noise that resonated through the sky. For one who was no real expert like Han Shuo and the three, one such as Cecilia, that buzzing alone would cause their eardrums to rupture.

"I'll go right and you take the left. Let's move!" Stratholme the old monster shouted loudly. An unhealthy light grey appeared on his handsome face. Before Han Shuo could answer, the old monster's speed multiplied abruptly, and he streaked across the surface of the vast lake in an instant, heading into the isle covered with aliens.

With one sweep of the longsword in Stratholme's hand, colourless and formless fighting aura erupted like a volcano. The bodies of a dozen or more aliens closest to Stratholme exploded violently, shattering into pieces just three meters from him.

For swordsmen and knights, even though they possessed fighting aura, their fighting aura carried different colours. From the pale blue fighting aura of a swordsman apprentice to the gold fighting aura of a sacred swordmaster, they all varied in colours. Legend had it that only an expert who had broke through to divine swordmaster could possess colourless and formless fighting aura. This Stratholme before his eyes was evidently one of the said experts on the level of divine swordmaster.

If not for Han Shuo's mighty consciousness, and his unwavering attention to Stratholme's attack movements, he perhaps wouldn't have had so easily noticed the intimidating colourless, formless fighting aura condensed in his longsword. Without any colour as indicators, the opponent would hardly be able to tell just how horrific the fighting aura was, and it would surely leave any opponent of his with a headache.

Absolutely marvelous! Indeed a true, out-and-out demigod expert! No

wonder sacred swordmaster Karel and Dempus suffered such a crestfallen defeat. Han Shuo thought inwardly, having witnessed Stratholme's attack.

Even while observing Stratholme, Han Shuo's own movements weren't slowing a tad. By the time Stratholme swept out his longsword, Han Shuo had landed in the middle of another side of the aliens. Hundreds of humanoids with green skin, python-like tails and one or two horns on their head, coldly fixed their green eyes on Han Shuo. A dozen or more of those aliens were already charging at him.

"Hmph, just in time to try my new demonic art Demonic Blades on you fools," Han Shuo said to himself in a low voice, sneering. His two bladed hands moved succinctly in a criss-cross motion. Dazzling lights flashed one after another as Han Shuo made his way forward, laughing grimly.

The few aliens that had tried to approach him were now sliced into shreds, their bodies reduced to the fleshy equivalent of julienned vegetables. Some of those aliens even maintained running position, but their heads and half of their bodies would fall apart cleanly.

Even more aliens turned into severed limbs and corpses in a flash. Perhaps Han Shuo had waved his Demonic Blades too rapidly, or maybe the Demonic Blades themselves were excessively sharp, but there was not a single shriek from the aliens, not even an expression of pain on their faces.

As if an incorporeal incisive weapon was being unceasingly whirled around his body at such high speeds it was impossible to see, Han Shuo advanced towards the center of the isle and the aliens who were charging towards him from all around simply split into pieces. Not one of them could get anywhere closer than three meters to Han Shuo.

Lightning sacred magus Reynold who had just released large-scale lightning magic, 'Omnipresent Lightning', revealed a rather ugly expression. Under his voice he exclaimed, "What a terrifying young man. It's no wonder Brettel City was left so brazen!"

Just then, a dense element of lightning converged from all around. The bright, clear sky turned into hundreds, maybe thousands of lightning bolts



with the girth of an infant's arm. Accompanied by the fierce rumbling of thunder, the lightning tangled in the air like dragons before striking the isle in the middle of the lake.

At long last, Han Shuo finally witnessed just the severity of a magical spell cast by a sacred grade magus!

Hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts struck down like a thunderstorm in the bright, clear sky. Jolts of lightning of differing diameters filled the sky. Although Reynold's target was merely the isle in the middle of the lake, the coverage area of this 'Omnipresent Lightning' spell was clearly far wider.

As thunder and lightning bombarded the ground below, the deep blue lake transformed into an ocean of electrical sparks. The tranquility of the lake was completely disrupted by the rumbling. One after another, jets of water mixed with the power of lightning shot to the sky. The water pillars were extremely muddy, obviously expelled from the bottom of the lake by the thunder.

Strands of electric currents flooded the big lake. Fish and shrimp, which weren't considered magical creatures, floated on the surface with their stomachs to the sky, dead beyond all doubt.

If the mere boundary was such a horrific sight already, then surely those aliens on the isle, the true targets, were suffering even more devastation. Heavy lightning struck the land, densely packed. Each and everyone of those aliens collapsed to the ground, letting off thick, black smoke.

Of the aliens with less than three horns on their heads, not one survived the attack of the lightning magic.

Those with three horns were trembling to insanity, and must have suffered rather extensive injuries. Only the four-horned aliens emerged unscathed. Each of them had their eyes locked firmly on Stratholme and Han Shuo, ready to gang up and attack.

The five-horned alien leaders had managed not only to deflect all lightning, but before the lightning even came close to them, they perished due to the energy they emitted, causing absolutely no harm. Of the four

alien leaders, two remained in their posts to proceed with the ceremony, while the other two slowly rose up to the sky, and headed towards Stratholme and Han Shuo.

For Stratholme and Han Shuo, as the main assault forces, this kind of high-coverage lightning magic had hardly any adverse effects on them. They continued to charge towards the altar.

The aliens with one or two horns had had no chance of attacking Stratholme, and were massacred under the two's attacks. And while those with three horns could, with a higher moving speed and better bodily defense, they were barely enough to resist the two for a while, yet unable to hinder the pace of the two as they charged ahead.

However, the four-horned aliens were flight-capable. Over a dozen of these aliens closed in on Stratholme and Han Shuo separately. Even with the incisive longsword and Demonic Blades wielded by Stratholme and Han Shuo respectively, they could only leave blood traces, and couldn't behead the aliens effortlessly like before.

The four-horned aliens were, despite their strength, somewhat inferior to a sacred swordmaster, they weren't much of a gap apart. Surrounded by threateningly powerful four-horned aliens, even Han Shuo and Stratholme held back.

But even more frightening was that two of the alien leaders with five horns were stepping down from the altar. Han Shuo had long appraised the strength of these two alien chiefs. Their cold green eyes lacked the emotion that any mortal being would display. Even as they approached, a kind of destructive aura wildly converging on their bodies.

"Elder Sister Tiana, can you do it now?" Stratholme the old monster yelled.

"Hang in there for two minutes. It will be ready very soon!" Tiana replied from a great distance.

Han Shuo felt the temperature was dropping rapidly in the area. The vast lake, which was still spurting a moment before, had actually turned into thick layer of ice at some point. Lightning still thrashed now and

then, but surprisingly, were unable to break the thick layer of ice. The even more terrifying fact was that the surrounding temperature was ever falling. There seemed not to be a hint of warmth between heaven and earth, only a spine-chilling coldness.

# Chapter 453: Icebound

As the pair of five-horned aliens dove downwards, Han Shuo felt an enormous pressure crashing onto him. One of them was plunging towards Han Shuo from high up in the air. The five horns protruding from its head were flaring with cold, dark green light, causing them to look like five jade batons from afar.

Before Han Shuo could even react, he felt his consciousness being violently stung by five mysterious energy forces. The five rays of energy felt like sharp awls, dealing an enormous stabbing pain onto Han Shuo.

His consciousness seemed to be thumped!

The whirling motion Han Shuo was making with his two hands while wielding Demonic Blades abruptly halted. The seven four-horned aliens which had surrounded Han Shuo continued to close in on him, and the horns on their heads similarly shone with dark green radiance. Shortly after, twenty-eight mysterious energy forces came pouring into Han Shuo's consciousness, and with that followed another twenty-eight weaker attacks on his soul.

What a splitting headache!

That was the most direct string of blows he had ever perceived. The acute pain even caused Han Shuo momentary vertigo and hallucination. Although an attack on the soul was a rather straightforward technique, it could give one an immense pain as though his brain was being rummaged with knife blades.

Countless years of cultivation in the demonic arts had caused Han Shuo to develop his ability to endure pain to an extraordinary stage. Not only did the demonic arts allow Han Shuo's soul to evolve into a high-level consciousness, it also made his consciousness more tenacious and miraculous than a normal human being could ever imagine.

In all those days of the constant, perverted tempering of his body, he had endured pain and agony that no ordinary person could endure. Thus, when the stinging pain suddenly burst forth in his mind, the dizziness only

lasted for two seconds!

After those two seconds, the blood essence within Han Shuo's demonic infant flared up, and instantaneously, his consciousness gained an inexhaustible energy.

Unexpectedly, the lump of consciousness in his brain broke into millions of strands. The energy forces attacking Han Shuo's consciousness suddenly lost their target!

A moment later, Han Shuo's scattered consciousness regrouped at the site of his demonic infant.

The altogether thirty-three soul-attacking energy forces reacted as they sensed the reappearance of Han Shuo's consciousness. However, before they could attack again, Han Shuo's consciousness, which was fused with the demonic infant, suddenly released an absorption force of utmost ferocity!

The 'Demonic Art of Assimilation', which represented the inherent attribute of demonic cultivators to devour everything, was deployed with the demonic infant as the root. A violent vortex formed.

Of the mysterious energy forces aimed at attacking Han Shuo's consciousness, twenty-eight were trapped by the absorption force before they could pull out from Han Shuo's body!

Han Shuo tightened his consciousness. Like a giant whale inhaling, twenty-eight soul-attacking energy forces entered the tiny mouth of the demonic infant.

The five mysterious energy forces that originated from the alien leader, however, seemed to be a step ahead. When Han Shuo's consciousness regathered in the demonic infant to form the 'Demonic Art of Assimilation', the five mysterious energies seemed to have sensed danger and escaped from Han Shuo's body in advance.

"ROAR!" Han Shuo shouted loudly after having sensed his demonic infant breaking down and absorbing the mysterious energy. The Demonic Blades in his two hands thawed and resumed their rapid whirling.

When the five horns on the alien leader shone brightly it was already charging rapidly towards the seven quadrahorned alien experts. The green pupils that locked coldly on Han Shuo suddenly seemed to contain an extra trace of fear. The blueish-green lustered horns on their heads turned a bleak shade.

Only the alien leader that descended from the top of the altar retained the tint of its five horns. It looked as if the five mysterious energy forces that left Han Shuo's body in advance had been recalled to its source, so as to not suffer further damage.

Before reaching the Carnal Realm, Han Shuo already understood that the demonic arts, which benefits one to the detriment of others, possesses the miraculous ability to engulf energy. With Han Shuo's leveling up in demonic realm, the demonic infant's ability to engulf energy for its own use became increasingly prominent.

However, perhaps it was because demonic cultivators belonged to an extremely wicked faction, the demon infant's engulfment seemed to reject all positive energy, including holy energy and fighting aura. It was as though the demon infant refused to absorb this energy in order to preserve the pure wickedness of the energy in Han Shuo's body.

When it came to chaotic, negative energy that caused violence and corruption, no matter how strange or mysterious the origin, once it fell deep into Han Shuo's body, the demonic infant would always magically absorb it, and convert it into the purest, most suitable energy for the demon infant to continue growing and evolving.

It was such with the wicked energy in Elizabeth's body, and with the energy contained in the bodies of these overtly unkind aliens.

Subconsciously, Han Shuo realized that he himself was the big heretic of the evil faction. All kinds of evil energy was his to use!

I am, indeed, a bad guy! Not only that, I'm the also the bad guy that punishes other bad guys!

As Han Shuo thought to himself and laughed, the Demonic Blades in his two hands revolved rapidly, producing flashes nearly invisible to the naked

eye.

As for the four-horned aliens nearest to Han Shuo that were unable to retreat in time; before, Han Shuo's Demonic Blades could leave only blood trails on their bodies. But now, after a round of Demonic Blades flashes, Han Shuo discovered that the new wounds on the seven alien experts around him were deep to the bone!

The trace of fear in the green pupils of the seven alien experts turned into sheer dread. All of a sudden, the seven aliens that surrounded him stepped away from Han Shuo uniformly. Fresh, reeking green blood gushed uncontrollably from the new cuts on their bodies!

Han Shuo, too, was dazed. He inspected the meter-long Demonic Blades, almost flabbergasted, not understanding why his Demonic Blades could suddenly deal such extensive injury to the seven aliens.

After some careful thinking, Han Shuo noticed that the only difference between this attack and previous attacks was that the demonic infant had now absorbed the mysterious energy that attacked his soul from the seven aliens. Could the reason have been his demon infant's absorption of the twenty-eight strands of mysterious energy from the aliens?

"Hey! Elder Sister Tiana, could you hurry up a little?" Stratholme's yell sounded a short distance away from Han Shuo as he was pondering.

When Han Shuo turned his head, he discovered that Stratholme was swimming around a group of aliens. Wielding a longsword, his lily-embroidered robe was daubed with fresh green blood. Stratholme gave the impression that he was some sort of germaphobe as he appeared to be extremely uncomfortable with the green blood splattered on his robe.

He attacked with his longsword, swerving around the group of aliens, and would slash off the corners of his bloodstained robe from time to time. Even at such a moment of life and death, he was concerned with the cleanliness of his robe. This simply left Han Shuo between laughter and tears.

Stratholme seemed slightly flustered. Han Shuo couldn't help but sigh at just how mighty and experienced Stratholme the old monster was. All

throughout, he did not allow the five-horned alien leader a chance to get near to him, and rather moved around the four-horned aliens that surrounded him in a wonderful pattern. Again and again he would strike with his sword, and there would be another blood hole on an alien's body.

Ginger gets spicier with age. This old monster is a cunning and seasoned adversary, Han Shuo thought as he formed an impression of Stratholme.

"Done!" yelled upper-class woman Tiana from her distant hiding place.

Soon after, the temperature in the region plunged. Gusts of bone-chilling wind converged in an instant and slithered around like a giant anaconda. Even the four-horned aliens, once swept by the cold air, froze into ice sculptures. Among those formed were four columns of cold air of the greatest thickness, and they fiercely enveloped each and every one of the four alien leaders.

The two on top at the altar and another two under the altar were shrouded by dense, frigid air, specifically prepared for them by Tiana. The four alien leaders, who were nearly a head taller than the rest of their species, did not immediately turn into ice even through the cold air, so cold it could freeze space-time itself.

But still, they suffered some effects. Their bodies were visibly freezing. Crackling noises could be heard from the alien leader pursuing Stratholme, as its speed decreased gradually. And finally it was as slow as a snail, its bodily functions largely compromised by the cold air.

After that one magical spell was deployed by Tiana, the space between the heaven and earth became a frozen realm. The entire lake was frozen over. The cold air, the atmosphere, human shadows; everything seemed to have paused. Besides Stratholme the old monster, Han Shuo, and Tiana, nothing could leap or frisk about.

Han Shuo, too, quivered and silently cursed about the crippling coldness! After a few glances at the five-horned alien moving sluggish, yet mechanically, Han Shuo was finally certain that Tiana was a water divine magus. Otherwise, her bone-chilling air would never have been able to freeze the demi-godlike aliens.



“Now is the time, go grab the things!” commanded Tiana. A trace of unquestionable excitement could be heard in her voice.

The Origin Crystal of Water!

Despite having lived as long as she had, hiding in the shadows of the continent for however many years she had, it still proved an unrestrainable temptation for the water divine magus!

“Move!” yelled Stratholme the old monster suddenly. A new set of silvery-grey, lily-embroidered robes replaced his previous frayed robe. His gaze was fervent as he watched the round sphere radiating lights of fighting aura. His body shot out like lightning.

Of course, Han Shuo didn't want to fall behind. For the first time ever, he deployed 'Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens' to its fullest. Reynold and Tiana were blind to his flight path. By the time he had reached the top of the altar, his own shadow under the altar where he had just stood had yet to vanish.

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# Chapter 454: Plundering Treasures

When Han Shuo and Stratholme the old monster arrived at the top of the altar, neither seemed to have any hesitation whatsoever. They immediately reached their hands out to grab the twelve balls hoisted by the fleshy tentacles.

Needless to say, Stratholme the old monster first grabbed the sphere radiating lights of fighting aura, while Han Shuo aimed at the sphere emanating the pure aura of death. Out of some miracle, Han Shuo happened to land just where he needed to, near the orb that he had been eyeing so yearningly. As he extended his mighty hand, his meter-long fingernails shrunk and vanished bafflingly.

Just before Han Shuo's mighty hand could land on the orb, an anomaly occurred. The twelve tentacles, which had been static since they rose from the altar, suddenly began to writhe frantically. To his surprise, he managed to grasp nothing but the air.

"Huh?!" Stratholme cried out in surprise. His body shifted at high speed, and layers of phantom trails of his hands could be seen. His eyes were fixed on the Origin Crystal of Fighting Aura, not letting go for even a moment.

The twelve fleshy tentacles wriggled about much like a monster. Clouds of heavy green mist began to drift from the middle of the altar which, in an instant, had spread all around the isle. A shiver ran down Han Shuo's spine and he was sure something was very wrong.

Meanwhile, the four five-horned aliens icebound by Tiana's cold streams of air, let out popping sounds as their green skin made contact with the mist. Their stiff bodies began to tremble, accompanied by creaking noises. Their sluggish movements became faster and faster. The two alien leaders on the altar shot cold stares at Han Shuo and Stratholme respectively.

"Quick! They have broken the seal," warned Tiana anxiously, raising her voice from afar.

Han Shuo recovered from his trance and his demonic yuan began to

churn faster than ever. The alien on the altar charged at Han Shuo and the latter suddenly roared.

Twelve mystical demons which had been hiding in the surroundings in an immaterial state suddenly solidified to form physical bodies. Each and everyone of them let out malevolent and horrifying shrieks as they stormed towards the twelve spheres.

Han Shuo paid no heed to the alien headed straight at him but sped up to maximum capacity and stared fixedly at the sphere overflowing with the pure aura of death.

Deep within his heart arose a sort of feeling of unwell. Although he had confidence in the speed of his twelve mystical demons, the leakage of strange scents from the altar along with the green mist gave Han Shuo a palpitating uneasiness.

He therefore could not place all his hope on his twelve mystical demons. He, too, made a move without the slightest hesitation.

Buzz Buzz...

An insufferable buzz sounded from the mucousy mouth at the center of the altar. An eerie sensation that would make one's hair to stand on end disseminated throughout the region in a second.

This buzzing was as sharp as a sword and carried an unstoppable soul-attacking firepower. Compared to the soul attack that the five-horned alien leader unleashed just prior, this one was over ten times as strong!

Han Shuo's consciousness took a hit before he was able to completely scatter it. The pricking pain that followed exceeded any sort of pain that Han Shuo had ever suffered in all his years.

Unable to withstand the ache on his consciousness, Han Shuo almost fainted and his vision blurred. Within a split second, a fantasy land arose in Han Shuo's mind, his hands and feet turned cold and limp.

Han Shuo's consciousness sustained heavy damage. His body fell through the air involuntarily.

Suddenly, Han Shuo's consciousness, still hallucinating, felt twelve small, consecutive stabs of pain. Of course, relative to the sting loud buzzing on his consciousness, this kind of pain was totally negligible.

However, it was precisely thanks to these twelve stabs of pain projected in his consciousness that Han Shuo, who had entered a land of fantasy due to the fainting, promptly awoke. His body did not continue to plunge helplessly towards the ground.

At the next moment, Han Shuo realized that the twelve mystical demons he had painstakingly refined had their souls all completely annihilated!

The horrible buzzing was mixed with soul attacking energy. Given that even Han Shuo's consciousness could suffer serious damage, the twelve mystical demons refined from his blood essence clearly would never have survived!

Upon regaining awareness, Han Shuo halted the fall of his body. He suddenly found that right beside him were three spheres emanating different energies.

One was the Origin Crystal containing the pure element of death, another Origin Crystal contained the pure element of darkness. The last sphere was brimming with the energy of destruction!

Perhaps it was because the three balls were a class of treasure that only an evil powerhouse would be willing to hold together. When the awful loud buzzing began, the twelve madly convulsing muscles ceased to move. Eventhough Han Shuo's consciousness had suffered a heavy blow and nearly fell off, by clinging onto his determination, he arrived at the three spheres.

Of course, the twelve mystical demons had played a role as well. Were it not for the deaths of the twelve mystical demons reflecting their pains onto their host, Han Shuo might regrettably have had fallen into the giant grotesque mouth at the center of the altar!

Without any hesitation and with great difficulty, Han Shuo resisted the discomfort in his brain, took out the Demonslayer Edge which was still in hibernation stage and made use of its incisiveness to cut off three of the

tentacles. Subsequently, his space ring flashed and the three orbs entered his space ring, along with the tentacles holding them.

After successfully collecting three Origin Crystals, Han Shuo felt somewhat more relieved of the sorrow of losing his twelve mystical demons. At a glance, Han Shuo's gaze locked on an Origin Crystal of Fire ten meters away from him. Just as he was about to make a move to collect it, he heard Stratholme the old monster's shout, "Hurry! Get out of here!"

This loud warning from Stratholme was meant specifically for Han Shuo. Han Shuo immediately turned his head to look at Stratholme, and suddenly discovered that his silvery-grey robe was stained with fresh blood, dark red in colour. His seven apertures flowed unceasingly with blood. It was apparent that the fresh blood on his new robe was his own.

The bewitching, charming demeanor usually borne by Stratholme had vanished. His humiliating look made Han Shuo somewhat fearful. He did not even deal with the fresh blood on his body, but with a frightened look on his face, gazed down at that disgusting mouth that had been constantly fed with magical beasts' crystal cores and heart.

Following along Stratholme's line of sight, Han Shuo couldn't help but look down at it as well.

All he saw inside was a large, green head covered in thick pus, slowly forcing his way out. Han Shuo could tell that it was the head of another green-skinned alien. This one had a skull somewhat larger than those of the four alien leaders.

Most significantly, however, was that there were six horns on its head!

The five-horned aliens already possessed strength equivalent to a demigod's. As to just how powerful this six-horned alien must be, Han Shuo dared not imagine!

Even with the sensing ability of his consciousness, Han Shuo couldn't sense the presence of this emerging alien. Based on Han Shuo's understanding of demonic arts, he was sure that this alien possessed strength far superior to anyone in the region!

No wonder Stratholme the old monster was so frightened and wanted to leave. It was afraid that this alien who was about to arise could have the strength of a true god!

“Run!” Tiana screamed at the top of her lungs. Han Shuo could sense that she had immediately put her words into action. Her presence became further and further from this region!

“Run!” the old monster again shouted. He turned a blind eye to the remaining Origin Crystals which were almost within reach around him and flew away at speeds even faster than when he rushed over.

Given that his body was currently seriously injured, and he was yet able to deploy that skill with speed faster than when he had entered, this was sufficient to illustrate that he overdrafted his energy to escape.

“My... my Origin Crystal of Lightning!” Reynold’s unreconciling moan came from a distance. He was jumping up and down as though he had lost his mind. Stratholme the old monster, however, was none too concerned and would not pause for even a moment to help Reynold collect the Origin Crystal of Lightning not too far from him.

At this stage, Han Shuo did not hesitate. Just as Stratholme the old monster made a move, Han Shuo too gathered all the energy within his body to escape. He took one last regretful look at the remaining spheres before finally turning away.

Of the twelve spheres, Han Shuo had obtained three. The orbs containing fighting aura and pure element of water were, however, missing. Stratholme the old monster ought to have successfully collected them. Seven Origin Crystals, including the Origin Crystal of Lightning, sat there motionless as before.

However, neither Stratholme nor Han Shuo dared to stay any longer to collect more!

Unusually, instead of chasing after the escaping Han Shuo and Stratholme, the five-horned aliens all gathered at the huge mouth where the terrifying six-horned alien was ripping it apart as it struggled free itself. They jointly teared the huge mouth, helping the formidable six-

horned alien to break free from it.

“My... my... my Origin Crystal!” lightning sacred magus Reynold of Brut Merchant Alliance murmured alarmed as he stared at the Origin Crystal of Lightning from afar, jumping up and down.

“If you are still not leaving, then you shall die here,” said Stratholme the old monster who was spitting up blood after he arrived beside Reynold. After serving him his final alert, he flurried towards the outside, not taking another look at Reynold.

“My... My... Origin Crystal...” Suddenly, Reynold was no longer jumping up and down in fury, but seemed to be dazed and gaped blankly at the Origin Crystal emitting the purest elemental aura. Han Shuo had travelled the distance of a kilometer and arrived beside Reynold. He shot a glance at Reynold, who wore a blank, stupefied expression, but did not say a word. He rapidly shot away following behind Stratholme.

Reynold was a lightning sacred magus of the Brut Merchant Alliance. Han Shuo held an unfavorable impression towards the Brut Merchant Alliance. Reynold, who had actively participated in the governmental affairs of the Brut Merchant Alliance, might have had even secretly assaulted Brettel City in the past. On top of that, it was inevitable that the two would turn against each other in due time. At this point Han Shuo couldn't care less if Reynolds lived or died.

# Chapter 455: The Abandoned Sacred Magus

Soon enough, Han Shuo caught up with Stratholme the old monster and water divine magus Tiana.

When they arrived at the defensive shield, a mortifying aura shrouded the land. A suffocating pressure pushed down against them.

The three exchanged glances aghast, before Stratholme the old monster exclaimed, "This can't be good. It has arisen!"

Han Shuo and Tiana both knew who the old monster was referring to. Tiana's calm, frail face changed and she reached out her hand stick with utmost agility to the region defended by exotic energy. An ice awl sparkling with cold light suddenly materialized in her palm. The dense water element within was menacing. She directed the ice awl towards the space defending this area as it shot out.

Creak!

The ice awl of the water divine magus, seemed to be pricked on the toughest iron and stone in the world. The ice awl shattered into a million pieces!

Their hearts sank in unison. Stratholme the old monster questioned, "Elder sister Tiana, what's wrong?"

"The energy has been reinforced. I can't break this defense!" explained Tiana with a trace of panic in her voice. Her face grew ugly.

Stratholme the old monster furrowed his brows. The longsword, which he had carried in his hand all along and never stored in the space ring, began to emit a fighting aura like fireworks, albeit colourless and formless. A dazzling white light flashed.

Stratholme gathered all the remaining energy he had and struck at the defense field.

Clang!



Just as before, his bombardment seemed to have landed on an immovable stone. He pulled back his slightly trembling right arm. In an expression of overwhelming shock, he growled, "I can't break it either!"

One magic attack and another physical attack, but neither worked!

"That thing got out. He must have reinforced the defense energy! We might not be able to break through it," Han Shuo said heavily as he looked at the two bewildered demigod-like experts. It was clear to him that the six-horned alien race must have done just that.

Buzz Buzz...

A strange loud buzzing began in the distance. Unlike the previous buzzing that attacked Han Shuo's and the old monster's souls, this one came with some peculiar effects. It seemed to be able to rip apart the sky. Fine lines of space ripples appeared in the sky, bright, colorful chasms appeared beneath the cracks in the air.

The old monster Stratholme and Tiana exchanged glances. They simultaneously exhaled breaths of cold air. Gaping at the rifts in the air radiating colourful light, their faces turned an ugly expression.

Stratholme, who had just pulled out a scroll in his hand, turned to Tiana as though he would weep and said, "The fluctuation of the space is too violent. The space magic scroll can't be deployed at all. This guy has cut off all of our escape routes!"

At this point, even Tiana was at her wit's end. She shook her head and sighed, "We're going to die here. Stratholme, this is my fault. I've failed you. I never expected to face such a beast!"

The two with their demigod strengths were unable to break through the defense that enclosed this region by means of their own strength. The next best thing they could do to survive was to utilize a space magic scroll, rip apart spacetime and escape through it. However, that shrill caused fissures in space. Within a chaotic space, a space magic scroll was of absolutely no use. There, indeed, seemed to be no hope of escaping.

"My turn!" Han Shuo, who had not said anything but remained calm all

along, suddenly spoke.

The reason Han Shuo managed to appear calm all the while was that he still had a few tricks up his sleeves!

The gazes of the two demigod experts immediately landed on Han Shuo's body. The old monster stared blankly for a while before he asked, "You, you have a way?"

Han Shuo did not answer, but chanted an incantation. The foolish-looking earth elite zombie suddenly appeared. Stratholme the old monster and Tiana both looked at each other with obvious doubt in their eyes. They seemed to have no idea what purpose this low-level zombie warrior could serve at such a moment.

Suddenly, a most astonishing phenomenon occurred before their eyes.

When the mindless zombie warrior fell to the ground, its body melted into the earth, much to their surprise. The hard ground seemed to pose no resistance against it and its body rapidly disappeared.

In this world, although an earth magus could utilize the power of the earth, they could only do so for offense or defense. They couldn't explicitly utilize the energy of the earth to bore through it at will, like the earth elite zombie, the favoured son of the earth, could.

Therefore, when the body of earth elite zombie sank into the ground like quicksand, the divine magus and divine swordmaster both gawked in disbelief at the surreal sight before them and stood dumbfounded.

"Let's go!" called out Han Shuo, who was already deep inside the underground tunnel.

The two demigod existences turned from staggered to euphoric. They looked at each other and kept into the tunnel.

"Save... save me!" Just as the three entered the underground tunnel, the wailing of lightning sacred magus Reynold arrived from afar. His voice was riddled with fear.

A choking pressure approached like a strong wind. Han Shuo and the

others who had just entered the tunnel understood instantly what was going on – the six-horned alien had emerged. Reynold attempted to flee towards the tunnel, presumably under the pursuit of alien experts.

Han Shuo turned towards Stratholme and Tiana, and found the two with similarly creased brows, maintaining their silence with extreme rapport.

They had given up on Reynold! Han Shuo understood this in his heart.

Han Shuo knew what he needed to do next. He issued an order to the earth elite zombie. The thick, solid earth slowly filled up the opening to the underground tunnel.

When Stratholme the old monster and Tiana saw the last trace of light vanished from above their heads, they exhaled. It was as though a boulder was relinquished from their hearts. Their appearances loosened up slightly as well.

In the dark, Han Shuo had very clearly seen the expressions on their faces. He gained a deeper understanding towards human nature.

It's every man for himself!

"Thank you, Bryan. You really are a lifesaver!" praised Stratholme the old monster, who was following behind Han Shuo.

"Don't fret it. We are partners. It's my duty!" Han Shuo replied in the darkness, although his heart could not accept that to be true.

The real reason Han Shuo brought the two into the underground tunnel was that Han Shuo couldn't tell if he would run into any more terrifying dangers later on. Vaguely, through his instincts, Han Shuo felt that it wouldn't be so simple to escape alive this time. But with these two experienced fighters beside him, the three might have a greater chance of staying alive. It was only under such circumstances that Han Shuo was so willing to save the two.

The three had obtained all the loot they seekers from the trip. There wasn't much discrepancy between their strengths, therefore they would have greater odds of escaping alive by working together. As for Reynold, he was a far stretch short of their strengths. At such drastic times, he

would be of no use. It was the inevitable, logical move to abandon him.

“Elder Sister Tiana, this is your Origin Crystal of Water!” Stratholme drew out a ruby, which glowed a soft, warm red light in the darkness. Stratholme handed over the sphere.

Turning his head to catch a glimpse, Han Shuo witnessed an unrestrainable excitement on Tiana’s face. Her hand trembled as she caught and held onto the round sphere. With her eyes sparkling brightly, she murmured, “Origin Crystal. I have an Origin Crystal!”

Tiana was quite old. After the Origin Crystal was put into her space ring, having lived for so long , she learned quickly how to stabilize her emotions. After taking in a deep breath, she looked ahead towards Han Shuo who was leading the way and asked, “How much longer until we get out?”

“Very soon! But I think you two can feel it too. Even here, deep underground, we can still feel that heavy pressure. I doubt we are truly safe yet!”

Just two minutes later, the earth elite zombie broke through the ground. The garish light of day peered through.

The three lept out from the tunnel. Han Shuo took a quick scan through the surroundings. Before having a clear idea of where he was, his consciousness suddenly felt as though it was targeted. This feeling was anything but reassuring. Han Shuo immediately yelled, “It knows where we are!”

Although Stratholme the old monster and Tiana didn’t have sensing capabilities as sharp as that of Han Shuo’s consciousness, that stifling pressure they felt did not disappear. They understood right away that Han Shuo’s words were true.

“Come with me. We’ll walk and talk!” Tiana said with haste. The mist surrounding her turned once again thicker and she flew into the distance. Han Shuo and Stratholme followed behind her closely.

“The six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race has locked onto our souls.

As long as we are within the Profound Continent, he will be able to find us. Their kind are innately good at understanding souls. They possess a profound understanding of souls, which I believe you have experienced for yourself. We simply can't break free from his soul targeting!" Tiana said to Han Shuo and Stratholme the old monster as she breezed past like the wind.

"Soul Race? What race is that? Why is it that I've never heard of it?" Han Shuo asked, creasing his brows while trying to keep up.

"This is not a race from the Profound Continent. They appeared once in Profound Continent several thousand years ago, but then they disappeared and were never to be seen again. As to why they would suddenly show up in Tarrag Canyon this time, I have no idea either.

"The knowledge I have of this race, I've only inadvertently come across it in an ancient scroll. I have no way of knowing the specifics of what happened all those years ago. It was from their appearances that I surmised they are of the Soul Tribe," Tiana explained.

Tiana's eyes twinkled. Han Shuo did not expect Tiana to know nearly this much about the Soul Race. However, it would have been inappropriate for Han Shuo to get to the heart of that matter.

"Elder Sister Tiana, could it be that once the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race recognizes our souls, we will have no option at all, but to merely wait for him to catch up and kill us?" Stratholme the old monster asked, concerned about his own safety.

"Not really. We have the Origin Crystals in our hands now. As long as we merge it with our souls and form Soul of Element, not even this six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race will be capable of sensing the locations of our souls. Once a Soul of Element is formed, we will fuse together and be one with the elements found everywhere between the heaven and earth. He will not be able to locate us," Tiana explained.

"But the process of merging one's soul with an Origin Crystal takes time, during which he could possibly locate our souls, and kill us one by one. What are we to do?" Stratholme said with a bitter smile, as though he was

overcome with sorrow having obtained a most valuable treasure that he would be unable to enjoy.

A thought struck Han Shuo. He recalled that he could make use of the skeletal staff to have his consciousness descend into the netherworld. Separated by boundless distance of different planes of existences, no matter how remarkable the abilities of this six-horned tribal king, there would be no way for him to detect the position of Han Shuo's consciousness. Han Shuo could simply fuse the Origin Crystal with his soul in the netherworld and hide from the pursuit of this terrifying being.

This would be the most dependable method. Furthermore, Han Shuo's consciousness was not like Tiana's or Stratholme's souls. Once one attained a certain realm in demonic arts, his soul underwent an evolution into an incomparably superior consciousness. Han Shuo reckoned that, given a little bit of time, his consciousness would surely find a way to break free from the sensing of the six-horned creature.

With that in mind, Han Shuo became at ease. But Han Shuo was still rather curious about this Soul Race, hence, he did not hastily depart, but stayed to continue listening to the conversation between Tiana and Stratholme.

"There's still a way out for us," Tiana said in a weird expression.

"What is it?" the old monster asked anxiously.

"By utilizing the transportation matrix facilities of various countries, we can travel faster than him. Then, if we bring him to a powerhouse with enough strength to contend against him, we could pit him against one of those few formidable existences within the Profound Continent. Then perhaps, we really will have a chance to escape this alive!" Tiana said to Stratholme after hesitating for a moment.

The old monster's eyes lit up as he immediately understood what Tiana meant, and replied, "Beings within Profound Continent that could resist the six-horned king of the Soul Race, you can count them with a single hand. Plus, the majority of them don't live in fixed locations. The only ones in fixed locations are those in the headquarters of the Church of

Light and Calamity Church!”

Han Shuo, who was planning to leave, was shocked, but continued to decide, “Church of Light it is then!”

Tiana and Stratholme the old monster both made a strange expression. The two exchanged glances, remained silent for a moment, and finally nodded in agreement with Han Shuo’s proposal.

For the Church of Light, who had always taken it upon themselves to exterminate heretics, to have such an obviously unkind race appearing at their headquarters – Han Shuo thought this to be amusing.

# Chapter 456: Consciousness Healed

With that decision made, the three set their individual agendas and they began executing their grand scheme with the objective of ensuring their own survival.

Although Han Shuo had lost his twelve mystical demons, his consciousness could sense the vitality coming off from all kinds of life within range. However, he couldn't get a clear view of every nook and cranny like the mystical demons could.

Luckily, Tiana and the old monster were rather familiar with the geography here, so Han Shuo need only follow their lead.

Along the way, Tiana and Stratholme the old monster ceased to discuss anything meaningful, and Han Shuo could obtain little useful information from them. Of course, Han Shuo wouldn't force them to talk if they didn't want to, although he was scheming in the back of his mind.

The Profound Continent was vast and extensive. It housed numerous nations, countless tall mountains and deep oceans, and a whole variety of races, including the human race.

No one could have fully comprehended just how many people there were on this continent with extraordinary talent and incomprehensible power. Based on Tiana and Stratholme's previous conversation, Han Shuo was almost certain that even those like Tiana and Stratholme, both of whom possessed the strength of demigods, were not nearly the strongest of Profound Continent.

However, from what he was hearing, Han Shuo also understood that there were only a few beings on the whole of Profound Continent with strength more formidable than theirs. It made perfect sense to Han Shuo the more he thought of it. Given that he had never even heard about certain demigod beings, it was hardly unexpected that he hadn't an inkling what they were up against.

As the two richest and most powerful religious organizations on Profound Continent, the Church of Light and the Calamity Church, their



capacity for spreading influence over every region across the continent was sufficient to illustrate just how mighty they were. To be able to stand tall and never fall for thousands of years, perhaps no one would have believed that there were no almighty beings backing them. It was a reasonable assumption that any being more powerful than Tiana or Stratholme would be present at the headquarters of the two religious organizations.

Stratholme grew concerned. “Elder Sister Tiana, whichever way I go about it, it still seems a bit inappropriate. When we arrive at the Church of Light’s headquarters at Oden Empire, we will definitely cause immeasurable damages to the Church of Light. And of course, I don’t expect that the Church of Light is going to let us get away with it. What then?” Three were arriving at a city of the Brut Merchant Alliance called Tjaba and began to slow down.

“There’s nothing we can do about it. The Church of Light is closer to here. What’s more, the Church of Light has always made it their business to deliver kindness to any living creature in suffering. Therefore I am confident that they will forgive us,” Tiana replied in a righteous tone. After thinking for a while, she added, “No need to be too worried. The protector safeguarding the headquarters of the Church of Light cannot leave their post. So, provided that we leave as soon as we’re done, there shouldn’t be much of an issue.”

“Well then, if you say so, I can be at ease!” Stratholme the old monster nodded in comprehension. Perhaps he felt relieved that the merciful Church of Light wouldn’t seek revenge on them, or maybe he was reassured that the protector of the Church of Light wouldn’t be able to leave the headquarters.

The city of Tjaba isn’t far from Tariq City, both are equally metropolis belonging to the Brut Merchant Alliance. The three hastily made their way to the transportation matrix facility at Tjaba City. Han Shuo furrowed his brows and said, “What should we do? In every country, the guards regulating their transportation matrixes don’t allow any unauthorized personnel to use it. Only certain figures of great importance are granted

access to transportation matrixes that even a wealthy man would be denied admittance.”

“No worries!” Stratholme the old monster said, smiling slightly. Somehow there was a badge held in his hand. The old monster swaggered his way to the person in charge of this magical transportation matrix, held up his badge at those men, and said, “We are going to Thea City!”

Without any objection, this person in charge respectfully started up the transportation matrix, and allowed the three to enter it. After a flash of white light, they appeared at Brut Merchant Alliance’s Thea City.

Stratholme the old monster had lived for countless years and had witnessed the rise and fall of nations. It was no surprise at all that he would possess certain artifacts that allowed him to move freely between various countries. After arriving at Thea City, the three let out a sigh of relief, and continued their journey by flying to the Oden Empire.

Thea City of the Brut Merchant Alliance was one of the closest cities to the Oden Empire. No transportation matrixes between two countries would ever be interconnected, therefore the three had to continue by flying. Fortunately, the three fugitives had temporarily shaken off the vigorous pursuit of the six-horned Soul Race tribal king when they used the transportation matrix. At that moment, they weren’t as strained and anxious as they were previously.

As the trio possessed demigod strength, their airspeeds were phenomenal. In less than half a day, they made it to the most powerful empire on Profound Continent – Oden Empire.

Upon arriving at Oden Empire, Stratholme the old monster pulled out another badge representing a different identity. And yet again, they were unimpededly granted access to the magical transportation matrixes in Oden Empire. After three consecutive long-range teleportations, they finally arrived at the city closest to the Church of Light’s headquarters.

It was a city in Oden Empire named Sandro City. Right after exiting from the transportation matrix, they saw plenty of Temple Knights and Light Priests of the Church of Light walking on the street.

The Church of Light held tremendous influence in the Oden Empire. As the closest city to the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light, Sandro City was run by Oden Empire officials alongside followers of the Church of Light. Han Shuo took a quick look at the surroundings and discovered that the architecture had strong religious influence as churches of the Church of Light could be seen at every corner.

An absolute majority of residents living in Sandro City were devout followers of the Church of Light. Many of them came from all over the continent, having travelled far and wide to migrate to this city, as they believed that this city was the closest to the God of Light and would allow them to better listen to the teachings of the God of Light.

“Alright. that beast will need at least a day’s time to get here. In the meanwhile, we can have a little rest. I have suffered rather extensive injuries, but fortunately we were able to leave in time. Otherwise, I would be staying there forever!” Stratholme said to Han Shuo and Tiana after walking out from the transportation matrix and let out a sigh of relief.

“Sure! Let’s find a place and rest for a while!” Han Shuo agreed. His consciousness had, as well, sustained serious damage. The terrifying Soul Race could possibly be there in just a day. Furthermore, this location was at the base camp of the Church of Light. Once Han Shuo’s identity was exposed, the Church of Light wouldn’t let him off for sure. The more energy he recovered, the better his chances were to escape alive when the time came.

The three no longer spoke superfluously and Han Shuo concealed the aura in his body. Soon after, the trio found a small, remote hotel, and requested for three rooms close to each other.

The six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race had taken note of their souls, meaning that the three were all in the same boat in facing this enemy. But still, Han Shuo remained vigilant. Immediately after entering his room, Han Shuo deployed a magical formation. He would immediately be alerted if there was the slightest disturbance in his surroundings.

After everything was in place, Han Shuo sat cross-legged and began

activating the blood essence in his demonic infant to heal his heavily injured consciousness.

The deafening buzz of the six-horned tribal king inflicted pain akin to millions of daggers dragging across his consciousness. If it wasn't for Han Shuo's prompt response of immediately concealing his consciousness by splitting it into millions of strands, there was a real possibility that his consciousness would have been completely wrecked.

But, so long as his consciousness was not exterminated, he could activate the blood essence within his demon infant to release demonic yuan energy, and use it to recombine the scattered consciousness.

In fact, Han Shuo had already started doing so along their journey to Sandro City. And now, with his attention fully concentrated on actuating his blood essence, the rate at which his consciousness recovered instantly increased.

A human soul is comprised of three ethereal souls and seven corporeal spirits, the three ethereal souls being Heaven, Earth, and Life, while the seven corporeal spirits are Mind, Intelligence, Impetus, Strength, Central Axis, Vitality, and Heroism.

The seven corporeal spirits reside in the internals of one's body. As long as the three ethereal souls are present, the seven corporeal spirits can be reassembled, and one's soul will not fade away between heaven and earth.

Han Shuo's demonic arts caused the three ethereal souls – Heaven, Earth, and Life – to fuse into one, forming a consciousness. This consciousness not only had remarkable abilities, it could even separate into millions of strands and hide among the seven corporeal spirits. When the six-horned tribal king released the soul attack, Han Shuo's consciousness did this without a second to spare, therefore it was able to escape the calamity.

The three ethereal souls of an average person would require their seven corporeal spirits to survive, meaning that once his physical body perished, his three ethereal souls would dissipate. Han Shuo's consciousness, however, was bound by no such limitation. Even with his physical body

turned into fine powder and his seven corporeal spirits totally destroyed, his consciousness would still be able to drift away, select a new body and be reborn. But in that case, he would need to spend a few hundred years to cultivate his new physical body in order to regain his original strength.

Although his consciousness would not be destroyed with his physical body, he still required the energy of seven corporeal spirits to heal his consciousness once it was injured. Fortunately for Han Shuo, as a demonic arts practitioner, he possessed top-notch ability to control his body. Han Shuo used his blood essence to generate demonic yuan energy, which in turn induced the seven corporeal spirits residing in his seven chakras. Strands of energy from the seven corporeal spirits assimilated into his consciousness, healing it bit by bit.

The process of recovering his consciousness, with Han Shuo's all-out effort, did not take too much time. After his demonic infant consumed a dozen or more droplets of blood essence, the energy generated by his seven corporeal spirits was absorbed by his consciousness, thus, his heavily-injured consciousness was completely healed.

If the consciousness of a demonic practitioner was injured, as long as the person's physical body and demonic infant were not destroyed, it wouldn't be hard to recover. However, if the two were destroyed, the consciousness would have no choice but to select a new body, spend perhaps tens or even hundreds of years to cultivate a demonic infant in the new physical body. And only then may the healing process for the injured consciousness begin.

As soon as his consciousness had recovered, Han Shuo awoke from his meditative state. His enormous consciousness began to spread out immediately to get a glimpse of the situation in Sandro City.

# Chapter 457: Ploy

No living being less mighty than Han Shuo could elude his consciousness, allowing him a complete overview of the situation in Sandro City.

This place was indeed worthy of being the closest city to the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light. Through his consciousness, Han Shuo discovered that there was an abundance of Church of Light followers carrying divine energy in their bodies, the whole Sandro City was brimming with churches, numerous magical towers had been erected, and holy energy permeated in every corner in the city.

Everywhere his consciousness passed, each and every expert in its vicinity would appear in Han Shuo's perception. He sensed that a light sacred magus was present in Sandro City. Not only that, there were all sorts of followers of the Church of Light that occupied every crevice in the city, amongst whom a staggering number were powerful experts.

As Han Shuo was slowly expanded his sensing power, he felt ripples of divine energy crashing in from the Sacred Mountain not far from Sandro City. The divine energy was forcing people to their knees to bow, and induced a tranquility of the mind and even-temperedness that seemed to signify a readiness to serve.

Even for the bloodthirsty Han Shuo, under the effect of this sacred energy, he felt as though he would surrender, repent and be absolved of his crimes. A wisp of energy that penetrated deep into the soul arrived thereupon. This soul-penetrating energy possessed a sort of intense seductive property, one that could turn people permanently into obedient slaves.

Han Shuo released a soft groan. Immediately, his consciousness, which was snooping through Sandro City, stopped expanding outward, receding instead. He also concealed the presence coming from his body.

The divine energy transmitted from the top of the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light, to certain devotees, perhaps granted heightened

divine energy. However, to any ordinary man, this kind of divine energy carried an intense captivating power, pied-piping people to throw themselves into the embrace of the Church, offering their firm conviction to the God of Light.

As the heretic that the Church of Light so wished to eliminate, Han Shuo undoubtedly understood what it meant for an ordinary person when they were exposed to this kind of divine energy with captivating power aimed at their souls. Such practices of the Church of Light obviously had no resemblance to the transparent practices they paraded.

After withdrawing his consciousness, the suffocating pressure which had shrouded him all along did not disappear. Starting from Tarrag Canyon, the three had travelled across numerous cities. And yet, that soul targeting from the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race, had never ceased.

And by now, this choking pressure had grown even stronger. Han Shuo could sense creatures of the Soul Race rapidly approaching.

Ding!

A sharp tinkling sounded in his ears. It was an early warning from the magical formation, only audible to Han Shuo.

“Bryan!” barked Stratholme the old monster. Judging from his voice, his body must have had sufficiently recovered.

“In a second!” cried Han Shuo, disengaging the magical formations around him. He then opened the door to Stratholme and Tiana outside.

“He’s almost here!” There was a trace of undeniable distress on the old monster’s face. Despite his preparations, when it came time to confront this terrifying six-horned tribal king, the old monster could not help his pessimism about his future outlook.

“We need to get in the vicinity of the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light right away. When he’s almost here, we will immediately intrude into the Sacred Mountain and await the six-horned tribal king’s appearance. Only when both sides have fought and are wounded will we stand a

chance.” Tiana remained ever so graceful and sumptuous, but the look on her face was growing heavy, indicating that, just like Stratholme, she too was riddled with apprehension.

“Alright then. Let’s move,” Han Shuo replied succinctly.

Neither Stratholme nor Tiana said anymore. With Tiana showing the way, the trio left Sandro City quietly.

The Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light was so tall that it pierced through the clouds. The three arrived at the foot of the mountain. When they looked up, it seemed as though the blue dome of heaven was prodded through by the Sacred Mountain. A sense of peace and tranquility rose in their hearts.

“The Sacred Mountain is 9,763 meters tall, with the City of Light located at the top. Inside are the most powerful experts of the Church of Light protecting the place. We can first sneak halfway up the mountain. Then, when the six-horned tribal king is almost here, we make a run for the summit of the Sacred Mountain,” Tiana explained to Han Shuo and Stratholme when they arrived at the foot of the mountain. She seemed very familiar with the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light.

Han Shuo and the old monster nodded simultaneously and Tiana did not need to explain any further. She proceeded in leading the two flying to the middle of the Sacred Mountain.

“Follow me. We must find a place where we can hide. There are many experts of the Church of Light on the top of the mountain. Two of them are just as powerful as we are. One is a light divine magus and the other a divine knight. In addition to that, there’s an ancient Saintess. God knows how long she’s been around. If our whereabouts are exposed, we might be terminated by the Church of Light even before the six-horned tribal king arrives!” Tiana explained to Han Shuo and Stratholme as they flew up the Sacred Mountain.

All three of them were beings of demigod strengths. Even when they arrived at nine thousand meters up the Sacred Mountain, the three still managed to soar up.



Since arriving at the headquarters of the Church of Light, Han Shuo had reserved his consciousness and observed his surroundings solely with his naked eyes. From what he saw, he discovered that starting at the foot of the mountain, structures of the Church of Light covered every surface. Tens of thousands of followers of the Church of Light lived on this lofty, huge mountain.

“This way!” Tiana called out, leading towards a steep, projecting cliff at the middle of the Sacred Mountain.

Behind this cliff was a dark cave. After Tiana lead Han Shuo and Stratholme to land at the precipice, they walked right into the dark cave.

As soon as he entered the cave, Han Shuo found that the cave wasn't actually as dark as it seemed from the outside, on the contrary, there were a few magical lamps. The cavern was extremely spacious, no doubt excavated by men.

“Huh? Elder Sister Tiana, have you been here before?” Stratholme the old monster asked, astonished.

“No, but I sensed this place to be uninhabited. Alright, we will stay here for the time being. Erm, let me deploy some spells and form boundaries to cover our presences!” Tiana replied almost impulsively.

Neither Han Shuo nor Stratholme further questioned her. Tiana stood at the only entrance and exit to the cavern, took out her azure staff, and slowly recited magical incantations.

Tiana abruptly paused her chanting and bolted from the cave like lightning. Just after her exit, she finally completed the final phrase of her incantation. In an instant, water element of utmost intensity enveloped the only mouth of the cave. The energized water element solidified rapidly. Before Han Shuo or Stratholme could react, a chunk of ice a meter thick sealed off the exit.

The expressions on Han Shuo and Stratholme the old monster's faces flipped. Stratholme was furious and shouted, “Elder Sister Tiana, what is the meaning of this?”

Two divine presences zoomed down from the summit of the Sacred Mountain indiscreetly. After a few breaths, they arrived beside Tiana right outside the cave. Separated by crystal-clear, solid ice, Han Shuo could see that one of them was dressed in a Light Priest outfit, and another in a divine knight outfit. They both looked very young.

The duo who descended from the mountain top at great speeds made no effort in concealing the frightening presences coming from their bodies. Therefore, Han Shuo was immediately certain that they were the divine light magus and divine knight Tiana had previously mentioned. Both of them were similarly demigod beings!

“Tiana, you have done well. You may fuse with your Water Origin Crystal on the top of the Sacred Mountain at ease. Our Saintess will protect you from the persecution of that alien!” said the young looking divine knight with a tender smile on his face.

“Bergson, that young man Bryan is the big heretic you had all been hunting for all along. Do with him whatever you please. As for Stratholme, so long as he hands over that Origin Crystal of Fighting Aura, we shall let him walk. He has no conflicts with your Church of Light!” Tiana felt somewhat irked in her heart, and pleaded for the old monster.

“I’m sorry, I’m not the one to decide on this matter. Let’s put off the discussion until I’ve reported to The Saintess,” the divine knight called Bergson shrugged, and afterwards smiled and said, “However, if Stratholme is willing to vow loyalty and devotion to the God of Light, then that surely won’t be a problem!”

Suddenly, both Han Shuo and Stratholme sensed whiffs of intense divine energy which shrouded all around the cave at an unknown time. Add to the fact that Tiana had frozen off their only means of escape, the situation seemed like it could not get any worse.

“Elder Sister Tiana, I never expected this from you!” Stratholme the old monster who was trapped in the cave stared blankly at Tiana. His voice, although tranquil, carried a distinct wrath.

“Stratholme, I’m so sorry, but Bergson and I are very good friends. As

long as you hand over that crystal ball of fighting aura, I will find a way to let you walk out of this Sacred Mountain alive!” There was not a hint of remorse on Tiana’s face, and she kept ever so graceful and poised.

The frightening presence rapidly approached. Though they were separated by layers of boundaries, Han Shuo and Stratholme could still hear that weird buzzing noise.

At the same time, a beautiful, tender melody waft from the summit of the Sacred Mountain. A surge of divine energy possessed only by the gods fell before the cliff in an instant.

# Chapter 458: Domain of the Divinity

Han Shuo and Stratholme the old monster glanced at each other. They then realized that the Saintess, the one Tiana had mentioned, was standing before them.

This expert who possessed the strength of a god. As soon as she arrived, Han Shuo and Stratholme seemed to be enveloped by a sludgy marsh-like energy. Simply wiggling their fingers was proving to be a challenge!

Domain of the Divinity!

A look of overwhelming shock appeared in both Han Shuo and Stratholme's eyes. The kind of energy that caused the desire to kneel and worship in their hearts, and difficulty to even budge from head to toe, was such power that only a true god could possess as legend has it, an energy which incapacitated mere mortals from coming close to facing them!

"Saintess!" The two demigod existences of the Church of Light kowtowed simultaneously, wearing a respectful expression from their hearts' deepest pits.

"Your Holiness!" Even Tiana performed a solemn etiquette in a grave expression.

However, Han Shuo and Stratholme were unable to clearly see the appearance of the being who had just arrived. But that omnipresent holy aura was nevertheless breathtaking. There seemed to be a beautiful song extolling the God of Light mixed with the holy aura as it reverberated in the depths of their souls.

This voice carried an occult power, which could appeal to one's prejudices and emotions as it sang the praises. Han Shuo gradually lost the strength in his hands and feet, as though he was willing to throw himself into the embrace of the God of Light, and from then on, to forever serve Him with utmost dignity.

Not good! Han Shuo's heart quivered and he came to his senses.

By now, Han Shuo was completely certain that the holy power he had

previously sensed from the Sacred Mountain originated from this Saintess of the Church of Light. It was only due to the great distance and the wide dispersal of holy power of the Saintess to cover the whole of Sandro City that Han Shuo did not feel much discomfort the last time.

Perhaps the holy aura was naturally released and was not aimed at Han Shuo and Stratholme, but because this mighty godlike existence was in such proximity to them, they found it particularly difficult to resist and gradually desired to surrender their hearts and souls.

All these years of practicing the demonic arts had tempered his willpower, and granted Han Shuo a stubborn tenacity unlike any other's. He submerged his consciousness at the site of the Demonslayer Edge, which was still hibernating in his body. He constantly stimulated his consciousness using the inexhaustible ruthless desire to destroy that the Demonslayer Edge emitted, therefore his consciousness had been unswervingly sober and calm all the while, and did not sink into the Domain of the Divinity.

"Scour!" Stratholme the old monster unsheathed his longsword. The formless fighting aura reverberated within the sword hilt and produced a peculiar sound, which he used for resisting the corrosive influence of this divine energy.

Stratholme wore a grave expression never seen before. His brows were locked tightly together, and his breathing became irregular. He had exerted every last bit of his strength to resist!

Buzz Buzz...

The resounding buzz that came from the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race, seemed all of a sudden to have enveloped the whole Sacred Mountain. An ice-cold, desolating aura that carried not a trace of humanity, like indestructible ice blades, filled every space in the region.

The noise had been, at first, exceedingly unpleasant to the ear, but at once became incomparably pleasant to Han Shuo and Stratholme. Thanks to the sudden emergence of this buzzing, the tempting divine power discharged by the Saintess, as though it had been shattered into pieces

with a sharp sword, obliterated completely!

“What a terrifying energy!” Stratholme the old monster cried out in surprise with lingering fear in his heart after letting out a sigh of relief.

A gentle, sweet voice instructed from outside the cave mouth separated by the thick layer of ice. “Intercept the attackers first. As for these two, we shall deal with them after the Soul Race leaves!”

“Yes, Saintess!” the three demigod existences including Tiana responded simultaneously.

Whoosh! The green skinned, python tailed, six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race was the first to arrive in front of the cave mouth. Immediately, the four pentahorned experts showed up and stood behind their king.

Without any unnecessary exchanges, the five of the Soul Race made a prompt move to attack the few people blocking the cave upon descending to this region.

A silhouette of a person in a dress as white as snow suddenly appeared. The Saintess, cladding a White Priest gown, turned her focus to repulse the six-horned tribal king. Han Shuo and Stratholme could finally see the Saintess who they could previously only hear.

She appeared to be a beautiful, young girl, wearing a sweet smile on her face. Solely from her appearance, she gave off a sort of flawless, pure, holy quality. Add to the wholly refined temperament she naturally emitted, this young girl seemed to be the incarnation of the holiness of the God of Light.

Beautiful, holy, and regal were the most intuitive descriptions Han Shuo had for her, which made him momentarily cast away all sense of disgust he had for the Church of Light. It was as though this girl had all the desirable traits of a woman. Only the word ‘perfect’ could adequately describe her flawless appearance.

This young girl flew out from the incline and gracefully arrived before the six-horned tribal king, holding the Holy Grail that reflected dazzlingly holy light. Holy water flowed within the Holy Grail.

To proceed, she swirled the Holy Grail in her hand. An enormous force the mass of a mountain seemed to engulf the six-horned tribal king. From the looks of it, the body of this six-horned tribal king was swaying along with the Holy Grail.

A devilish buzz soon sounded from the mouth of the six-horned tribal king. Akin to a celestial dragon ascending to heaven, his gargantuan tail shot towards the Holy Grail at lightning speed.

Dong! A frightening sound seemed to envelop the whole of Sacred Mountain. Aftershocks invisible to the naked eye violently shot out in waves. As though they were being bombarded by high-yield explosives, an avalanche of fist-sized pebbles rushed down from the cliff protruding from the mountain.

The Sacred Mountain rumbled like an earthquake, a 9,000 meter tall mountain at its epicenter. Han Shuo and Stratholme, imprisoned in the cave, swayed along with the tremor.

Meanwhile, the four Soul Race leaders who accompanied their six-horned tribal king had their merciless green eyes locked on Tiana and the other two demigods. They began attacking the trio almost precisely as the six-horned tribal king made a move. The horns on their heads again started to radiate that nefarious green light. Han Shuo, who already had a taste of its unpleasantness, immediately understood that it was another attack on the soul.

“We have to find a way out of here. If we don’t leave now, we will not have another chance!” Stratholme said to Han Shuo hastily, while his eyes closely followed the world-shaking battle from behind the thick ice.

How could Han Shuo not realize just how unfavorable of a situation it was? This cave was defended with a layer of divine energy by that Saintess. Even the solid rocks were filled with divine energy. Tiana’s ice boundary, too, was reinforced with divine energy from the Saintess. Even Han Shuo was at his wit’s end.

We have no choice. We must try the metal elite zombie! After arriving at that decision, Han Shuo summoned the metal elite zombie. The metal elite

zombie sparkling with golden rays from head to toe appeared from the netherworld. At Han Shuo's command, he attempted to dig open a tunnel using his ability to manipulate metal and stone.

Clink! Clank! A sharp noise sounded under the foot. Han Shuo turned his attention and the metal elite zombie made a helpless shrug at him, and transmitted, "The stones here are mixed with some strange impurities. Their attributes have changed. I cannot make an opening!"

"That damned Tiana!" Han Shuo cursed with an ugly look.

It seemed that no matter the moment, he could not reveal his hidden trump. The last time they escaped the Soul Race tribal king, Tiana witnessed Han Shuo make use of the earth elite zombie to dig open a tunnel in order to escape. This time, Tiana had certainly told the Church of Light about the miraculousness of Han Shuo, hence the Saintess of the Church of Light injected divine energy into the rocks.

With this escape route blocked up, they obviously wouldn't give the two a chance to leave with space magic scrolls. Under the effects of this Domain of Divinity, even a sacred space magus wouldn't easily be able to leave using space laws, let alone Han Shuo and Stratholme, who merely had space magic scrolls.

"Can you do it?" When Stratholme saw that Han Shuo's zombie warrior had no effects and heard Han Shuo curse at Tiana, Stratholme understood what was going on. His heart sank and he had a feeling of helplessness.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo replied bitterly, "Tiana sold us out. Even my trump card was blocked!"

As he spoke, Han Shuo had a staunch expression in his eyes. He considered deploying the Demonic Blood Disassembly to escape. Doing could severely wound him, but it seemed like his only way out.

"Father, are you looking to break open this cave?" the metal elite zombie suddenly transmitted.

"Yes, but it seems that there's no hope now!" Han Shuo replied without thinking, still wondering if he should deploy the demonic escape



technique.

Right after Han Shuo finished those words, the metal elite zombie took out the metal attribute treasure he obtained from the place of extreme metal – the Golden Cudgel. While Han Shuo wasn't paying attention, this most precious treasure of metal attribute slowly grew an insane length, turning into a massive pillar, sparkling gold!

# Chapter 459: Escaping Alive

The golden cudgel filled the cave with brilliant golden light as it grew. The dazzling golden rays finally caught Han Shuo's attention.

He saw that under the manipulation of the metal elite zombie, one end of the golden cudgel – a treasure of the metal attribute – was pushing against the solid ice on the cave mouth deployed by water divine magus Tiana and further strengthened by the Saintess. Naturally, the metal elite zombie couldn't completely grip the golden cudgel as it had transformed to the size of a huge pillar of great height. But with that said, the metal elite zombie could still manipulate the golden cudgel with the energy of metal element in his body.

The golden cudgel, purportedly capable of destroying any solid object, under the manipulation of a metal elite zombie, a great force burst out from its one end that pushed against the iced cave mouth. Under the watchful eyes of Han Shuo and Stratholme, it broke the solid ice like a twig.

The golden cudgel weighed tonnes. Except for the metal elite zombie, whose body was filled with the energy of metal element, no one could move the golden cudgel, not even Han Shuo with the brute force of his physical body. It seemed that the metal elite zombie yielding the golden cudgel indeed deserved the reputation of possessing the greatest fighting strength. Even the shield of ice reinforced with divine energy from the Saintess could be forcefully broken open under the pounding of the golden cudgel.

"Let's go!" Stratholme the old monster shouted. He was shocked and delighted at the same time.

Han Shuo, who had been staring blankly at his metal elite zombie in disbelief, immediately returned to his senses when he heard Stratholme's yelling. With an incantation, the immensely proud metal elite zombie along with his golden cudgel were sent back to the netherworld by Han Shuo.

“Let’s go!” Han Shuo replied and flew out at lightning speed through the broken cave mouth with Stratholme. The combat between Tiana and those from the Church of Light, and those of the Soul Race continued like wildfire. Among it, the Saintess displayed truly terrifying strength. All along, under the protection of boundless divine energy enveloping her, and the Holy Grail bursting with holy light, the six-horned tribal king was forced to remain within bounds.

“This is not good, they have broken through the ice!” The solid ice boundary at the cave mouth was deployed by water divine magus Tiana. She sensed it the instance her ice boundary was destroyed.

Han Shuo and Stratholme flew out from the cave just as Tiana finished speaking.

However, at this moment, no matter the Saintess of the Church of Light or the three demigod beings, they were all busy fighting off those of the Soul Race. When battling against such a grade of experts, unless one’s team possessed strength well above that of their opponents, one must not be distracted in the least.

Tiana and the two others handled the four five-horned members of Soul Race, with the divine knight as the main fighter while Tiana and that light divine magus ceaselessly dealt frightening magic attacks. Although Tiana and the light divine magus deployed layers upon layers of defense boundaries, in a battle of three versus four, it was obvious that the three were in disadvantageous position.

As Tiana let out a cry of surprise, her cold air attack against the few Soul clansmen become a tad slower. The pressure on the light divine magus and divine knight, which was already difficult to handle, instantly increased multiple times over. That caused the divine knight to be miserably swooped by three tails, nearly wounding him gravely.

While their hands were all tied up, Han Shuo and Stratholme the old monster felt zero hesitation to avail themselves of the situation and flew right away into the distance. They dared not stay at this Sacred Mountain a moment longer.

Han Shuo and the old monster were extraordinarily fast in their escape. Before the few were able to catch sight of the two, they had already rushed out from the region.

The Saintess of the Church of Light placed all her attention on the six-horned Soul Race tribal king and dared not to distract herself in the slightest. All she could do was to look on helplessly at the departing duo, not having extra hands to intercept.

“Quick, run!” Stratholme shouted to Han Shuo as soon as he rushed out from the Sacred Mountain.

It was, of course, clear to Han Shuo obviously just how dire the situation was at the moment and fled like lightning, following closely behind Stratholme. But in contrast to Stratholme, the expression on Han Shuo’s face was much calmer and collected, unlike the panic on Stratholme’s face.

Once departed from the cave in the Sacred Mountain, countless means of escape opened up for Han Shuo. In terms of airspeed, Han Shuo believed that even a character with strength a grade higher than his would be incapable of chasing up to him. At the very least, he could still use the transportation matrix connecting to the Cemetery of Death to escape. Therefore, with such aces up his sleeves, Han Shuo wasn’t as anxious as Stratholme the old monster.

After the two escaped from the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light, instead of returning to Sandro City close to the mountain, they took the longer route and flew to Ortley City.

Once they entered Ortley City, Stratholme used the authority in his hands to gain access to the transportation matrix. After travelling to a few transportation matrices, the two flew from the borders of the Oden Empire back to Brut Merchant Alliance. They then finally arrived at Tariq City.

Upon arriving at Tariq City, Han Shuo immediately sensed the position of Elizabeth through the drop of blood essence in her brain.

“Bryan, it was all thanks to you that we could escape alive. Well, I owe

you one!” Stratholme the old monster said to Han Shuo after arriving a Tariq City.

“You’re welcome!” Han Shuo replied with a slight grin. After a short pause, Han Shuo creased his brows and asked, “The six-horned tribal king could sense our souls. What do you plan to do next?”

Stratholme the old monster revealed a worrisome expression at those words. He sighed before saying, “I will immediately find a secluded place to fuse my soul with my Origin Crystal. Only by fusing the soul can we completely free ourselves from the pursuit of the Soul Race.”

“But we haven’t the slightest detail about the situation at the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light. If that six-horned tribal king did not suffer serious injuries in the battle with that Saintess, and gets to you when you are still fusing with the Origin Crystal, that will mean certain death for you,” Han Shuo exclaimed.

“There’s no other way. I can only take a chance. If midway through it, the six-horned tribal king comes knocking at my door, it’ll be my luck!” The old monster again sighed helplessly.

Han Shuo didn’t know how to respond. There was indeed no better alternative.

Han Shuo actually had a rather good impression with regards to Stratholme the old monster. Because of the existence of the seven grand duchies, Han Shuo could have become his enemy in the future. Yet, from their interactions during the prior few days, Stratholme’s conducts could have been called straightforward, instead of harboring any evil intentions towards Han Shuo because he was the Lord of Brettel City as Han Shuo imagined.

“Well then, good luck!” Han Shuo said after shaking his head and sighed lightly.

“You too. I hope there is a chance that we see each other again. It sure was nice to meet you!” Stratholme the old monster said with a smile, as though he laid down some worries in his heart. Afterwards, he seemed to suddenly recall something and hesitated for a while before saying, “Bryan,

after we part ways today, we may never see each other again. I need to discuss something with you. I hope that you will agree on the account we have fought shoulder to shoulder.”

“Tell me about it first,” Han Shuo creased his brows and had a good guess of what Stratholme wanted to discuss.

“For many years, I have been the State Preceptor of the Verdun Imperial Court, which is no more, and has been split into the seven grand duchies today. I still have some feelings for the seven grand duchies. In the future, perhaps the six-horned tribal king will find us both and we shall both die. Or perhaps one of us will survive this calamity.

“If I do survive, I shall restrict the seven grand duchies to never again infringe on Brettel City. However, if I do not, and you so fortunately survived, I hope that, for my sake, you will not let the people of the seven grand duchies live in hell.

“Your Lancelot Empire and Brut Merchant Alliance have always coveted for the seven grand duchies. I know that once I die, the seven grand duchies will no doubt be conquered. If you live through this, all seven grand duchies will be swooped by Brettel City. I’m not asking you to give it up, but I hope that you will treat the citizens of the seven grand duchies well,” Stratholme the old monster requested earnestly as he stared deeply into Han Shuo’s eyes.

It was only because Stratholme had calculated the likelihood of his death that he would say such things. No matter the perspective, Stratholme’s request wasn’t too arduous. Therefore, right after Stratholme finished, Han Shuo nodded and reassured, “Don’t worry, I will treat the citizens of the seven grand duchies well.”

Whether or not Stratholme would die, Han Shuo had no clue, but he knew that he himself would be able to escape this alive. He had long wanted to get his hands on the seven grand duchies. That decision wouldn’t change even if Stratholme lived. Now, Stratholme merely asked Han Shuo to treat the citizens well, which was not inappropriate at all.

“Thank you. I will return to Stranglethorn Valley and make some

arrangements. Then I shall find a spot that any average person would be unable to detect to merge with the Origin Crystal of Fighting Aura. I truly hope that there will be a day that we meet again!" Stratholme the old monster smiled and left placidly.

After Stratholme left, Han Shuo muttered in a low voice, "I hope you can escape this calamity!"

Towards this demigod existence that had obstructed the Lancelot Empire's military expeditions for many years, Han Shuo now held only a feeling of sympathetic respect and reverence. He truly hoped that there would come another chance to meet with the old monster again. After the old monster gradually vanished from Han Shuo's sight, he took a deep breath and flew away. He went searching for Elizabeth by relying on his senses.

"Come with me!" Han Shuo instructed when he saw Elizabeth, and he brought her back to Brettel City.

# Chapter 460: Peerless Murderous Soul

Upon arriving at Brettel City, Han Shuo introduced Elizabeth to Jack and others, gave a few instructions, and immediately headed to his secret chamber and activated his transportation array.

Once he entered the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo was overcome with exhilaration. That terrifying pressure which had been trailing him – as a shadow does a body – vanished without a trace.

“It’s gone!” Han Shuo cried out in surprise.

Ever since leaving Tarrag Canyon, Han Shuo could feel a bone-deep pressure coming from the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race. But upon entering the Cemetery of Death, that heavy pressure on his chest all could no longer be felt.

He walked out from the hall, looked down at the snow-white bones under his feet, then raised his head to gaze at the dark, murky sky. Suddenly, Han Shuo realized what was going on.

It seemed that the boundary that enveloped the whole Cemetery of Death was isolating him from the six-horned tribal king’s trace of his soul. As long as he was in the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo believed that the six-horned tribal king would never be able to locate him.

Before arriving at the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo had worked out plenty of escape plans. He had even prepared to use the skeletal staff to send his soul down to the netherworld for shelter once he entered the Cemetery of Death. But now it seemed that none of that would be necessary. The boundary of the mysterious Cemetery of Death, unexpectedly, solved Han Shuo’s worries.

“Cemetery of Death, oh Cemetery of Death, how many more secrets are you hiding?” Han Shuo couldn’t help but lament.

To be able to block off the sensing power the six-horned tribal king on his soul, this alone adequately explained just how miraculous the boundary that shielded the Cemetery of Death was.



Poor Stratholme. Perhaps you have already left Stranglethorn Valley for secluded cultivation. But even if you are still in Stranglethorn Valley, the Cemetery of Death isn't a place you could enter. Han Shuo thought to himself.

Without the menace of the six-horned tribal king breathing down his neck, Han Shuo's mood somewhat loosened up. Afterwards, he sat cross-legged at the spot where he had previously refined his mystical demons and from his space ring, he withdrew the three spheres he managed to plunder.

Three spheres. One of the Origin Crystal containing the intense element of death, one containing the element of darkness, and the last one emanating the energy of destruction that could cause one to palpitate – the Crystal of Destruction, one that only a maniac would want to fuse with, according to Stratholme.

Along the way as they ran away from the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light, Han Shuo had asked Stratholme about the exact technique of utilizing the Origin Crystal. And now, everything was in its place. Han Shuo aimed his eyes at the Origin Crystal emanating pure element of death.

With the Origin Crystal dispersing pure element of death in hand, Han Shuo steadily entered into the Origin Crystal with his mental strength and felt the incomparably enormous and pure elemental energy of death stored within. Next, Han Shuo tried to act according to the methods that Stratholme had described. He opened up his consciousness for the Origin Crystal to fuse with his consciousness.

All of a sudden, something Han Shuo had never anticipated happened. His mental strength could clearly sense the tremendous pure element of death. But when he tried the method Stratholme prescribed him, attempting to fuse his consciousness with this element of death, his consciousness immediately locked up, absolutely prohibiting any iota of the element of death from entering.

His consciousness had completely rejected the energy of the Origin

Crystal, thus leaving him unable to form the 'Soul of Element' that Stratholme and Tiana had mentioned.

Han Shuo's demonic infant had the fantastic ability to absorb an array of evil energy and transforming them. However, Han Shuo's consciousness was nevertheless very selfish, not permitting one bit of energy incompatible with demonic arts to assimilate with it. Han Shuo could clearly sense the rejection from his consciousness.

Perhaps the Crystal of Destruction will produce better results!

After putting away the Origin Crystal of Death, Han Shuo took out the sphere that emanated intense energy of destruction, and tried to fuse the energy of destruction into his consciousness again using the same methods.

The consciousness once again rejected!

As before, not a trace of that enormous energy of destruction could enter his consciousness, and naturally he unable to fuse with it.

Han Shuo frowned. With one hand holding Origin Crystal of Death and another the Crystal of Destruction, he thought, I have spent a great deal of effort plundering these two spheres and yet, in spite of everything, I can't absorb any of it. It seems this endeavor was all for nothing.

There were three important components in Han Shuo's body. One is the demonic infant located in his lower abdomen. The demonic infant was the source and root of demonic yuan, which was the basis for deploying demonic arts. The other two components were located in his brain. His consciousness, formed after his three ethereal souls fused together, was the basis for everything. Its importance was self-evident.

The last one, just like the demonic infant to a demonic arts cultivator, was the source and storage of energy. What was stored in this part of the brain was mental strength. It was the crux for Han Shuo, a necromancy grand magus, to release necromancy magic.

Of the three, the most important was of course the consciousness, also known to the average human as the soul. The consciousness contained all

the experiences and memories Han Shuo had, including all his realizations, all his knowledge of demonic arts and comprehension of necromancy magic.

The consciousness was the only evidence that Han Shuo was alive!

With his demonic arts attaining such a stage, Han Shuo would never permit any mishap on his consciousness, the basis for his demonic arts to advance further.

However, based on Stratholme's explanation, Han Shuo knew that if one wanted to become God in the domain of magic, one's soul had to form a Soul of Element. Only with that could his soul be perfectly compatible with the element, and possess the most profound realization towards that line of magic.

But still, the Soul of Element was obviously also an evolution of one's soul, and evolving one's soul meant change. What a pity it was that his soul had previously been transformed into consciousness, most suitable for practicing demonic arts. Unless Han Shuo devolved his consciousness to its original state, the Origin Crystals would be of no use to him. No matter what the perspectives, the demonic arts, compared to necromancy magic, was always more valuable to Han Shuo. Hence, Han Shuo would never relinquish his attainments in demonic arts. Besides, he didn't believe that he couldn't become a God without forming a Soul of Element. After some consideration, Han Shuo gave up on merging with the crystals.

Origin Crystal of Death, Destruction, and Darkness. Han Shuo could use neither of the three of them. He placed the three spheres before him, and started to ponder on how to maximize the utility of the three objects he had procured with all that effort.

After some thinking, a light bulb lit over his head. He summoned little skeleton from the netherworld.

"This is for you. Take it and fuse your soul with the energy within. This way, you can better utilize the element of death in the netherworld." Han Shuo handed the Origin Crystal of Death to little skeleton as he appeared and informed him of the process to fuse it with his soul.

“Thank you, thank you father. I can feel that this thing will bring me unimaginable gains. This must be the most valuable treasure for an undead creature. I don’t know what it will transform me into, but I’m certain that I will become stronger. That will surely be the case!” Little skeleton held the Origin Crystal emanating pure aura of death with blinding light exploding from his Purple Demon Eyes. Han Shuo could sense his immense excitement and delight.

“Good then. I believe that you will be stronger!” Han Shuo said with a faint smile as he felt the hard-to-restrain excitement from little skeleton.

“Father, with this, I will be able to subdue bone dragons. In my world, I reckon I will be stronger and stronger. My scope of influence will expand a hundredfold!” little skeleton said with exuberant ambition.

“Alright, go ahead. Immediately fuse with the Origin Crystal of Death like I taught you!” Han Shuo said smilingly and when little skeleton nodded, he sent him back to the netherworld with another necromancy spell.

As for the Origin Crystal of Darkness, of those beside Han Shuo, only Emily could exhibit its use to the greatest extent as no others practiced dark magic. It seemed that this time, Emily would surely go mad with joy. After fusing her soul with the Origin Crystal of Darkness, her strength would advance by leaps and bounds without a doubt.

All that remained then was the Crystal of Destruction. After racking his brain, Han Shuo still couldn’t figure out what to do with it. As he stared at the Crystal of Destruction, he found that the Crystal of Destruction was somewhat different from other Origin Crystals of elements. Once one’s soul fused with this boundless energy of destruction, they would become deranged, only knowing to wreak havoc.

He held the Crystal of Destruction, gazed at it for ages, and yet had no idea what to do with it.

Suddenly, a boundless craving for ruthless massacre rushed from Han Shuo body. With a thought, the Demonslayer Edge suddenly flew out from Han Shuo’s nape and landed on his palm. Inexhaustible resentment and

murderous intentions overflowed from the Demonslayer Edge, flooding the whole Cemetery of Death.

A stream of blood glistening bloody rays flowed from the Demonslayer Edge as though it was alive.

Han Shuo understood that the murder weapon that was the Demonslayer Edge had evolved and formed a true main soul! From that day onwards, the Demonslayer Edge would truly be an unparalleled demonic weapon!

While Han Shuo was looking at the Demonslayer Edge with excitement, the Demonslayer Edge suddenly flew out from his right hand. Before Han Shuo could react, its edges had pierced through the sphere containing the energy of destruction.

While Han Shuo was stupefied – the main soul that had just formed within the Demonslayer Edge had begun to fuse with the frightening energy of destruction in the crystal!

# Chapter 461: Concealing the Consciousness

In a rather short time, the energy contained within the sphere of destructive aura had fused with the main soul in the Demonslayer Edge. After the fusion of the main soul and the crystal of destruction, it flew back into Han Shuo's body and again sank into hibernation stage.

The Demonslayer Edge was a demonic weapon closely tied with Han Shuo. It had now formed a main soul, and therefore gained its own intelligence. As the Demonslayer Edge was originally casted with Han Shuo's blood essence and demonic yuan, the main soul would eternally serve Han Shuo as its master. Unless Han Shuo's consciousness dissipated, the Demonslayer Edge would always be a demonic weapon for Han Shuo alone to use.

Han Shuo stared at his empty hand that had lost the sphere containing destructive energy, and thought to himself that this was a pretty good ending, and at least it wasn't used to benefit outsiders. After absorbing the destructive energy in the round sphere, the Demonslayer Edge would no doubt only grow more terrifying. As a weapon that only he alone could use, the stronger the Demonslayer Edge became, the more advantageous it would be for Han Shuo.

Three Origin Crystals. One gifted to little skeleton, another fused with the main soul that just formed from Demonslayer Edge, and the last one belonging to Emily the dark magus. All three of them were people that Han Shuo could trust the most. Although Han Shuo's consciousness could fuse with none of the three Origin Crystals, it could be said that his strength had improved indirectly.

To Han Shuo, who had originally planned to fuse with the Origin Crystal containing intense element of death, the Origin Crystals didn't concern him anymore. The only thing that continued to worry Han Shuo was the threat of the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race.

As long as Han Shuo remained inside the Cemetery of Death, the six-

horned tribal king of the Soul Race couldn't do anything to Han Shuo as he couldn't detect the presence from Han Shuo's body.

But the problem was, it was impossible for Han Shuo to stay within the Cemetery of Death forever. The moment he left the Cemetery of Death, the six-horned king would sense the position of Han Shuo's soul. And when that happened, Han Shuo would have to confront this terrifying threat that he momentarily could not resist.

It seems I still need to purge that guy's sense of my consciousness! Han Shuo thought and began sifting through the memory that Chu Cang Lan left to him for a way to tackle it.

As Han Shuo carefully went through the memories, it suddenly occurred to him that once he reached the next Nine changes realm in demonic arts, even if he didn't seek a deliberate way, his consciousness would become undetectable by the six-horned king.

Once Han Shuo reached the Nine changes realm, not only could his physical body transform into any form he wished, his consciousness too could have a myriad different transformations. By then, that six-horned tribal king would never be able to detect Han Shuo again.

Of course, after Han Shuo broke through to the Nine changes realm, if the six-horned tribal king came knocking at Han Shuo's door, he would be courting death.

Currently, in the Carnal realm, although his consciousness could not alter as he wished, he could still conceal it with a concealment technique. As long as Han Shuo didn't intentionally use the wonderful energy of his consciousness, and remain in a state of nothingness under the effects of the concealment technique, no one could sense the position of Han Shuo's consciousness.

In fact, the consciousness concealment technique was one of the many miraculous abilities that the consciousness had. Unfortunately, Han Shuo had not spent enough time and effort delving into the marvelousness of consciousness. Once he found out that the consciousness could remain in a state of nothingness as long as he didn't use it to explore, he began to

practice this method of concealing the consciousness.

Not only would this state not affect Han Shuo's thinking and memory, it would also help Han Shuo make more rational decisions, and not cause him to lose control of his emotions or do anything at odds with his character.

Once Han Shuo thought that he mastered this technique of concealing his consciousness, he of course was eager to test if it was genuinely useful. He returned to the center of the Cemetery of Death and activated the transportation matrix, returning to the secret chamber in the city lord's mansion of Brettel City.

Indeed, as expected, even after he left the Cemetery of Death, Han Shuo did not feel that pressure coming from that six-horned tribal king, indicating that the consciousness concealment method was definitely working. Han Shuo no longer needed to be concerned about the potential threat of the six-horned tribal king anymore.

Immediately, he summoned Dorcas, Jack and the others for a meeting. When everyone was present, Han Shuo turned to Dorcas and said, "From today onwards, you will be in charge of the invasion of the seven grand duchies. You will make preparations at once. I shall take a trip to Ossen City, and provide you with detailed instructions when I return!"

"I have been waiting for this day for so long!" Dorcas' eyes were sparkling with exuberant ambition. The excitement of this war-lover was plainly visible.

"Master, what are you planning to do?" Dark dragon Gilbert asked Han Shuo, puzzled.

Han Shuo did not answer, instead instructing, "You stay by Dorcas. His strength is of no use. You will be in charge of protecting him and keeping him from assassination."

"Alright then. How come I've become a bodyguard? Before this I was protecting Trunks, and now it's someone even weaker," the dark dragon mumbled in unwillingness.



“Elizabeth, you stay in Brettel City. Guard against people playing tricks in the dark. There are a few with poor strength in Brettel City. You must protect them with your life.”

“Got it, master!” Elizabeth replied.

Afterwards, the duo of Dorcas and Jack thoroughly explained the current situation in Brettel City to Han Shuo. From their words, Han Shuo understood that the current population of Brettel City had increased over ten times over to around 530 thousand people. Under the leadership of Dorcas, Brettel’s military had 50,000 elite troops, in addition to 30,000 guards defending the city.

As the ever-expanding Brettel City possessed its own weaponry workshops and armour smiths, never short of all kinds of ore supplies coming from the five mines around it, every last one of the altogether 80,000 soldiers of Brettel City were fully equipped. Compared to the imperial guards of Ossen City, their weapons and armour were in no respect inferior.

With King Lawrence’s vigorous backing, the convenience of magical transportation matrixes, and the unusual terrain of Brettel City, in the short span of a few years, Brettel City had transformed into a true major city that was invulnerable to attack, and with flourishing businesses. The city now had a powerful, well-trained army. In addition to the lack of worry for future consequence, it was the best time to go on the offense at the seven grand duchies.

“Very well. I shall pay a visit to Ossen City. When I return, I shall set off with you all!” Han Shuo said and chuckled heartily as he felt entirely free from worry. With that, the meeting concluded. Han Shuo then headed towards the transportation matrix in Brettel City.

Currently, of the things that threatened Han Shuo the most was the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race, and another was the Church of Light. The six-horned tribal king could not sense Han Shuo’s location, and hence this threat could be disregarded. As for the Church of Light, although Han Shuo couldn’t contend against them if the two demigod beings of the

Church of Light were to act together, Han Shuo was confident that he could easily escape.

As for the Saintess with her Domain of the Divinity, based on what Stratholme the old monster said, Han Shuo knew that she was bound to the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light, and generally never left the mountain rashly. This seemed her hardly a threat to Han Shuo.

With that, Han Shuo really didn't have much to worry about. Being in Carnal realm, Han Shuo longed to go all out with no restraints. Only by completely satisfying his desires could he break through from Carnal realm and reach the next Nine changes realm. Therefore, Han Shuo hardly exercised restraint to the desires from his heart, ready to start punching and kicking towards significant undertakings.

Historically, in the school of demonic arts, anyone who advanced to Nine changes realm would first completely set free all their longings while in Carnal realm. These people were more often than not ambitious and ruthless characters in their worlds. For dynasties, these elders of the school of demonic arts, all played important roles, the trendsetters of their times.

As Brettel City had its own transportation matrix, it was incredibly convenient to go back and forth to Ossen City. Han Shuo made use of the space magic transportation matrix and appeared in the capital city in the blink of an eye. Upon arriving at Ossen City, Han Shuo headed straight towards the Dark Mantle headquarters.

Before coming to Ossen City, Han Shuo learned from Dick that Emily now rarely executed missions herself. She was currently in charge of assigning and distributing tasks. The post was more relaxed and lacked a lot of dangers. It seemed that perhaps Emily had ridden on Han Shuo's coattails a little, and therefore she could be so comfortable and relaxed.

Mount Ordas, Dark Mantle headquarters.

In three years, Han Shuo had turned into a legendary character in the Dark Mantle. Ever since he first stepped into the headquarters, while on his way, the people would look at him with a most revered expression in

their eyes.

“Where is Lady Emily?” Han Shuo asked the guide who was bringing him to the Candide’s secret room.

The guide then recalled of Han Shuo and Emily’s relationship. He revealed a meaningful smile and replied to Han Shuo, “Lady Emily and Lord Candide’s place aren’t separated far from each other. Lord Bryan, where do you intend to go to first?”

“Bring me to Lady Emily’s secret chamber first,” Han Shuo instructed.

“Very well,” the guide answered respectfully. His gaze towards Han Shuo was filled with admiration coming from the bottom of his heart.

To these people, although the current Han Shuo was not the one of the three heavyweights of the Dark Mantle, he was a character more honored than them.

# Chapter 462: Of Course It's for You

In the stony room were a few wide bookcases and a black wooden table where Emily was fully concentrated on an ancient personal letter held in her hands. Her brows were slightly knitted, puzzling over the dark magic knowledge recorded on the ancient letter.

“Reporting to Lady Emily, Lord Bryan requests an audience!” a voice came from a tubular hole on Emily’s desk.

A pleasantly surprised expression took over her face and she involuntarily let out a gentle cry. She put down the ancient letter with haste and took out a clear rounded mirror from her space ring, and touched up her tender, lovely cheeks.

“Lady Emily, can Lord Bryan enter?” when the guide heard her soft cry, he understood that Emily was in the secret chamber, but since she did not reply, the guide repeated his question.

Emily, who was tidying up her appearance in a flustered manner, hastily replied with her lovable voice, “Hold on, I will be ready in a second!”

As she spoke, she double checked her face in the mirror, making sure that not the slightest blemish was visible. She then smoothed out her black robe with magic. Finally, she said, “Alright, Lord Bryan may enter!”

With a flash of bright light, Han Shuo appeared in the stony room through a short-distance transportation matrix.

“Bryan!” Emily exclaimed delightedly when she saw the imposing stature that had been constantly in her mind standing in her presence. She threw herself into Han Shuo’s broad chest and tightly embraced him with all her strength, as though Han Shuo would disappear at any moment.

Han Shuo had a warm smile on his face as he looked down at Emily in his embrace.

Not only hadn’t her beautiful face aged after three years, but it had grown even more fascinating and charming. Her delicate face flushed with joy and excitement, making her already beautiful and alluring appearance

even more mesmerizing.

Han Shuo could feel the rapid climb in temperature of Emily's body. After three years of abstinence, an irrepressible fire surged up in his lower abdomen as he savored the wonderful feeling of having such a magnificent being in his embrace, with her supple skin as smooth as it looked and her slender neck, her curvaceous physique, bum and bosoms thick in all the right places.

Emily obviously felt the erection and heat coming from Han Shuo's lower abdomen. She became usually sensitive to such things after receiving much nourishment from Han Shuo. Her sight suddenly blurred, her voice and body, too, started to tremble lightly. Subconsciously, her two hands which were tightly wrapped around Han Shuo began unbridledly moving across his broad back.

Han Shuo let out a gentle roar and swept Emily off the ground in one motion. In a flash, he sat her down on the office desk used to distribute assignments to members of the Dark Mantle, and their clothing tore into shreds...

A long while later, Emily couldn't make the slightest movement with her fingers, and curled up in a languid posture in the comfy, wide chair.

A thread of demonic yuan flowed into Emily's body, gradually nourishing her, restoring the lost physical power little by little.

Some more time passed and Emily, who was in extreme comfort, took a deep breath and opened her bright eyes. With her gaze focused on Han Shuo, she asked, "Bryan, when did you arrive at Ossen City?"

"Just now!" Han Shuo had thrown on a new set of clothes. He gently pulled out a soft blanket and layed it over Emily's tender body.

Her eyes suddenly lit up with excitement and the corners of her mouth curved with a trace of sweet joy. In a shy tone, she asked, "Then does that mean I was the first person you visited when you arrived?"

"Yep," Han Shuo replied smilingly.

"Very good!" Emily nodded, full of energy. She looked pleasantly at Han

Shuo and held his big hands tight, guiding them to gently rub on her cheeks.

“This is an Origin Crystal of Darkness I obtained from Tarrag Canyon. Take it. Slowly fuse your soul with it. It will make you form a Soul of Element, which is enormously beneficial to your practice of dark magic!” Han Shuo said with a warm smile as he revealed the Origin Crystal containing pure elemental energy of darkness and placed it in Emily’s palm.

As soon as Han Shuo removed the Origin Crystal of the purest of dark element from his space ring, Emily, who had been curled up lazily in her chair, immediately sensed the pure element of darkness stored within.

This element of darkness contained not the tiniest bit of impurity. Its uncontaminated energy carried an indescribable temptation power. Eventhough Emily did not use her mental strength to deliberately examine it, as a dark magus, she could deeply sense just how miraculous and mysterious what was contained within was.

“Such pure element of darkness. What, what is this thing?” Emily asked with her bright eyes on Han Shuo.

“This is called an Origin Crystal. It contains an enormous and pure element of darkness free of any impurities. Once your soul is fused with an Origin Crystal, it becomes a Soul of Element. This will let you possess the most profound realization of dark magic, and your soul and dark element will reach the most compatible state.

For any magus practicing elemental magic to become God, the person must form Soul of Element and Body of Element. An ordinary magus may never get the knack of forming a Soul of Element. Even if they do, it can’t be easily realized for any ordinary persons.

With this Origin Crystal, so long as you fuse it with your soul, the enormous, pure element of darkness stored within can directly make you form a Soul of Element. With that, you will undoubtedly make rapid progress in your practice of dark magic. In addition, you will possess the foundation of becoming a God in dark magic!” Han Shuo explained with a

smile.

Emily couldn't help but shiver slightly. Her eyes were gleaming with disbelief. She looked at Han Shuo, and with a trembling voice, she stuttered, "Br...Bryan... this is for me? Are you sure this is for me?"

"Silly woman, of course it's for you!" Han Shuo said as he gently caressed Emily's face. Suddenly, Han Shuo recalled something and said solemnly, "However, given your current realm attainment, you must absorb it carefully. I don't know if your soul can fully bear this enormous amount of dark element. In any case, be careful of all things!"

"I, I will!" Emily held the Origin Crystal of Darkness with both hands, she was so stirred up that she nearly fainted in euphoria. From Han Shuo's explanation, she realized what this Origin Crystal would mean for her. It was a most precious item that could make her a God. She could no longer express her gratitude and adoration towards Han Shuo with words.

"Lady Emily, is Bryan in there?" Candide's voice interrupted from a magical device on Emily's table.

Candide's voice seemed somewhat unsteady and excited for some reason. Before Han Shuo could answer, Candide spoke again through the magical device, "I sense an incomparably pure and tremendous aura of dark element coming from your location. Are you both alright?"

Han Shuo and Emily exchanged a glance and they both came to their senses. Candide was, too, a dark grand magus. He had immersed himself in dark magic much longer than Emily had. His comprehension of dark magic had likewise presumably exceeded that of Emily's.

As Han Shuo did not utilize any special technique to cover up the aura that the Origin Crystal of Darkness emitted, Candide, as a dark grand magus, it was a matter of course that he would sense the presence of this enormous pure element of darkness.

"Quickly put it away!" With one hand covering the sound-transmitting magical device, Han Shuo hastily instructed Emily.

Emily had already come to her senses when Candide's voice sounded,

but the first thing she did was hurriedly get dressed. Only after Han Shuo's reminder did she put away the Origin Crystal. Shortly after, she said with panic, "He knows, what do we do, what should we do?"

As a figure of such high authority, Emily shouldn't have been so panic-stricken. The reason she was so out of her wits was purely that the Origin Crystal had overwhelmed her to the point of shock. She was so excited that she found it challenging to remain calm, hence her agitation.

"It's okay. Not only does he not have a clue about anything, plus, even if he knew that I handed the Origin Crystal to you, there's nothing he could do about it," Han Shuo soothed Emily. He realized that the Emily was now too emotional, and it would be inappropriate for Candide to enter. He immediately added, "You stay here and calm down yourself. Leave Candide to me!"

Han Shuo then stood on the transportation matrix in Emily's room. After a flash of bright light, he appeared before Candide.

"Bryan, I've just received reports, you indeed have returned. Oh right, I sensed an extremely pure aura of dark element coming from Emily's stone room a minute ago. For so many years, I have never perceived such pure dark elemental energy from anywhere. What's going on?" Candide asked.

"Nothing much. I was just using my martial arts to help Emily aggregate some dark element, so that she could more clearly sense the presence of dark element," Han Shuo said smilingly as he tried to conceal the truth. Shortly after, he changed the subject, "Lord, I have met Stratholme the old monster."

Perhaps the subject of Stratholme the old monster provoked Candide's interests, or perhaps Candide was astute and understood that Han Shuo was unwilling to discuss it thoroughly, Candide did not investigate any further about the enormous dark element, but asked in astonishment about the course of events that led to Han Shuo and Stratholme's meeting.



# Chapter 463: A Big Gift

Except anything related to the Origin Crystals, Han Shuo told the story of his encounter with the old monster and Tiana at Tarrag Canyon. Even the incident at the Sacred Mountain of Church of Light located in Oden Empire was disclosed.

Candide was all ears as Han Shuo described his account from the beginning 'til the end and his brows were tightly knitted together.

“Lord Candide, about those true powerhouses of Profound Continent and the Soul Race people, do you have any knowledge of them?” The reason Han Shuo revealed everything was to ask Candide if he was aware of their existences.

“Tiana is the protector of Kasi Empire. In Kasi Empire, Tiana is a godly being. She is a character of the same as era our Lancelot Empire's dark divine magus Ayermike Cotton. I genuinely did not expect her to still be alive!” Candide exclaimed.

Ayermike Cotton? A character his era?! Han Shuo was startled.

Ayermike Cotton is one of the most reputable characters in the history of Lancelot Empire. It was all thanks to his existence that Lancelot Empire was established and possessed such mighty power and influence these days.

However, Ayermike Cotton the dark divine magus was a character from 500 years ago! Having found that out from Candide, Han Shuo then realized just how long Tiana had actually been alive. It was no wonder that even Stratholme the antediluvian old monster that lived through two dynasties would address her as ‘Elder Sister Tiana’!

“Besides Tiana, about those of the Church of Light and Soul Race, does your Lordship know of their origins?” Han Shuo asked as he stared blankly at Candide.

“That divine knight and light divine magus of the Church of Light you mentioned, I've read a little about them from ancient records. They are

both existences of the Church of Light famous for their strengths a few hundred years ago. Everyone assumed that they had both died of old age. They had unexpectedly lived on until the present day.

“As for that Saintess of the Church of Light, and that Soul Race of Tarrag Canyon, I have no idea. If not for you telling me this news, perhaps, I would have never learned of such characters on Profound Continent. These beings are far beyond anything I can imagine,” Candide lamented as he repeatedly shook his head and sighed.

Although Candide’s knowledge was rather limited, Han Shuo learned, at least, of the origin of Tiana and that she was a protector of Kasi Empire.

“Bryan, do you mean that you already have the strength of Stratholme and Tiana?” After a long while, Candide suddenly asked as he stared blankly at Han Shuo.

Just then, Han Shuo mentioned fighting shoulder to shoulder with Stratholme the old monster and revealed the encounter with the Soul Race. Candide soon realized one small detail – Han Shuo and Stratholme were beings of the same class!

There was nothing worth hiding here, so Han Shuo nodded and calmly admitted, “I believe I now possess that so-called demigod strength.”

“Unbelievable, truly unbelievable!” Candide spoke somewhat incoherently and mumbled, “Madam Grace’s astrology is truly miraculous. No wonder she said that you can bring Lancelot Empire a new future. With the presence of an existence like yours, any nation can grow mighty.”

“Mighty or not, I don’t know, but I do know that Stratholme will not be appearing in the seven grand duchies for the time being, and the Brut Merchant Alliance has just lost their sacred lightning magus Reynold. Given that the magical beasts from Tarrag Canyon roam all over their streets disturbing residents, in addition to the group of Soul Race of unknown origin, I reckon they won’t have the capacity to deal with other matters.

Now is the best chance for our Lancelot Empire to send troops and take down the seven grand duchies. It is now or never!” Han Shuo explained to

Candide ambitiously.

“Bryan, go meet His Majesty. I believe that His Majesty will fully support you!” Candide urged. It seemed that he was itching to get on with it as well.

Han Shuo nodded. After authenticating his identity as a Fourth Dark Sun envoy from Candide, and without notifying Emily, Han Shuo headed directly for the imperial palace by means of transportation arrays in Dark Mantle headquarters that only some highest level personnel could operate.

“Bryan, you joker, disappeared all of a sudden for three years. You have finally returned!”

Lawrence, the king of the Lancelot Empire, personally came to greet Han Shuo when he heard that Han Shuo had requested to meet him and laughed heartily as soon as he saw Han Shuo.

Compared to three years prior, the Lawrence now had more of that imposing demeanor of a monarch wielding the power to dictate the lives and deaths of others. He appeared even more mature and experienced. He even deliberately kept a beard over his originally clean shaven upper lip. His eyes beamed wisdom and prudence.

“Your Majesty, long time no see!” Han Shuo stepped forward with a faint smile. Leaning over to Lawrence’s side, he continued, “Your Majesty, let’s have a chat alone!”

Lawrence waved his hand at his imperial bodyguards to send them away, “You are all dismissed!” Afterwards, he dragged Han Shuo back to the grand hall, chucklingly said, “So we are actually still good friends away from the public eye. How come you remember to visit me this time?”

“I came here with the intent of presenting you with a big gift!” Han Shuo smiled.

“Oh? A big gift?” Lawrence asked engrossing.

“The seven grand duchies!” Han Shuo proclaimed.

Lawrence's body jolted. His eyes burst out cold rays that one wouldn't dare look at directly. With excitement in his voice, he asked, "Bryan, are you confident about this now?"

Han Shuo nodded, and again disclosed what he had to Candide.

By the time Han Shuo completed his story, Lawrence was trembling from the head down. He held firmly onto Han Shuo with both hands, his fiery eyes ardently on Han Shuo, and in an astonished voice he asked, "Bry... Bryan, you mean..... you mean you now possess demigod strength?"

"That's right!" Han Shuo affirmed.

"Good! Good! Good!" Lawrence howled with laughter with his face to the sky. He then continued with a broad smile, "After the honorable Ayermike Cotton, finally, our Lancelot Empire is once again blessed with a demigod being! Haha, from now on, no one will disregard the mighty existences of my Lancelot Empire!"

"Don't celebrate so soon. Like I just said, a demigod existence isn't the apex of strength on the continent. Besides, I'm not the only one with demigod strength. Tiana of Kasi Empire is another. Over at the Church of Light headquarters in Oden Empire, there's far more than one demigod existence!" Han Shuo doused Lawrence with cold water when he saw that Lawrence was so excited he nearly went mad, and feared that Lawrence might rely on him too much.

"I know, I know!" Lawrence said in an elated voice. "Of course I know. But with you in Lancelot Empire, I feel much more reassured in my heart. I have long thought of conquering Brut Merchant Alliance and Kasi Empire, but had always shelved it aside because of all sorts of apprehensions. But now, our Lancelot Empire can really flex our military muscles!"

"Alright. I knew you wouldn't do anything so ill-judged! Hmm, you can start with the seven grand duchies first. Of the seven, Helon Duchy and Boulet Duchy have secretly allied with me long ago. As long as we set about this covertly, without Stratholme the old monster appearing to upset the apple cart, swooping all seven grand duchies is definitely in the bag," Han Shuo said in a deep voice.

“Very well, I will back your campaign fully. Whatever military resources or physical resources you require, speak, what do you need? Tell me, and I shall aid you with all the resources of my kingdom!” Lawrence cut straight to the point. He seemed determined to firmly tether up Han Shuo.

“Frankly, military strategizing isn’t my strong suit,” Han Shuo replied with a bitter smile. After thinking for a moment, he continued, “As for how to attack the seven grand duchies, it’s better if I just leave you and your men to discuss and deal with it. Oh, by the way, it would be best that Dorcas is appointed commander for this matter. This chap has roamed about the seven grand duchies for the past several years, and is therefore totally familiar with the situation there. In addition, he has expertise in military strategy. I trust he will make a fitting commander!”

“No problem, I will make arrangements! Rest assured, without Stratholme’s hindering this time, the seven grand duchies will surely give in to the military might of my Lancelot Empire!” Lawrence assured.

“Well then, I have said what I ought to have said. I believe you will need some time to prepare as well. I shall depart now! I, for one, have yet to make time to see my ladies. If I don’t look for them as soon as possible, they are going to start grumbling for sure!” Han Shuo said smilingly to Lawrence.

After receiving a few meaningful winks from Han Shuo, Lawrence empathizingly said, “I understand. Haha, go ahead and repay your ‘debts’! Oh, right, your mansion has been rebuilt and all the servants are still there. Every now and again Phoebe, Fanny and the others stay there for a few days. Don’t forget that you still have a home in Ossen City!”

Previously, during the upheaval at Ossen City, in one night, many mansions of the nobles were destroyed into puffs of smoke. The mansion he received as a count was no exception to this heavy damage. Originally, Han Shuo thought that the mansion had been completely ruined. It looked as if Lawrence did indeed care about Han Shuo very much, to go as far as to completely rebuild the house for him.

“Thank you, Your Majesty!” Han Shuo replied. Without saying any more,

he left the palace.

“A demigod expert! Madam Grace is indeed an admirable astrologer. Bryan, oh Bryan, you truly are my lucky star!” Lawrence muttered softly after Han Shuo had left.

# Chapter 464: Days of Debauchery

For days in a row, Han Shuo remained in his own mansion at Ossen City. Fanny and Pheobe came by when they received the news, and savored every rare moment they had with Han Shuo. In the meantime, whenever Emily had completed her work at the Dark Mantle, she too would head over. Of course, her lips were sealed about the Origin Crystal of Darkness that Han Shuo gave her.

In those few days, Han Shuo had indeed lived a most pleasurable life. All three women in Han Shuo's life were lovely ladies that an ordinary man would yearn for even in their dreams. Having not seen each other for three years, the ladies would deliberately accompanied Han Shuo for every second they had together. Phoebe and Emily, who long had especially close physical relationships with Han Shuo, would even more persistently stick to Han Shuo.

Being in Carnal realm, Han Shuo could hardly restrain his desires, and that was especially so when it came to sexual desires. During those couple of days, he would intemperately be with Phoebe and Emily all day long. Initially, they would make love to Han Shuo separately by themselves. But later, Han Shuo found it hard to contain his sex drive and he couldn't have cared less if either of them had qualms about it.

After the first occasion of them sleeping together, the two ladies gradually let go of their reluctance, and began cooperating to serve Han Shuo better. Phoebe and Emily, who originally had minor discord, improved their rapport as they pulled together, and their relationship grew stronger and stronger.

Han Shuo, being in Carnal realm, did not find such a preposterous thing distasteful. In fact, when he discovered that such behaviour actually helped the two ladies bond with each other, he further ravaged the two by doing so even more frequently. Throughout the process, Han Shuo discovered that his mind would unwittingly grow calm and stable. Everytime his desires were set free, his demonic yuan would grow richer and stronger.

The only thing that caused Han Shuo some distress was Fanny. Perhaps she was really shy, or perhaps it was Firenze's provision, but everytime Han Shuo attempted to break through her last defense and take down Fanny, she would always reject Han Shuo, telling him with flushed cheeks that Firenze wouldn't allow her to lose her virginity before she got married.

"That old fart! He meddles so much with other people's businesses!" Who knows how many times Han Shuo repeated those words and how many times he cursed Firenze in his heart. If Han Shuo had been studying the curses of dark magic, perhaps Firenze would have long been cursed to death by Han Shuo.

"Bryan, I forbid you from speaking of my father like that. Erm, in any case, you already have Emily and Phoebe, aren't the two of them enough to make you, make you...." Fanny murmured in a frail voice, panting, after she pushed Han Shuo away. Her upper garment was half-untied with her bosom slightly revealed. Amorous feelings drizzled in her eyes. As she was rather shy, she was unable to complete yet sentence.

When Fanny rejected him at that crucial moment, Han Shuo was fumed with rage and rained curses on Firenze. Although Han Shuo's leaning tower was erect and ready for action, his face was flushed, panting heavily much like a wild animal during mating season, he had no choice but to pick up his pants and consider if he should immediately leave and look for Emily and Phoebe to satisfy his needs.

It was at this moment, Han Shuo's demonic yuan began to react chaotically, causing Han Shuo to turn pale with fright. Such a situation had not occurred for a very long time. This sudden occurrence left Han Shuo somewhat bewildered. The more Han Shuo forcefully repressed his clear desires for Fanny, the more disorderly that demonic yuan energy became. Even the demonic infant felt unwell.

Oh shit! Han Shuo cursed in his heart when he realize what was actually going on.

In the Carnal realm, it was only when the desires in Han Shuo's heart



were completely liberated that he would make progress in the realm as well as deepening the demonic yuan. On the contrary, if Han Shuo exercised restraint against the cravings from his heart, he would not improve but instead deteriorate in the realm. For the last couple of days, Han Shuo had restrained himself from acting on Fanny more than a couple times. He had earlier on faintly felt that something was wrong. But now when the demonic yuan in his body sank into utter chaos, he immediately came to his senses.

Han Shuo was very clear just how intense that desire to deflower Fanny was. The more Fanny rejected, the fiercer the craving to possess her got. Especially, time after time, when Han Shuo nearly had his way as even Fanny was struggling to contain herself, that desire in his heart would increase by folds.

After this was repeated several times, Han Shuo finally suffered the consequences. He felt as though he was gradually losing control over the demonic yuan in his body.

The more Han Shuo tried to give up and leave, the worse his body condition got. For a character like Han Shuo of such exceptional class, it was really difficult for any average person to harm him. Apart from a certain secretive and mysterious character of godlike strength, only Han Shuo could really cause damage to himself.

Feeling the overwhelming changes in his body and the intense struggle in his heart, Han Shuo was red-faced, with the veins on his forehead, and on the brink of a total meltdown as he hesitated on whether to deviate from his cultivation and sustain serious damages to his body, or to possess Fanny and calm down the disorder in his heart.

“Bryan? Bryan? What’s wrong with you?” Fanny obviously also discovered that Han Shuo’s condition was far from good. Not minding that her breasts were semi-revealed, she rushed to Han Shuo and reached out her hand to caress Han Shuo’s forehead seeped with cold sweat, at a loss for what to do.

Damn it! Fanny is my woman to begin with. I am going to do her sooner

or later anyway. How can Firenze come in and meddle with my business! After thinking for a while, Han Shuo no longer beat about the bush and suddenly embraced Fanny. When Fanny found herself in a confused state of mind not knowing what to do, the gasping Han Shuo moved his mouth close to Fanny's ear and told her the current situation as it was.

When Han Shuo finished his explanation, Fanny started to breath rapidly. Similarly panting, she asked, "Bryan, are you for real? You aren't joking right? We must do that thing, only then you won't be in so much pain?"

"I really wasn't joking, such is the peculiarity of my martial arts!" Han Shuo explained with a bitter smile as he puffed hard.

An amorous feeling gradually filled her bright eyes. Fanny no longer showed the slightest resistance. She took the initiative and undressed herself before Han Shuo, bit by bit laid bare her body of ideal proportions. Her curvaceous, naked body, like fine jade, emitted enchanting rays that hooked onto one's soul. Han Shuo stared at Fanny right before his eyes, intoxicated.

"Bryan, what... what are you waiting for?" The corners of Fanny's mouth curved to form a faint smile, which in Han Shuo's eyes, was ever so charming, ever so lovable, and ever so irresistible!

Without any hesitation, Han Shuo made a move. Fanny's nymph-like bare body completely fell on Han Shuo's wide chest. At that moment, demonic yuan in Han Shuo's body was no longer chaotic while the demonic infant suddenly turned quiet.

Fanny's look when she was embarrassed was drop-dead gorgeous. All of a sudden she wrapped her arms tightly around Han Shuo's back and cried somewhat nervously, "Bryan, be gentle, I'm afraid of pain!"

"Don't worry, you won't feel the slightest bit of pain!" Han Shuo reassured her tenderly. Han Shuo, like a cheetah, carried Fanny onto a large, cozy bed.

Shortly after, the enchanting moans that could sweep away a man's soul, combined with Han Shuo's beastly gasping, began reverberating from the

room, which sounded like an incomparably touching song of nature.

“This little wench, succumbed just the same in the end!” In another room, Phoebe who was practicing with a sword suddenly halted and mumbled after carefully listening for a while.

“Hehe, I knew she couldn’t escape the malicious hands of that little lecher!” Emily said smilingly after walking into Phoebe’s practicing room. She had just returned from a day’s work at the Dark Mantle.

“That’s true! It’s just that I feel disdained at her persistence all this while. Humph! So pure and righteous, as though, as though she was imploring us, to be, to be so wanton!” Phoebe couldn’t seem to voice the reason for her discontent.

“Hehe, sister Pheobe, don’t be silly. You are the only person that was licentious, can you please not drag me into the same boat with you?” Emily rocked her body backward and forward, winked her eyes as she mocked Phoebe on purpose.

“Look who’s talking!” Phoebe’s cheeks blushed as though they were smeared with red dye. She flew into rage from humiliation, charged towards Emily, putting down the longsword, and tickled Emily. Striking back, she said, “You aren’t wanton? Then who’s the one that used the mouth, and even very much enjoyed it!”

“Damned sister, I will tear up your mouth!” The originally complacently smirking Emily turned so embarrassed that she nearly bore a burrow to hide herself. The two with blushing faces fought playfully. As it was just a jest, they did not actually exert much strength,

“Ohhh.....” Suddenly, the two heard an significantly sharper moan from Fanny.

The hand movements of the two ladies fighting with each other suddenly froze. The two were very clear that the loud moan meant Fanny had been utterly defeated. Soon after, the duo seemed to simultaneously recall something, and immediately their faces both flushed. They could unquestionably feel the rising temperatures of each other’s bodies.

Emily licked her rosy lips and suggested, "I'm certain that Bryan definitely has yet to finish. How about we look for him, and take Fanny in as well?"

"Hey! Who was the one that claimed to be not licentious, but always comes up with such ideas!" Phoebe cursed softly, but continued with an even softer voice, "Good idea. I do want to get a look at Fanny's appearance now!"

"Well then, let's go find him!" Emily dragged Phoebe into Han Shuo's room.

"Hehe, just in time to keep me accompanied!" Han Shuo laughed heartily when he saw the two come to him.

Soon enough, the room was again filled with boundless ecstasy. That dissipated moaning sound that itched the heart once more reverberated.

# Chapter 465: The Dark Dragon's Plead

Time just seemed to fly as Han Shuo revelled in the joy of having several partners at his full disposal. His innermost desires were completely liberated. There was no longer any indication of cultivation deviation of his practice of demonic arts. Instead, it improved with each passing day.

Regarding the matter for which Han Shuo returned to Ossen City, with the exception of King Lawrence and certain members of the Dark Mantle, nobody was given any information on it. Consequently, in the past few days, while Han Shuo was seeking pleasure with his three women in his mansion, no bigwigs came by to interrupt his indulgence.

Good times evidently never last. When Emily came by this time, she notified Han Shuo that Lawrence had completed arrangements to invade the seven grand duchies. Thus, Han Shuo had no choice but to, yet again, depart from Ossen City.

Fortunately, the space magic transportation matrix connecting Ossen City and Brettel City had been completed. As all three ladies were of honorable statuses, they could utilize the transportation matrix to effortlessly visit Han Shuo. Therefore, Han Shuo's departure did not cause intense melancholy to the three ladies.

After one final briefing with Lawrence and Candide, Han Shuo left Ossen City for Brettel City.

Once Han Shuo arrived at Brettel City, he learned from Dorcas and the others that Brettel City was basically ready. As soon as the reinforcement troops from the empire arrived, they could head right over to the seven grand duchies.

As military warfare was not Han Shuo's strong suit, he handed over all military power to Dorcas to do what he was best at. For so many years on the arena that was Brettel City, Dorcas had amply demonstrated his talents in military strategy. Each and every soldier of Brettel City accepted his leadership willingly.

"Senior brother!" Bollands respectfully saluted Han Shuo at the doorstep

when he returned to the city lord's mansion.

“Huh? Why are you here?” Han Shuo was startled when he saw Bolland and couldn't help but to size him up.

After three years, the killing intent and reeking of blood that had always lingered around Bolland were all gone. Han Shuo understood that this wasn't a sign that Bolland had made no progress in God Slaying Devil Path, but the contrary. From the aura Han Shuo sensed emitting from Bolland, he figured out that Bolland had successfully cultivated in the God Slaying Devil Path to the realm where he could conceal his killing intent.

At this realm, Bolland could skillfully put his killing intent to use. Any time he was not engaging with enemy combatants, not a trace of killing intent in his body would spill out. Compared to his former state of intense killing intent from head to foot, his well concealed killing intent indicated that he had made lightning-fast progress.

“Senior brother, for the last three years, I have constantly come and gone in various battlefields, secretly absorbing the killing intent that wafted through the air using the martial skill you taught me. After that, I digested the energy in accordance with the method you instructed me. As senior brother has been cultivating without leaving a trail for the last three years, I have not gotten the chance to meet you. It was sometime ago when I learned that senior brother made an appearance in Brettel City, therefore I specially rushed over here.” When Bolland came face to face with Han Shuo, he wore a most humble, deferential expression, even more diligent than when he served his former master Karel.

Han Shuo knew that this was because he could give Bolland what Karel never could.

After three years, based on the substantial yet reserved aura radiating from Bolland, Han Shuo could be certain that his cultivation of God Slaying Devil Path had been fruitful. Compared to the strength of a great swordmaster of the past, Bolland's must now have been considerably more formidable.

“Come on in with me!” Han Shuo nodded before instructing Bollands and marched straight into the city lord’s mansion.

After they arrived at a practice field in the mansion, Han Shuo stamped his feet and, with his eyes on Bollands, he instructed, “Attack me with all your strength. I want to see how much you’ve progressed in the last three years!”

“Yes!” Bollands gradually withdrew his longsword. Just as he unsheathed the fine sword, strong, concentrated killing intent was released. With every inch unsheathed, the killing intent congealed on his body grew sharper and stronger. Indistinctly, a wicked look of savagery emerged in Bollands’ eyes.

God Slaying Devil Path was a kind of demonic arts meant solely for massacre. The more a cultivator immersed into the field, the more frightening the killing intent of the cultivator became. So much so that it could even affect the body of the cultivator.

Han Shuo had a deep understanding of the God Slaying Devil Path. The reason he taught Bollands this demonic art was so that Bollands would become an additional weapon of his own disposal. Therefore, when he saw the madness in his eyes, Han Shuo wasn’t startled but delighted. He understood that Bollands almost reached the finest state in his cultivation of the God Slaying Devil Path.

Under the watchful eyes of Han Shuo, that longsword that Bollands had been pulling out bit by bit suddenly unsheathed like lightning. At the same time, an incisive killing intent, which could seemingly rip the air apart, violently erupted from Bollands’ body.

Hundreds of thousands of phantom images of swords, like pythons breathing with ferocious killing intent, came slithering towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo opened his left hand, his demonic yuan circulated and formed a ghostly face. Initially, it was only the size of a palm. But when the mass of sword phantom images propelled by killing intent arrived in front of him, the ghostly face had grown so big it blotted out the sky and hid the earth. Suddenly, it opened up a humongous bloody mouth, swallowing all

of the phantom swords.

The five fingers on Han Shuo's left hand then twisted to form a hook. It was as though his five fingers were connected to the ghostly face through millions of incorporeal strings, with the movements of his five fingers controlling the sinister ghostly face. Like a starved wolf, the ghostly face launched itself towards Bollands. Before he could react, the enormous bloody orifice had swallowed Bollands.

While Bollands was losing his mind from fear, the ghostly face suddenly exploded. In an instant, it vanished into thin air. It was as though all that had just happened was Bollands' own imagination, with the exception of Han Shuo still standing unruffled at the same place, still displaying a tranquil and calm smile.

After awaking from the shock, the madness in Bollands' pupils faded away. He respectfully kowtowed towards Han Shuo, and said, "Senior brother's martial arts sure enough have attained perfection!"

"You did very well. To be able to advance to such a stage in the duration of three years shows that you indeed have been very hardworking!" From the strike Bollands had just dealt, Han Shuo could tell that his strength had improved rapidly. Currently, with the benchmark of Profound Continent, he ought to have been able to pit against an expert who had advanced to sacred swordmaster.

"Master, you have returned!" Elizabeth's voice suddenly sounded from afar. A moment later, Elizabeth appeared right before Han Shuo.

"Senior brother, what was that martial skill back there? Was that sinister ghostly face real?" Bollands was astonished by the attack Han Shuo had just made on him. He paid no attention to Elizabeth but stared fixedly at Han Shuo as he questioned insistently.

"That is formed by congealing demonic yuan. Haha, as for whether it was real or not, you figure that out yourself. When you reach a certain realm in your maneuver of killing intent, you too can congeal it with killing intent. You will understand then!" Han Shuo explained with a faint smile. He paused for a moment, and suddenly moved to Bollands' side.



Before Bollands could react, Han Shuo suddenly pressed his hand on Bollands' head.

Certain knowledge pertaining to the basics of demonic arts flowed from Han Shuo's palm into Bollands' brain.

Upon reaching the Separate demon realm, Han Shuo could portion and organize his memories. The knowledge that Han Shuo poured into Bollands' mind was just some of the most basic information for those cultivating in demonic arts, such as expound teachings on the topic of cultivation deviation, some bizarre remarkable abilities of demonic cultivators, and certain cultivation malpractices.

This knowledge was information that every demonic arts cultivator should understand. Han Shuo worried that Bollands would be so anxious for quick results, not realizing the discipline required for practicing demonic arts, that he would sink into an irremediable state of madness. That was why Han Shuo passed down this foundational knowledge to him, lest he lost self-control and turned into a monster that only knew to slaughter.

"Alright. Digest this knowledge thoroughly!" Han Shuo said looking at Bollands after he withdrew his hand.

"Thank you senior brother. I will never ever forget this great favor from you for the rest of my life!" Bollands was moved to tears and crawled towards Han Shuo with sincere gratitude.

"That's enough, you just have to practice well!" Han Shuo said with a grin.

Out of nowhere, dark dragon Gilbert begged, "Honorable master, help me, you must help me!" Gilbert displayed an unprecedented anxiousness.

"Dark dragon, what's the matter?" Han Shuo stared puzzled at dark dragon Gilbert as he scuttled their way, not knowing what would made him so nervous.

"Master! My most honorable, most admirable master! You must help me! Otherwise, my grandpa, and perhaps even the entire race of dark

dragon will be done for!” Gilbert was frenetic. When he arrived before Han Shuo, he dropped to his knees, totally unlike his usual sloppy manner.

Han Shuo furrowed his brows. With a heavy voice, he said, “Get up. Tell me what’s really the matter?”

Gilbert had a resolute look. With his eyes looking deeply at Han Shuo, he pleaded, “Master, if you don’t agree to help me, I, I won’t get up!”

For so many years, dark dragon Gilbert had gone through fire and water with him and never imagined betraying him. Especially the time at the forbidden ground of Dark Forest, he nearly died for him.

And now, dark dragon Gilbert must have been met with a truly distressing problem that he would behave so unusually. When Gilbert finally finished, Han Shuo did not hesitate and nodded, saying, “Get up, I promise you! Whatever the matter, I will help you!”

“Thank you master!” the dark dragon cried gratefully and stood up. He then hastily explained, “My grandfather left me Dragonspeech Bone made using a chunk of his own bone. Through this chunk of Dragonspeech Bone, even as I kneel before you, I can still hear my grandpa’s instructions.

For a long time, my grandpa told me that someday, my dark dragon race will face a great catastrophe and that if our race couldn’t avert the disaster, we will forever be wiped out from the underground world. I always thought that my grandpa was just giving alarmist talk. However, just this morning, my grandpa transmitted a message through Dragonspeech Bone, saying that this great calamity is approaching, asking me never to return to the underground world, and the further I stay away the better.

Not only that, he even left me his last words! I know that something very terrifying is on the verge of crashing down on our dark dragon race, or perhaps it already happened! Master, I beg you, please save our dark dragon race!”

The dark dragon Gilbert again kneeled at Han Shuo’s feet, his eyes gazing at Han Shuo, pleading.

“I already promised you!” Han Shuo helped dark dragon Gilbert up, and continued, “I don’t know if I could be of help, but I will take a trip to the underground world with you!”

“Thank you master! Thank you master! I know that with your help, our dark dragon race will surely turn peril into safety and avert the disaster!” Gilbert asserted.

“Bollands, you take Gilbert’s place temporarily, follow alongside Dorcas in the dark and protect him. Elizabeth, you stay in the city. Assist Dick in his job of keeping Brettel City safe!” Han Shuo instructed.

With a war at nigh, logically speaking, Han Shuo shouldn’t be wandering far. However, the relationship between Han Shuo and dark dragon Gilbert wasn’t simply that of master and servant. Given that the dark dragon race was possibly facing the threat of extinction, in addition to such pleading from Gilbert, Han Shuo really couldn’t find an excuse to refuse.

Fortunately, the protector of the seven grand duchies, Stratholme the old monster, was powerless to defend himself at the moment, and therefore would not appear in the seven grand duchies for some time to come. On such a large scale military campaign, the absence of Han Shuo, who wasn’t exactly good at the art of war, wouldn’t have done much to affect the general situation of the war.

Therefore, with the decision made, Han Shuo once again summoned Dorcas, Jack, and the others, handing over a detailed overview of certain matters.

“My Lord, be at ease. With the full support of the empire, in addition to the Helon and Boulet Duchies’ cooperation surreptitiously, I am certain that I can take down the seven grand duchies!” Dorcas said with complete confidence. In presence of Han Shuo, the wild ambition in his eyes was hardly concealed.

“You haven’t been around Brettel City for years anyway. In fact, Brettel City would operate as usual even without you!” In Brettel City, there was none other than Jack who would be so daring to speak so bluntly to Han Shuo like that.

Han Shuo was muted in shock. Soon after, he flew into rage out of humiliation, and said, “You damned little fatty. If you can’t make Brettel’s economy grow, don’t doubt for a second that you’ll get just what you deserve!”

“Hahah, take a look at how glorious and flourishing Brettel City has become under my rule! You won’t have the chance!” Jack burst into complacent laughter.

“Oh, right!” Han Shuo suddenly recalled something, and immediately instructed Dorcas, “When you attack the seven grand duchies, treat every citizen well. Be wary not to kill indiscriminately!”

“Rest assured my Lord, I know what to do!” Dorcas pledged.

“Then I can be at ease!” Han Shuo shot a glance at the impatient dark dragon Gilbert, and said, “Let’s go to the underground world!”

# Chapter 466: Disastrous Turn of the Dark Dragons

There hadn't been much change in the underground world. Along the way, they still often saw ugly goblins and batmen looting all over the place. The whole underground world was terrorized with chaos. The situation seemed like it would never change if it were given a few hundred years.

"Gilbert, do you know exactly the kind of disaster your dark dragon race will run into? You can't be totally clueless, can you?" Han Shuo questioned Gilbert as they headed towards the dwellings of the dark dragons.

"Master, I really don't know anything. That was all that my grandpa told me through Dragonspeech Bone. I have no idea at all!" the sullen Gilbert answered. He was not in a good mood.

Throughout the journey, the very much anxious Gilbert constantly urged Han Shuo to pick up his pace. It seemed that although Gilbert was a runaway, he still held deep feelings for the dark dragon race. Otherwise, he wouldn't have had entreated Han Shuo so piteously.

Having followed alongside Han Shuo for so many years, although they had met some hazards, the two would always manage to escape the jaws of danger. Unknowingly, dark dragon Gilbert felt as though Han Shuo could handle any danger, as though there was nothing that could truly harm him.

Especially when Han Shuo recently emerged from the Cemetery of Death, being a dark dragon that was linked to Han Shuo via contract, Gilbert knew more than anyone the terror of the strength possessed by Han Shuo! Therefore, when he received the message from his grandpa, he immediately thought of Han Shuo, and believed that only Han Shuo could help the dark dragon race safely overcome the calamity.

When Han Shuo realized that he wouldn't get much more information from Gilbert, Han Shuo squandered not a second more asking. Gilbert had

a far superior understanding of the underground world compared to Han Shuo. Therefore, with Gilbert's guidance, they did not waste much time in the first underground layer where dark elves ran amuck. They descended through an arduous cliff-like cavern, arriving at the next layer that was slightly darker.

There was no absence of light upon this layer of cliff rock, but it was rather weaker than in the previous layer. Tall, lofty, luminescent plants could be found everywhere, illuminating this layer, yet clearly visible, though it required a little more effort.

"Come with me!" Gilbert hardly spoke as he lead Han Shuo directly to a narrow tunnel. He seemed very anxious.

Along the way, Han Shuo roughly learned from the dragon about the geographic distribution of the underground world. There were three layers in total. The top layer was where the dark elves and lizardmen resided. Relative to the rest, the creatures on the layer were the weakest. Even for the ancient dark elves Han Shuo had met before, they were still weaker compared to the creatures in the two following layers.

Of course, an abnormal existence like the Ancient Lizard King was an exception. For beings like the Ancient Lizard King that climbed to the pinnacle of the five ranks by evolving, wherever he was placed on the Profound Continent, he remained a mighty existence.

However, it was incredibly rare to find existences like his. The great majority of lizardmen were still that stupid, incapable of being so lucky as he was to evolve to the fifth stage, and possess such immense strength that he could leave this plane of existence.

The dark dragons lived in the second layer. The creatures found there were usually extremely strong. Other than the dark dragon race that lived together, there were some very formidable super-ranked magical beasts that lived in solitary. But in regular circumstances, these super-ranked magical beasts all inhabited their own territories, and everyone simply kept to their own businesses.

The dark dragons were a kind that no one dared provoke. They were a

formidable race to begin with, and they even lived in a large group. Therefore, despite being surrounded by a myriad of other formidable creatures in this second layer of the underground world, not many were willing to provoke the dark dragons.

Han Shuo took this to mean that he could basically eliminate any threat from the second layer.

The third layer of the underground world, however, now that was a region of great mystery. According to Gilbert, there wasn't a creature alive who knew what dwelled in the next layer.

According to legend, there indeed were tunnels connecting the second layer to the third layer. However, it was incredibly rare to find a creature who knew where the tunnel was located. And of the super-ranked magical beasts that so fortunately found the tunnel and ventured into the third layer, not one returned!

Therefore, pertaining to the situation in the bottom most layer, no person, or perhaps no living being, was truly clear about it!

After crossing the narrow tunnel, Gilbert again took Han Shuo walking for a long time, and they finally arrived at a region covered with mountain ridges. This was a huge canyon with unbroken ridges of irregular heights as far as the eye could see. From a distance, it looked as though enormously long dragons were entrenched there.

As soon as they arrived at the region, HS's sensitive nose picked up a faint reeking of blood, "I smell blood!"

Gilbert's eyes turned red, on the brink of tears, he cried, "Grandpa, I'm home! Gilbert is home!"

Gilbert's voice echoed without end in the great canyon. He was already rushing towards the canyon as he cried those words. Han Shuo hastily followed behind him.

"Get lost!" from the deepest part of the canyon, came an angry roar of an aged man, with terror in his voice.

"Grandpa, it's my grandpa's voice!" Gilbert was pleasantly surprised and

turned to Han Shuo, "My grandpa is still there. He is alright!"

"But I believe you have already lost some clansman!" Han Shuo shouted lightly and grabbed dark dragon Gilbert. He suddenly accelerated and shot towards the canyon at lightning speed.

Under their feet, a thirty meter long body of dark dragon was strewn bare at the back of a mountain ridge. As Han Shuo and Gilbert flew overhead, looking at the ground beneath them, they could make out that the body of this dark dragon was most likely cut by sharp weapons, with hideous wounds all over his magnificent body.

"Uncle Delix!" Gilbert obviously recognized the body of the dead dark dragon and snarled with his eyes popped out.

However, this dark dragon wasn't the only carcass!

As they continued flying towards the canyon, three additional dead bodies of dark dragons appeared under their feet one after another. These three dark dragons must have suffered cruel torment before they died. Every body were riddled with cuts and wounds. One was even dismembered into three pitiful chunks!

Gilbert knew all four dark dragons that were killed, particularly the gigantic dark dragon that died in the most miserable state of being butchered into three. He nearly fainted in grief and indignation. No longer able to restrain himself, he wailed in tears.

Because that was Gilbert's father!

"You scoundrel! Run! Run far, far away!" a frantic scream, as though weeping blood, came from the depths of the canyon, which was mixed with Gilbert's grief-stricken crying. Han Shuo's heart grew as cold as it could, giving him an impulse to slowly torture the offender to death by separating their skin and flesh into a thousand chunks.

Even without actively using his consciousness to probe the situation inside, he could sense the few presences within, one of whom was especially powerful. Faintly, Han Shuo even felt that their aura bore some resemblance to that of water divine magus Tiana. When this feeling arose



in his heart, his desire to kill grew even more vigorous.

“Move! Put it off until we get to the canyon!” In spite of Gilbert’s bawling in loss of self-control, Han Shuo grasped him firmly and hurriedly flew into the canyon with a gloomy face.

“Here comes another one, tut-tut, interesting!” Suddenly, a disdainful, ice-cold sneer could be heard coming from the depths of the canyon.

“I will kill them, I will kill them! No matter who they are, I will kill them!” Gilbert the dark dragon constantly repeated those words as he wailed. His usual sloppy, happy-go-lucky attitude had long vanished.

At this moment, other than grief, perhaps all that Gilbert felt was deep-rooted hatred.

Finally, with Han Shuo pulling Gilbert along, they arrived at the biggest canyon.

The first thing that entered Han Shuo’s eyes was an enormous pure white cage made of some unknown materials. Inside the cage were about seventeen dark dragons that had transformed into human form with skin as dark as ink. There were elderlies as well as young ones. They all wore collars around their necks, not unlike dog collars. Bloody whip scars were visible on their faces. Not even a dark dragon with the appearance of an underage girl was spared. There were trails of open wounds on her cheeks still flowing with fresh blood, she seemed to have just received a lashing.

Around the cage were six people in clad in matching attire that was as white as snow. They all wore an ice-cold expression, carrying a whiff of indifference and ruthlessness.

Among them was a middle-aged man with a handsome face that could have been carved with blade. He looked at Han Shuo and Gilbert with a cold and indifferent smile, hands clasped behind his back. The presence coming from him was rather similar to that of Tiana. Furthermore, he was the being with the greatest strength in his group – a demigod being!

“Another puny reptile!” This handsome middle-age man looked at Gilbert as though he was looking at a pet, naturally causing a feeling of

aloofness. He then turned to Han Shuo, "Who are you?"

"You know Tiana, correct?" Han Shuo asked instead of answering.

Including this handsome middle-aged man, all six of those in white slightly changed their expressions. The middle aged man that lead the group creased his brows before saying, "You actually know of my junior sister. Who are you?"

"Who are you people?" Han Shuo was startled and yelled.

"We are from the Shrine of Ice. I'm Corey the Ice Celestial. How did you come to know of my junior sister Tiana the Snow Celestial? Who are you? Are you a friend or a foe?" This man from the Shrine of Ice known as Corey, a so called Ice Celestial, questioned coldly with his eyes fixed on Han Shuo.

# Chapter 467: Ganging Up?

Like the Church of Light, the Shrine of Ice was one of those rather famous religious organizations on Profound Continent. The Shrine of Ice worshipped the Ice Goddess. Although its influence wasn't as extensive as the Church of Light, it was not to be belittled.

The Shrine of Ice was the state religion of the Kasi Empire and their headquarters were also located at the top of the coldest mountain in Kasi Empire. Unexpectedly, Tiana was not only the protector of Kasi Empire, but also came from the Shrine of Ice, and was even their Snow Celestial.

Han Shuo learned secrets from Corey that even Candide from the Dark Mantle knew nothing about. It seemed that this Shrine of Ice was rather mysterious.

At last, Han Shuo finally understood why Tiana would scheme against him. It was because the Church of Light and the Shrine of Ice had always co-operated closely. As the Snow Celestial for the Shrine of Ice, it was a matter of course that Tiana would entrap them for the Church of Light.

The group from the Shrine of Ice, led by Corey the Ice Celestial, were all on high alert as they looked at Han Shuo. Among them, Corey was the strongest, possessing strength approximately that of Han Shuo's. As for the other five, based on the ice-cold aura they emitted, they possessed about the strength of a sacred grade expert.

The strength of this party was not, however, to be underestimated. No matter the nation, they represented forces that no one dared neglect. To be so daring to enter the second layer of the underworld and massacre the dark dragons in their own territories, would certainly have had to possess a certain level of power to be successful.

It was also at this moment that Han Shuo began to understand why Lawrence was so happy to find out that Han Shuo possessed demigod strength. The Oden Empire had the Church of Light. Kasi Empire had the Shrine of Ice. Such religious organizations would generally possess terrifying experts. Perhaps the reason the Lancelot Empire had dared not

to wage war for so many years was that it held misgivings for those existences.

Soon after, another question arose in Han Shuo's heart. The strength that the Kasi Empire demonstrated completely crushed that of the Lancelot Empire. But why was it that for so many years, the Kasi Empire hadn't yet infringed on the Lancelot Empire? By relying on their Ice Celestial and Snow Celestial, before Han Shuo became a demigod, who on Lancelot Empire could stop them?

Apart from this, the Brut Merchant Alliance and Angela Empire were both supported by mighty experts. Even the seven grand duchies had Stratholme the old monster, another demigod existence. How was it that for so many years the Lancelot Empire remained safe and sound?

"What's your intention?" the Ice Celestial again shouted as Han Shuo indulged in his thoughts. He had unsheathed a bone-chilling longsword in his hand!

Han Shuo immediately came to his senses, and turned his head to glance at dark dragon Gilbert. All he saw was that Gilbert was rained with curses from a small, tearful old man trapped in Corey's cage. The old man seemed likely to be Gilbert's grandfather, patriarch of the dark dragons – Gilges. Although he spoke in a nasty, disgruntled tone, his anxious look showed that he was concerned.

Gilbert turned a deaf ear to his grandfather's roundly abuse, but stared at Corey the Ice Celestial with his eyes full of sheer hatred. Even without practicing God Slaying Devil Path, the killing intent coming from his body was still incredibly dense. It was a bloodthirsty desire to destroy everything regardless of the consequences.

"Nothing really!" Han Shuo groaned coldly. He opened up his hand. Five dark rays shot out from his fingertips straight towards the pure white cage imprisoning the whole clan of dark dragons.

Against Han Shuo's expectations, Corey, who stood right beside the cage, did not intercept the attack but sneered as he looked disdainfully at Han Shuo. The other five put on the same expression. This expression showing

in their eyes irritated Han Shuo.

However, very soon, Han Shuo found out why those people had such contemptuous faces. Without Corey or the other five obstructing, the five rays landed directly on the spotlessly white cage, making a few “dong dong” sounds, but remained intact under Han Shuo’s bombardment.

Han Shuo was stunned. He was very clear as to just how terrifying the impacting force contained in those five rays was. Even iron and stone, no matter how hard, would be pulverized when met with those forces. Nevertheless, after taking a direct hit from Han Shuo, the cage managed to come out unscathed. This was obviously beyond Han Shuo’s expectations.

“This cage was blessed by the Goddess of Ice. If you could damage it, we would have turned around and fled!” Ice Celestial Corey sneered incessantly at Han Shuo. Then, he turned the ice-cold longsword in his hand to point at Han Shuo, saying, “A foe, it seems!”

When Corey said those words, the other five of his party all left the cage simultaneously, seemingly unconcerned about it breaking. One after another, they dispersed cold, detached expressions, likely preparing to leave both Han Shuo and dark dragon Gilbert behind.

Of this delegation of six, Ice Celestial Corey was the most powerful. From the presence coming off of him, he seemed to be a mage swordsman. The longsword in his hand contained enormous icy-cold aura, which was mixed together with pure, cold divine energy, bearing astonishing resemblance to the holy energy found on the temple knights from the Church of Light.

All so-called religions were like this. They could always exchange piety towards their respective gods for some divine energy. Even just a mere share of divine energy was more than enough for them to transcend beyond their own limitations, and gain strength unimaginable to the ordinary man.

When he noticed the six fellows of the Shrine of Ice attempting to surround him slowly, Han Shuo couldn’t help but crease his brows. If it had just been Ice Celestial Corey alone, Han Shuo would not at all have

been afraid, after all, Han Shuo had extreme confidence in himself. However, if those five sacred-grade experts were brought into the picture, Han Shuo would have felt somewhat vexed handling them all at once.

Especially, among the five, two were water sacred magi. At that moment, they had already begun chanting their spells. All of a sudden, the entire second layer of the underground world seemed to have transformed into a world of ice and snow. Bone-chilling coldness filled this entire region.

“Friend, no matter who you are, don’t even think about leaving here today!” Corey advanced towards Han Shuo one step at a time as incantations from his subordinates hummed through the air. The longsword in his hand was gradually covered with a layer of frost glittering like diamonds, containing an incomparably frosty aura.

“Ganging up? Hahah, being ganged up on is the last thing I’m afraid of!” Han Shuo was suddenly no longer anxious. Laughing mischievously, he took out the skeletal staff from his hand and followed by chanting necromancy spells. Undead creatures appeared all around Han Shuo one after another.

Before Corey could get close to Han Shuo, every last empty space around Han Shuo had begun to close up until there was none left, all occupied by numerous densely packed undead creatures.

Starting from the lowest ranking skeletal warriors and ghouls, all the way up to evil knights, a bone devil and a mummy lord, a complete gamut of undeads were summoned. Above all, there was a bunch of totally uncanny zombies each clad with oddly looking armour. Among them was the metal elite zombie wielding the golden cudgel sparkling with golden rays, while the fire elite zombie held the Fire Lotus pulsing blazes.

Among all the undead creatures, the elite zombies somehow appeared offbeat!

“You, you really are a damn necromancer!” Corey was shocked, somewhat shaken by the countless undead creatures Han Shuo summoned.

“Heheh. So what if you’re a necromancer? We have even the entire tribe

of dark dragons imprisoned in our hands. With merely a ragtag team of lowly undead creatures, what exactly do you think you can do to us?” Corey was very conceited, obviously not seeing these living deads as a threat.

“Lowly?” Han Shuo sneered. Soon after, he inwardly delivered an order to the five elite zombies: Find an opportunity to form the Penta-elemental Undead Formation.

As the little skeleton was busy fusing his soul with the Origin Crystal containing pure death element, he did not make an appearance this time. But with the five elite zombies, in addition to the three evil knights and the mummy lord, Han Shuo was still certain they could withstand the six from the Shrine of Ice.

But having said that, as a surefire guarantee, Han Shuo nevertheless had the elite zombies prepare to deploy the Penta-elemental Undead Formation. Although the five elite zombies still could not completely fuse their energies, based little skeleton’s previous statement, Han Shuo noted that even the currently half-complete Penta-elemental Undead Formation could still unleash formidable firepower.

“Master, I want to avenge, I want to kill them!” dark dragon Gilbert roared in rage.

“With what? Just you lot?” Corey sneered in the most pejorative tone possible. After that, with loathing in his eyes, he roared, “Cleanse away these filthy necromancy creatures for me!”

At Ice Celestial Corey’s words, those behind him who had been chanting abruptly ceased. Shortly after, the entire region thoroughly transformed into a world of ice and snow. Frigid gusts of air engulfed the entire valley. Huge icicles and hailstones the size of quern shit down from the sky, directed at the undead that crowded the canyon.

The magic released by a sacred grade magus was indeed terrifying, and even more so when deployed by two sacred magi simultaneously!

The entire canyon turned into an awful scene of icicles and hail shooting in every direction. Of the tremendous count of undead creatures Han Shuo

summoned, the low ranking skeletal warriors and skeletal warriors would be slain one after another.

In no time at all, several thousand undead creatures were pounded into ground meat by icicles and hail. But with undead creatures with the level of hate warriors and above, their tough bodies were capable of resisting the attack. Naturally, the bone devil and mummy lord, undeads of such high level, were left unscathed.

The bone chilling aura extended to cover the whole great canyon, causing even the dark dragons imprisoned in the cage to shiver and creak. But as far as the undead were concerned, low temperatures would never be a threat to them. Under the torrent of icicles and hail, the remaining undead were all lined up to launch an attack at Corey and his party.



# Chapter 468: Corey the Ice Celestial

The three evil knights who had been reformed by Han Shuo all wore armour that gleamed like mirrors, wielding extremely long bone spur that carried an intense aura of death. Counterintuitively, the three charged at the front-most line.

Mounted on massive fire-spitting warhorses and holding huge bone spurs in their hands, the kick-ass evil knights exuded inexhaustible aura of death as they charged head on at Corey and his party.

Behind the three evil knights were five additional evil knights who were not reforged with demonic magic, and behind them were the mummy lord and bone devil. As for the five strange looking elite zombies of five elements: earth elite zombie and wood elite zombie utilized their innate skills, hiding deep beneath the earth and hiding in a outlandish plants respectively. Fire, water, and metal elite zombies mixed themselves among remaining zombie warriors that survived by mere chance, and slowly dispersed to encircle Corey and his men.

Corey, wielding a longsword coated with a layer of ice as tough as diamond that emanated bone-chilling cold air, before the three evil knights got near him, he suddenly let out a cold groan and brandished the longsword in his hand. Colorless fighting aura mixed with frosty cold aura launched out from the longsword and headed for the three evil knights on fire-spitting warhorses.

Frigid air current found between heaven and earth that could freeze any ordinary living organism congregated immediately with the colourless fighting aura. The originally colourless and formless fighting aura exploded with bright light and assimilated with the cold air current, forming a colossal icicle glittering with frosty light. The icicle mixed with indestructible fighting aura shot towards the three evil knights.

Han Shuo, who was standing beside dark dragon Gilbert, smirked and vanished in the blink of an eye. When his body was again visible, he was standing tall in the air ahead of the evil knights, and threw a ferocious

punch from above.

As though a red dragon had shot out from Han Shuo's hand, under the propelling of Mystical Glacial Spellfire, red flames danced around his fist. Carrying scorching light and heat, it pounded right in the middle of the colossal icicle.

Creak!

A crisp shatter of ice rock resonated. Under the effect of Han Shuo's ferocious force, the slender and long demonic flame first made a big hole on the icicle, only then from within the icicle it released the intense heat it carried, evaporated away the icicle that contained Corey's colorless fighting aura.

"Your opponent, is me!" Step by step, without touching the ground, Han Shuo marched towards this Ice Celestial from the Shrine of Ice. As raging flames burned in both his hands, the searing heat interweaved with cold air found all around, producing fine water droplets that rained down.

"Who, who the hell are you?" Corey shouted, his heart palpitating with fear. After that strike from Han Shuo, this Ice Celestial of the Shrine of Ice finally had a taste of just how daunting was Han Shuo's strength was.

Even without actively probing Corey with his consciousness, over such short distances, Han Shuo could still sense Corey's actual strength. Corey however, despite possessing exceedingly formidable strength, didn't have such miraculous demonic arts as Han Shuo. Therefore, from the beginning, Corey failed to realize that Han Shuo was an opponent of the same grade.

Afterall, it was exceedingly rare to find demigod existences in the whole of Profound Continent. In his defense, Corey had come prepared. Nearly every cream of the crop expert in the Shrine of Ice, apart from Tiana, was brought here. He did not think that somebody he randomly came across in the dark dragons' territory would possess such strength to contend against them.

Most significantly, as the demonic arts which Han Shuo practiced was as different as it could be from the martial arts in this world, Corey did not

feel any circulation of fighting aura in Han Shuo's body, thus dismissed the possibility that he was a martial arts practitioner. Only after Han Shuo withdrew his skeletal staff did Corey realize that Han Shuo was merely a necromancer. When he saw that Han Shuo did not summon bone dragon, he even further looked down upon Han Shuo.

A mere grand magus was nothing in his eyes. Any one of his five subordinates could easily finish Han Shuo. Hence, he never would have expected Han Shuo to be of any threat!

However, when he discovered that Han Shuo could smash his icicle in one strike, he knew he was gravely mistaken in his assessment. That was the reason he again interrogated about Han Shuo's origin gravely.

"You are about to be no more than a corpse anyway, why bother asking?" Han Shuo stared at Ice Celestial Corey with murder in his eyes. The two fireballs in his hands, formed by congealing demonic yuan energy, hurled at Corey as Han Shuo finished.

Perhaps only characters the grade of this Ice Celestial could truly understand the power of the energy contained within these seemingly ordinary fireballs! He roared, and his longsword fluttered, sending sparking, translucent cold air towards the two demoniacal fireballs.

Against Corey's expectations, the raging fireballs that were flying towards him in straight lines, evaded the discharge coming from his longsword with bizarre, sinuous maneuvers. Like two autonomous living beings, the fireballs with their unpredictable trajectory again came flying towards him.

Behind the two diabolical fireballs stood Han Shuo, wearing a smile even colder than this world of ice and snow he was in. He sent a command to earth elite zombie, then told dark dragon Gilbert from a distance, "You're just going to have to look after your grandpa in a moment!"

The spell released simultaneously by two sacred grade magi filled the entire region with intensely frigid air, a mixture of snowflakes and ice shards fluttering everywhere, as though there was a frozen mountain where the Shrine of Ice was located.

Perhaps because their energy was confined, each and every one of the imprisoned dark dragons shivered in the cold. The dark skinned girl covered with cuts and bruises, possibly due to the freezing cold, or maybe it was the ice crumbs that fell on her. Her skin seemed to have paled a significant few shades.

After Han Shuo spoke, the ground on which the cage rested suddenly crumbled into a dark cavern. As the imprisoned dark dragons screamed out in fear, the entire cage tumbled into the dark hole.

At the same time, right under Gilbert's feet, an underground tunnel opened up. Gilbert came to his senses in an instant, and leapt into the tunnel.

After both the cage and dark dragon Gilbert descended, the two holes that appeared so bizarrely, in the attentive watch of the Shrine of Ice experts, again miraculously closed up. Before they realized what was happening, the two holes had completely disappeared. The ground restored to its former smooth surface.

"Lord, Lord Corey! The Jedefrost Cage disappeared!" Suddenly, one of the magi that had been chanting, cried out in shock.

Corey, who was brandishing his sword to resist the tricky attacks of the diabolic fireballs, found time to take a glance behind him. His face turned an ugly expression. Corey the Ice Celestial had been on the defense against those diabolic fireballs all along when, all of a sudden, a dreadfully frigid gust of air gushed out from his body.

All of a sudden, cold air gathered rapidly with Corey at the center, and the space around him started to freeze, producing an enormous block of solid ice in midair.

The two constantly whirling diabolic fireballs manipulated by Han Shuo were frozen into the huge chunk of ice as well. Before Han Shuo could react, a dozen or so cold streams of air attached themselves to the solid ice and began to rapidly circle within the ice like silvery snakes, which then converged towards the fireballs trapped in the ice.

Dense white smoke immediately emanated from where the two fireballs

were confined. Han Shuo could feel the demonic yuan energy contained within the two diabolic fireball depleting little by little under the besiege of the streams of cold air.

At the center of the huge chunk of ice sat Corey. As the caster, Corey wasn't affected by the cold ice. With his chilly eyes on Han Shuo, he suddenly flew towards him at high-speed. The enormous chunk of ice that completely froze the space around him, as though it was weightless, flew along with Corey and towards Han Shuo.

Midway, thick white smoke stopped emanating from the surface of the solid ice. The dozen or so cold streams of air finally wore down the last bit of demonic yuan energy in the two frozen diabolic fireballs, and there was no longer a trace of their presences.

At Han Shuo's command, the higher ranking undead creatures that suffered no effect under the previous wave of ice magic attack, circumvented Corey and charged at the five top experts from the Shrine of Ice. The five elite zombies too rapidly scattered around, preparing to release the Penta-elemental Undead Formation.

Seeing Corey fly towards him in that big block of ice, Han Shuo's two hands began to rapidly whirl about, all kinds of uncanny demonic magic suddenly flew out with whooshing sounds. When the streams of unstoppable demonic light met with the solid ice, they produced beautiful clanking sounds.

However, this enormous chunk of solid ice that constantly absorbed the frosty air from the area seemed to be made of the toughest substance. When Han Shuo's unique demonic attacks bombarded the boulder of ice, the deepest dent they made was barely a meter deep, absolutely incapable of penetrating through the solid ice and touch a single hair on Corey's head.

Ice Celestial is indeed a well justified nickname! Han Shuo praised in his heart. He had been, on the one hand, busy releasing all sorts of dazzling attacks on the ice, and on the other, rapidly dodging, pressingly turning over in his mind for ways to break the ice.

As the Demonslayer Edge had yet to completely fuse with the Crystal of Destruction, and was unable to find a way to break the ice at the time, Han Shuo had no choice but to evade at high-speed. Fortunately, when it came to speed, Han Shuo always had the upper hand. Chasing after Han Shuo in a colossal chunk of ice, although fast moving, Corey wasn't nearly as fast as Han Shuo and couldn't get anywhere near him.

One couldn't break through the ice, one couldn't catch up to the other, the two were locked in a stalemate.

“Father, let me do it!”

“Father, let me do it!”

It was at this moment that Han Shuo received messages from the fire elite zombie and metal elite zombie. The two were overflowing with self-confidence, and seemingly sent the telepathic messages to Han Shuo simultaneously. The two then began to charge at Corey.

Metal elite zombie and fire elite zombie. One wielded the invincible treasure of metal attribute – the golden cudgel, another wielded the destructive incendiary treasure of fire attribute – the Fire Lotus. Han Shuo suddenly arrived at his senses. His mood loosened up and he started to plot on how to relentlessly hit Corey when he was down!

# Chapter 469: Ruptured

Fact proved that both the metal elite zombie and fire elite zombie, who obtained treasures of their respective attributes, could indeed release an incredible amount of energy.

Under the metal elite zombie's manipulation, the golden cudgel turned into a huge pillar glittering with golden rays. Carrying the force of millions and millions of tonnes, it directly hammered down on the enormous Boulder of ice that enveloped Ice Celestial Corey. A terrifying splintering noise broke out. Being in the center, Corey suddenly felt an unparalleled vigorous energy rush forth, causing his body to violently quake and his aura to become unsteady.

The fire elite zombie immediately followed. One after another, clouds of raging inferno continuously leapt out from the Fire Lotus in his hand and fell onto the solid ice that had yet to completely disintegrate. Thick smoke fiercely discharged from where the fire and ice made contact.

Corey turned pale with fright. If it was just one of those miraculous martial techniques of Han Shuo's that destroyed his ice shield, he may not have been so appalled. However, it was merely two strange looking zombie warriors that defeated the ice boulder which contained divine energy of the Ice Goddess, something absolutely beyond his imagination.

"What the hell are they!" Corey was stunned in fear by the fire elite zombie and metal elite zombie. He held tight onto his longsword that was covered with a layer of diamond-hard ice as he stared at the two elite zombies somewhat flustered.

It was at this moment that, like a ghoul, Han Shuo suddenly scudded out from the thick smoke. The Demonic Blades caused fingernails on both his hands to dramatically grow to a meter long. As he fluttered his hands in criss-cross motion, trails of demonic light violently shot out, seemingly weaving a huge intangible web to trap Corey.

Corey was extremely flustered. It was already extremely difficult to handle Han Shuo alone. Now to add to that, there was the fire elite zombie

refined with pure elemental energy of fire. Indistinctly, he felt as though the Fire Lotus was actually subduing him, making Corey extremely uncomfortable. When he saw Han Shuo charging over, Corey shot out shard after shard of ice as he inched backwards, retreating.

Suddenly, right before Corey, Han Shuo gradually turned fainter and fainter until he completely vanished! Yet, that sense of danger never diminished but instead swelled in magnitude. This caused Corey great distress.

With him at the center, icicle after icicle fiercely shot out from the longsword in his hand in every direction. After losing Han Shuo's trail, that was the best idea Corey could come up with to attack him.

After Corey launched the full coverage attack, the huge net falling right over his head was seemingly destroyed and dissipated under the bombardment of the icicles.

However, Corey did not feel any more comfortable. On the contrary, that sense of danger that always shrouded his heart grew more and more intense. Corey had gathered all his concentration, rapidly revolved at the same spot on the ground in his attempt to locate the source of the danger, and yet, couldn't find anything.

When that sense of danger amassed to the very brim, a stab of pain shot at his soles. Corey was visibly frightened, and hastily rose high up into the air, escaping from the sneak attack that had suddenly come from beneath his feet.

Below Corey's feet, Han Shuo, who utilized the earth elite zombie to construct underground tunnels for him to mount a surprise attack, with a malicious grin, raised his head to look at Corey the Ice Celestial. As cold lights glistened from the Demonic Blades in his two hands, ten dark rays emitted from his fingertips like serpents, biting at Corey. Not only did they travel faster than lightning, their trajectories were even more tricky and unpredictable.

Damn it! Corey cursed at his own negligence. In a flurry, he whirled his longsword downwards.



Of the ten slithering rays, six were stopped in their paths by Corey's panicked defensive strike, while another four attached to his body as though they were his own shadows. Then, they exploded one by one at his hips and waist. A waterfall of fresh blood gushed from his wound and Corey's miserable howl sounded.

While he's wounded, deal him the final blow!

Han Shuo soared into the sky. There seemed to be demonic lights constantly circulating inside the meter-long Demonic Blades in both hands. Another ten rays again accumulated at his fingertips, ready to take Corey's life at any moment.

Out of Han Shuo's anticipation, this Ice Celestial Corey, one of even more honorable status than Tiana in the Shrine of Ice, when his lower body was burst open by those rays, he went as far as to hastily pull out a magic scroll. Before Han Shuo even came close to him, Corey had activated the scroll that was as white as snow.

"Retreat!" Corey shouted at the top of his lungs. The snowflakes that filled the air suddenly rushed towards him. In just a split second, Corey the Ice Celestial vanished into the snowfall.

When Corey's miserable howl reverberated, the snowflakes that blanketed the entire region all of a sudden wrapped around each of the few remaining experts of the Shrine of Ice. The five seemed to have melted into the snowflakes, and miraculously disappeared before Han Shuo's eyes.

Even though he could feel their presences in the snow with his outstanding consciousness, Han Shuo could not trace their exact locations. It was as though they had all melted into the snow. He could sense them, but had no way of attacking them!

When the group of six disappeared, the snowstorm that shrouded the entire canyon ceased. Han Shuo could sense the presences of Corey and his party disappearing bit by bit. When Han Shuo could no longer feel any of their presences, although the frosty coldness that shrouded the entire canyon remained, there were no longer any snowflakes wafting through

the sky.

The undead creatures who had lost their targets, not knowing what to do, stood their ground dumbfounded as they awaited further commands from Han Shuo.

“Father, they have disappeared!” earth elite zombie transmitted naively after slowly emerging from the ground beside Han Shuo.

“They managed to escape! Their escape method was truly a miracle. It was actually achieved by blending into the ice and snow,” Han Shuo mumbled to himself. He instructed the earth elite zombie, “Open the underground tunnel. Bring dark dragon Gilbert and the cage out!”

“Okay!” the earth elite zombie replied bluntly. Right after, the ground beside the two suddenly split open to form a cavern. Therefrom emerged dark dragon Gilbert and the cage imprisoning the dark dragon race.

Gilbert lay on top of the cage, his tears constantly falling into it. He said nothing, but cried unceasingly at the patriarch of dark dragons, Gilges, who was right below him. His grandfather’s eyes were red through and through as tears rolled down, choking with sobs as he consoled Gilbert.

After glancing at Gilbert and the other dark dragons in the cage, Han Shuo quietly pulled open a distance with them. Han Shuo knew that it was best for them to have time together by themselves at such moments. Besides, perhaps Gilges might want to tell Gilbert about certain secrets of the dark dragons. It seemed inappropriate for him to remain there.

As the temperature in this tract of land had returned to normal, the ice and snow that previously covered the earth gradually melted away. Han Shuo sent the undead creatures back to the netherworld one after another, and then pondered the objective of the Shine of Ice making a presence.

The Shrine of Ice and the Church of Light had very friendly relations, and both possessed great influence over the continent. Although the two religions professed distinct doctrines, it was an open secret that they were allied with each other in private. Therefore, stemming from Han Shuo’s loathing towards the Church of Light, and adding to Tiana’s betrayal the last time, it seemed fitting that Han Shuo would view the Shrine of Ice as

his enemy.

Although Corey had successfully fled through the snowflakes that filled the sky, Han Shuo nevertheless left an eternally unforgettable mark on his body. On top of that, given the existence of Tiana, this enmity he had with the Shrine of Ice would be impossible to resolve peacefully. Han Shuo had even begun considering how to deal with the Shrine of Ice.

As Han Shuo continued to ponder, he felt a message from Gilbert, asking him to come over. Without hesitation, Han Shuo arrived beside Gilbert. He saw that although Gilbert was still wearing the same sorrowful face as before, his mood had at last somewhat stabilized.

With every one of the dozen dark dragons imprisoned in the cage looking at Han Shuo, Gilbert's grandfather, Gilges, leaned in towards Han Shuo from within the cage, and thanked him sincerely, "The last time Gilbert returned, I did hear of some of your past achievements. Never did I expect that it would be you who would end up saving our kind. On behalf of all dark dragons, thank you for your great favor!"

"You're welcome. The relationship between Gilbert and I isn't as simple as you would imagine. Assisting you was the right thing to do!" Han Shuo made a hand gesture, indicating to Gilges that he need not be so courteous.

"I do understand. No ordinary person would ever be willing to risk their life for their magic pets. To rush over here from distant parts in order to help us dark dragons, that alone has fully explained your affection for Gilbert. It was indeed his good fortune to have followed you!" Gilges was definitely a thoughtful person. Due solely to the fact that Han Shuo would head over to aid Gilbert, he reasoned that Gilbert had definitely followed the right master.

"Grandpa, stop discussing such pointless things!" Gilbert complained. Afterwards, looking impatiently at Han Shuo, he asked, "Master, can you open up this damned cage? I have tried countless methods, but nothing has worked!"

"Let me try again!" Han Shuo replied and proceeded to deploy several

demonic martial skills. However, this cage was blessed by the Ice Goddess, as mentioned by Corey, and indeed contained an exotic divine energy. A multitude of attacks, no matter how powerful, we're all frozen and disarmed by the bone-penetrating frigid divine energy, unable to break open the cage.

As the main soul of the Demonslayer Edge was fusing with the energy of the Crystal of Destruction, it now needed to be absolutely cloistered. With the assistance of the inconceivably incisive Demonslayer Edge, Han Shuo had absolute confidence that he could break this cage into pieces. However, as the Demonslayer Edge was currently unavailable, it remained a big headache.

Although the golden cudgel that the metal elite zombie wielded could destroy anything, if the cudgel really were to bombard the cage, the dozen or so dark dragon already on the verge of death would most likely give out before the cage did.

If this cage hadn't been enchanted with the divine energy of the Ice Goddess, Han Shuo would have been certain he could cut it open. But the situation at hand left him at his wit's end.

While he racked his brain, he suddenly recalled someone who might be of use. He let out a soft cry at once, "Perhaps there's still a way!"

# Chapter 470: Past Events Thousand Years Back

“What do you mean?” Gilbert asked insistently.

“Elizabeth is in Brettel City. I think she can help us!” Han Shuo explained.

Elizabeth, a target on the Church of Light’s hitlist, possessed a most bizarre Body of Divine Favor with the miraculous ability to absorb divine energy from followers of the Church of Light. Han Shuo had a feeling that she might be able to absorb and remove the divine energy contained in the cage. Without the protection of divine energy from the Ice Goddess, Han Shuo had a hundred percent certainty of breaking the Jedefrost Cage.

“She?” Gilbert wasn’t fully convinced. But when he saw Han Shuo’s confidence in the idea, he asked, “Can she be trusted?”

“I’m not too sure either. But there’s no harm trying!” Han Shuo replied.

“You, you are called Bryan, right?” Gilges, the patriarch of dark dragons, raised his head and asked.

“Yep!” Han Shuo replied.

“Thank you for your rescue. My race of dark dragons will engrave your grace in our memory!” Gilges kowtowed at Han Shuo. Then, he raised his head and said, “One of the reasons those of the Shrine of Ice came here, killed my tribesmen, and imprisoned us here was to turn the entire race of dark dragons into their saddle horses. The other was to find out the route to the third layer of the underground world from me!”

The third layer of the underground world!

Han Shuo was startled. Then, with glistening eyes on the patriarch of dark dragons, he asked, “What exactly was the situation?”

Since Gilges took the initiative to divulge the condition at the third layer of the underground world, it seemed that he intended to speak out candidly about the whole sequence of events to Han Shuo, something Han

Shuo had not expected.

“Two years ago, when Gilbert returned, I learned from him that you were the owner of the skeletal staff. And from that moment on, I stopped advising Gilbert not to follow by your side. Because, the owner of the skeletal staff surely couldn’t be an enemy to us dark dragons!” the patriarch of dark dragons said in a heavy voice as he looked deeply at Han Shuo.

Han Shuo grew even more bewildered. Gilges seemed to actually understand certain origins of the skeletal staff. He couldn’t help but withdraw the skeletal staff and fiddle with. Looking at the patriarch of dark dragons in an odd manner, Han Shuo asked, “Why do you say so?”

“Because, five thousand years ago, the race of dark dragons had been going to battles under command of the original owner of the skeletal staff. The reason we dark dragons had always lived in the second layer of the underground world, was also because the original owner of the skeletal staff had commanded us to, so as to prevent anyone from intruding into the third layer of the underground world!

“I also heard a little from Gilbert about your encounter with Ancient Lizard King Dagassi. The Ancient Lizard King was his magical pet back then. Dagassi must have told you something, hasn’t he?” Gilges asked.

“Nope, Dagassi hardly discussed his previous affairs. All he told me was that I can find out the truth from the skeletal staff. However, at the moment, I have yet to completely grasp the secrets of the skeletal staff. Therefore, for the time being, I’m unclear as to what actually happened five thousand years ago. If you do happen to know, I hope that you can tell me,” Han Shuo requested as he looked at Gilges, his heart full of doubt.

Gilges shook his head with a bitter smile. The thirst in Han Shuo’s eyes forced him to gather his attention and say, “I have only lived for a little over two thousand years. I only know of these things from ancient records my ancestors left behind. What I know is very, very limited!”

“What exactly do you know?” Han Shuo questioned closely.

Under Han Shuo’s gaze, Gilges contemplated for a while and said, “Five

thousand years ago, there was a great war that involved every powerhouse on Profound Continent. It was extremely intense and a great disaster. There seemed to even be experts from other planes of existence involved. The side with which the owner of the skeletal staff and us dark dragons stood likely lost in that great war. Some of the main leaders on our side escaped while some weren't as lucky. Our side suffered heavy damage. It is said that a few formidable races on our side were forever wiped out from Profound Continent! We dark dragons consider ourselves lucky. Although we've been holed up in the second layer of the underground world ever since, at least we weren't exterminated."

"I have no idea about the situation of other races, but we dark dragons have, under the instructions of the original owner of the skeletal staff, remained in the second layer of the underground world all this time. Firstly, it was to take shelter from the pursuit of the victors, and secondly, we had to stand guard at the path that connects to the third layer."

"When the owner of the skeletal staff gave us this command, he also told us that five thousand years from then, some mighty enemy would no doubt come down here. He said that as long as we could survive this calamity, provided that we had hold fast for five thousand years, we can at long last leave the underground world, and we would no longer need to defend it."

"That was all that I know. As to what really happened five thousand years ago, why we suffered such a crushing defeat, who the enemy was, what lay in the third layer, I'm clueless!"

Han Shuo fell into a deep contemplation. What was certain was that the original owner of the skeletal staff ought to be out of the leaders on this side five thousand years ago. Otherwise, he couldn't have left such instructions to the dark dragons. In addition, the original owner of the skeletal staff must have still been alive, otherwise he wouldn't have had left behind so many preparatory measures.

It was also from that moment that Han Shuo felt that the legends that circulated the outside world probably were nowhere near the truth. According to folklore, the Cemetery of Death was originally created by a

group of necromancers, who used the Cemetery of Death for research on the mysterious knowledge about necromancy. For they had committed a gross multitude of outrageously depraved acts, magi of every school of magic united to destroy them, and the Cemetery of Death completely vanished with them.

As a necromancer, Han Shuo had heard much of such folklores. But when extrapolating based on the events in these folk stories, he concluded that they were set less than a millennium before. Now when he heard Gilges mention matters from five thousand years ago, Han Shuo was almost certain that the Cemetery of Death ought to have existed for a longer period.

Suddenly, Han Shuo recalled that Gilges had been alive for over two thousand years, and so he pestered, “You have lived for more than two thousand years. Are you aware of the existence of the Cemetery of Death, and the legends about that place?”

“Of course. I haven’t been completely ignorant of all the events of the outside world for the past two millennia. When it comes to certain major events, I still know a thing or two!” Gilges nodded, and soon continued, “Which legends do you mean, exactly?”

Han Shuo was delighted in his heart. He hastily depicted all the way through every legend the human world perpetuated pertaining to the Cemetery of Death. Then, with his bright eyes on Gilges, he asked, “Are such the facts?”

Shaking his head, Gilges replied, “Thousand of years ago there was indeed a group of necromancers that gathered at the Cemetery of Death. They produced a lot of wicked necromancy magic in their research – also true. And in the end they were hunted to death by every magus of every country, that is also correct. However, they surely did not build the Cemetery of Death. Like you, they possessed the Cemetery of Death, but were not the creators.

Although I don’t have any conclusive evidence, I’ve always believed that the Cemetery of Death was constructed by the original owner of the



skeletal staff. And just like our dark dragon race's constant defense of the tunnel five thousand years, for the original owner of the skeletal staff to have built the Cemetery of Death, there must be some profound meaning to it."

"Then, do you know about the circumstances of the Calamity Church's origin? They don't seem to have appeared too long ago on Profound Continent. Why is it that they consider the Cemetery of Death to be their holy land? How did they know about the three miraculous abilities of the skeletal staff?" Han Shuo was anxious and asked Gilges in a hurried tone.

"I do know some things about the Calamity Church. That folklore you mentioned about the Cemetery of Death, except for the part where those necromancers constructed it, a large part of rest of the stories is true.

"The Calamity Church was actually founded by the same necromancers that formerly possessed the Cemetery of Death. At the time, they created countless terrifying magic in the Cemetery of Death. In particular, the appearance of this 'Plague' spell. It caused people in countless cities to turn into undeads.

"Therefore, they became the common enemy of the entire continent, and were finally extirpated by experts of various countries. However, they were very hard to kill. They weren't totally wiped out under the besiege of every country on the continent. But those few who so luckily survived would never dare to show their faces in public like they used to, and forever live in the dark.

"I have to say, these people indeed were incomparably mighty. Even with the combined effort of the entire continent to destroy them, they weren't completely eradicated. Those who survived even grew stronger and stronger, while their knowledge in the field of necromancy became more and more refined. They even began to recruit various wicked experts of the Profound Continent.

"That was, until these powerful necromancers attained new heights in their delvings into the field of magic, possessing the capacity of communicating with demons and evil gods. They established the Calamity

Church to worship the evil god, accepting more and more evil entities in Profound Continent, and flourished to the point now where even the Church of Light can barely suppress them.

“The Cemetery of Death is their birthplace, and also the place where the first generation of high-level Calamity Church members researched necromancy magic. For them to take the Cemetery of Death as their sacred ground, it’s a matter of course!” Gilges explained continuously as he looked at Han Shuo.

“So that’s how it is!” With Gilges’ narration, Han Shuo finally understood what the Cemetery of Death had to do with the Calamity Church. As it turned out, the Cemetery of Death was basically the laboratory of the evil necromancers that founded the Calamity Church. The founders of the Calamity Church would do research on producing that wicked magic in there. No wonder Wolf always said that Han Shuo was one of theirs.

# Chapter 471: Taking in a Scourge

“Then, do you know why the Cemetery of Death and the skeletal staff disappeared altogether?” With Gilges’s explanations, Han Shuo easily figured out the rest of the stories. Now the only thing that Han Shuo couldn’t understand was how the skeletal staff could be lost from the hands of Calamity Church.

“I haven’t a clue either. Ever since the encirclement and extirpation campaign against the ancient necromancers started, the Cemetery of Death disappeared along with them. Even later when the Calamity Church was founded, the Cemetery of Death had never once reappeared. But now, with you obtaining the skeletal staff, gaining the ability to freely enter and exit, after thousands of years, did the Cemetery of Death once more emerge!” Patriarch of dark dragons Gilges shook his head. He didn’t seem very clear about what happened behind the scenes.

Han Shuo then continued to inquire a certain matter about Calamity Church and Cemetery of Death. But this time, Gilges couldn’t seem to answer those questions either. That was all he knew.

“Oh right, do you all still want to stay here?” When Han Shuo could no longer get any more useful information from Gilges, he planned of leaving.

“We still need to discuss a few things. Furthermore, we want to bury our children’s bodies!” when this topic was raised, Gilges again appeared very sorrowful.

“Master, I also need to bury my father. From today onwards, as long as I, Gilbert, am alive, I vow to wipe the Shine of Ice off the face of the continent!” Gilbert said with a staunch look. He seemed to have taken the Shine of Ice as his arch nemesis.

Han Shuo creased his brows. He, on the contrary, was eager to leave as soon as possible. After all, there were still plenty of things to deal with in the world above ground. However, he couldn’t be sure if those from the Shine of Ice would be returning. If by any chance, they did come back and

he wasn't there, then the dark dragons would never be able to escape a tragedy.

After thinking for a moment, Han Shuo said, "Settle everything you need to here. After that, everyone leaves this place."

Han Shuo summoned the earth elite zombie and a bunch of zombie warriors. After issuing a command to the earth elite zombie, Han Shuo said to Gilbert, "Let them help you. Start by burying your father's corpse. I will wait here with you for a few days. Then, when it's all over and done with, you will carry the cage and we shall all leave!"

"Thank you, master!" Gilbert replied.

Hence, Han Shuo temporarily stayed at this great canyon. With the instruction of Gilbert's grandpa, Gilbert buried the dead bodies in accordance with the rites of the dark dragon race. The dark dragons in the cage then discussed the paths they wished to take in the future.

Han Shuo also remained there but kept some distance away from Gilbert and the others, assiduously researching the mysteries of the three necromancy boundaries that he obtained the last time. After Han Shuo successfully released the Boundary of Weakness, he easily picked up the knack of deploying the Boundary of Fear. In the short span of two days, he could proficiently release the Boundary of Fear.

The Boundary of Weakness and Boundary of Fear were virtually the same, therefore Han Shuo did need to spend much time to master the latter. But regarding the Boundary of Aging, he was rather perplexed. In the following three days, Han Shuo constantly bore into the method of releasing the Boundary of Aging. Although he attempted many times, not once could he form the Boundary of Aging.

After five days, with the assistance of earth elite zombie, all the dead dark dragons had been properly buried. In those five days, Gilbert finally brought order to his chaotic frame of mind. His grandfather Gilges also decided to leave temporarily, as to open up the cage and so that they would be safe if those of the Shrine of Ice were to return.

Perhaps it was because the dark dragons weighed as much as humans

when they transformed into human form, or maybe it was the unique structure of the cage, but dark dragon Gilbert alone could carry that huge cage on his shoulder, totally disproportionate to his own size. Following behind Han Shuo, they went back to the first layer through the same path that they came from.

Before arriving at the first layer, Han Shuo suddenly felt some aura fluctuations of several weak presences from the entrance above them. This set Han Shuo on edge. However, those presences couldn't possibly pose any threat to Han Shuo, so he wasn't too worried.

When Han Shuo and dark dragon Gilbert walked out through the tunnel, he finally realized who was actually guarding the cave mouth.

The five mature, sophisticated-looking female dark elves that once had an orgy with Han Shuo brought a group of dark elves to wait at the exit. Standing gracefully among them, Shialan smiled as soon as she saw Han Shuo. In a most licentious tone, she exclaimed, "Hey! It really was you! What a rare occasion to have you here. Why didn't you visit our tribe? Is it that you despise us dark elves?" Ever since Han Shuo killed Adele, the five became her successor as the new leaders of the dark elves. Initially, Han Shuo had maintained contact with the underground world. But later, after Trunks gained control of the Valley of Sunshine, Trunks' men began to gradually trade certain things with the dark elves.

The underground world is abundant with certain crystals and unusual ores. There were even some uncommon treasures that couldn't be found above ground. Being the transaction point between a few countries, in the Valley of Sunshine, goods for the function of enjoyment and pleasure could surely be found in excess. Incidentally, the dark elves was a race that constantly sought the pleasures of life. Hence, during those few years, Trunks had gained more gold coins trading with the underground world than he ever could as a mercenary.

"How did you know I was here?" Han Shuo asked puzzled with creased brows as he looked at this dark elf.

"Hahah, ever since you entered the underground world, you have been

constantly rushing all along the way. Therefore, plenty of batmen and goblins have spotted the two of you. Those filthy things now exchange food with us for any information about strangers that pass through. Right after you entered the tunnel to the second layer, I was already informed of your whereabouts!” Shialan explained. Shortly after, she giggled lovably and said, “Although these years you rarely come down to the underground world, without your help, we wouldn’t have been able to obtain so many rare playthings from Trunks. Since you have now come to the underground world, we as the hosts must show our hospitality!”

“So that explains it!” Han Shuo laughed. He then politely said, “I truly appreciate it, but this time I’m rather busy and don’t have much time. Next time I visit the underground world again, I will definitely pay you all a visit!”

Gilbert, dragging such a huge cage in his human form, appeared monstrous and strange, looking as though he were carrying a mountain on his shoulder. His face expressed disgust at his first glance at the dark elves.

If it wasn’t for his father’s recent passing, given the lewd personality of the dark dragon race, the dark elves would likely still have been his prey. However, Gilbert hadn’t been in a good mood. And now that Shialan and her party were delaying the dark dragons break from their shackles, he naturally couldn’t put on an amicable face.

“It’s him, that dark dragon!” Behind Shialan, a dark elf that had seen Gilbert before hastily whispered to Shialan.

Shialan again gave Gilbert a once over before shifting her glittering eyes to the few caged dark dragons for several more glances, wearing a pensive expression.

After a short while, a beautiful, pure, young dark elf beside Shialan coughed lightly. Shialan was startled. She couldn’t help but turn to look at this young beautiful dark elf with rather complicated emotions in her eyes. But she then returned to normal in an instant.

“Alright then. But since it’s such a rare occasion to have you come down

to the underground world, we must not let you leave empty handed!” When Shialan took a quick look at that young dark elf, she seemed to have received some kind of directive. All smiles, she pointed at the young lady and said to Han Shuo, “This is the most beautiful girl currently among our race. Hehe, she is still unsullied! As our best friend, I now give her to you as a present. However you wish to treat her, as servant or slave, it’s all up to you, but you must accept this gift. Or else, you will be looking down upon the race of dark elves!”

Beyond Han Shuo’s expectations, after Shialan took one glance at the beautiful, pure young dark elf lady, she insisted on giving her to Han Shuo.

While Han Shuo was startled, he also couldn’t help but carefully size up this beautiful dark elf. With just one quick look, he noticed that this dark elf was indeed extremely beautiful. Standing in the middle of Shialan and the other four gorgeous women, the pure, youthful aura she emitted was even more alluring.

Not unlike the ordinary dark elves, there seemed to be some kind of very clean aura coming off from her body. Indicating that she genuinely had not been tainted by the lascivious culture of the dark elves. When she looked timidly at Han Shuo, she gave people a lovely, pitiful feeling for her.

Han Shuo looked this youthful dark elf up and down deeply and, in his heart, a very familiar feeling struck him, as though he had long been acquainted with this young lady. It was a wonderful feeling. Han Shuo thought carefully for a moment. He was certain that he had never met this young lady during the many times he entered and exited the underground world. He was absolutely puzzled.

Could there be such a thing as familiarity at first sight? Han Shuo thought to himself. He couldn’t help but continue sizing up this lady even more oddly.

“You must accept. If you don’t, you’re looking down upon us dark elves!” There was no telling what Shialan’s problem was, absolutely insisting on handing this young lady to Han Shuo. It was as though if Han Shuo

wouldn't receive this girl, he would thenceforth be treated as an enemy to her race.

“Okay. You, come with me!” If the worst came to worst, there would just be one more servant in the city lord's mansion in Brettel City. Furthermore, it was not worthwhile to cause Trunks trouble for such a matter, and so he plainly agreed.

With that, Shialan and the others no longer obstructed Han Shuo but talked cheerfully and wittily with him, seeing him all the way to the exit.



# Chapter 472: In the Know

In the underground world, the dark elves reigned supreme. But once they emerged to the surface of the Profound Continent, they became prey for humans.

The beauty of the female elves, and the expertise of the male elves with enchanted weapons, made for a great temptation to humans. On the Profound Continent, never was there a shortage of hunters that specialized in capturing elves, especially female elves, which the nobility loved.

This beautiful dark elf named Kroely actually remained a virgin among the dark elves that had an innate tendency to be wanton, which greatly aroused Han Shuo's interests. As soon as they left the underground world, Han Shuo asked, "Kroely, why is it that Shialan and the others wanted to give you as a present to me? Did they threaten you?"

Kroely was terrified, and dropped to her knees for Han Shuo, saying, "Master, you are a benefactor of the dark elves. It is my honor to be able to serve you."

Han Shuo gestured with his hand, and did not continue asking. However, throughout the journey, he nevertheless held doubts in his heart. He always felt as though he was already acquainted with Kroely. Yet, after long, careful thinking, he was still certain that he had never met her before.

"Bryan, I'd like to have a few words with you alone!" After walking out from the underground world, the patriarch of dark dragons Gilges suddenly spoke.

Han Shuo stared blankly for a short while before nodding. He then said to Kroely, "Leave us for a moment!"

Kroely shot a glance at Gilges, then respectfully replied, "Yes," and distanced herself from the rest. After Kroely left to a long ways away, Gilbert put down the cage that imprisoned his grandfather. After shooting a glance into the distance at Kroely, Gilges creased his brows and said,

“Bryan, I feel that there’s something wrong with this dark elf. I sense some kind of familiar smell coming from her body.”

When Gilges said so, Han Shuo jolted, and cried in surprise, “You felt that too?”

“I don’t know why, but I noticed that while we were in the tunnel earlier, this dark elf repeatedly sized me up surreptitiously. It felt as though she wanted to harm me,” Gilges said in a low voice with his brows still furrowed. Soon after, he appeared rather embarrassed and admitted, “But perhaps it’s because I’ve gotten old, overly sensitive!”

Han Shuo, however, didn’t feel this way. The older one got, the more particulars one would notice, possessing insights that young people usually did not. With regards to this Kroely, Han Shuo himself had felt that something was wrong with her to begin with. And now with Gilges’ warning, he was on the alert.

Gazing at the slender, elegant, lovely dark elf standing afar, Han Shuo couldn’t help but carefully release his consciousness to slowly sense the aura on Kroely. There was indeed the absence of that lewd taste that female dark elves were usually tainted with.

However, when Han Shuo really sensed with his consciousness, he nonetheless felt that Kroely truly was somewhat atypical. It was precisely because her aura was so vastly different from that of an ordinary dark elf that Han Shuo felt suspicious. If he were to shut his eyes, merely based on his other senses, Han Shuo would never consider her as a dark elf.

As Han Shuo slowly observed Kroely with his consciousness, dark dragons patriarch Gilges mumbled to himself, “It’s rather baffling actually. Although I have lived many years in the underground world, I haven’t made much contact with dark elves. It was only that Adele who we imprisoned that spent a relatively long time with us. Why is it that from this young dark elf, I sense a familiar taste?”

“Grandpa, you must have gotten that wrong. I also knew of that Adele. She had a promiscuous taste to her. You could immediately tell that she was a slut with just one glance. But this Kroely, however, feels pure and

clean. If it were not for her dark elf appearances, I would've taken her for a forest elf!" dark dragon Gilbert butted in.

Han Shuo was startled. His eyes shone as he gazed deeply at Kroely standing a distance away. He put on a thoughtful expression.

"Alright, let's stop discussing this!" Han Shuo suddenly interrupted, and waved towards Kroely who was quietly standing far away. When Kroely came over, he said smilingly, "We have some business to take care of and it's not suitable for you to come along. Here, take this coat of arms, and walk to Brettel City. With this, nothing will happen to you while you are in Lancelot Empire."

"Master, but I don't know the way. What if someone captures me in the Dark Forest?" Kroely looked timidly at Han Shuo, seemingly losing her head out of fear.

"From here, just head north all the way. After two days you will reach Valley of Sunshine. Should any problem arise, take my coat of arms to Trunks and tell him you are my servant. You are a dark elf, so you don't need to worry about your life even if you are captured. With this badge, my friends will let you go, and my enemies will keep you alive to extort me. In short, you won't die! Be at ease!" Han Shuo reassured her.

After Han Shuo was bestowed the title of Marquis, he naturally received a complete set of emblems that represented his identity as a nobility. This coat of arms, which had a beautiful escutcheon on it, was an identity mark exclusively for Han Shuo. It even contained a magical imprint, which no ordinary person could forge. And of course, those with the capacity to forge wouldn't do such things senselessly.

Kroely anxiously looked towards Han Shuo. Although Han Shuo seemed polite and amiable on the surface, his manner of speaking was staunch. She knew that as a mere servant, she was in no position to discuss terms whatsoever. Even if Han Shuo were to kill her on the spot, that would be her fate. Hence, this sharp-witted Kroely could only take the badge. She replied weakly, "Yes, master. Your humble servant wishes that there will be a chance to meet your Lordship again!"

“Certainly!” Han Shuo affirmed.

After Kroely left, Han Shuo chuckled grimly, “Wanna play this trick on me? Those dark elves must have been tired of living!”

“Bryan, what’s the matter?” The patriarch of dark dragons Gilges could tell that something was up from the start, and by now he could not resist asking.

“On Kroely, I sensed the aura of those dark elves who worship the evil goddess Rose. Back then, I nearly got killed in a sneak attack, which I believe was the work of that so-called spider goddess Rose. It seems that this Kroely is yet another attempt to attack me,” Han Shuo explained to Gilges gloomily.

Gilges was very shocked at Han Shuo’s bitter experience, but did not question any further about it. He knew that if Han Shuo did not speak of certain things, it wouldn’t be appropriate for him to ask about them.

“Let’s go!” Han Shuo instructed Gilbert and headed for the Cemetery of Death.

But in the end, after carefully weighing in his heart, Han Shuo did not bring the dark dragons to the Cemetery of Death. Although Han Shuo believed in Gilges the patriarch of dark dragons, there wasn’t just one dark dragon inside the cage. Han Shuo could not be sure that none of them, at any point in the future, would divulge the location of the Cemetery of Death.

Although the Cemetery of Death was indeed enveloped in a mighty boundary, and there was absolutely no way to open it without the skeletal staff, nothing was always absolute. Han Shuo didn’t believe that the Cemetery of Death’s boundary was almighty. Otherwise, those wicked necromancers that did their research there all those year ago wouldn’t have suffered such disastrous losses from the encirclement and extirpation campaign against them.

Therefore, Han Shuo did not bring the entire race of dark dragons to the Cemetery of Death, but placed them in the forest trolls’ village, and returned to the Cemetery of Death alone.

Over the previous several years, the forest trolls had always lived under the arrangements of dark dragon Gilbert. The forest trolls had long regarded Gilbert and Han Shuo as the messengers of their God, Datara.

The Valley of Sunshine wasn't far from the Dark Forest. When Trunks was still fighting for power over Valley of Sunshine, he even utilized the forces of these forest trolls through Gilbert. After the event, the forest trolls and Trunks had established a good relationship. There was even a portion of forest trolls that explicitly migrated to live in the canyons around the Valley of Sunshine to better cooperate with Trunks.

After grasping authority over the Valley of Sunshine, Trunks' mercenary band grew richer and more powerful with each passing day. For the purpose of exacting revenge, Trunks had invested all his effort into strengthening himself. With Han Shuo's backing behind the scenes, Trunks also established a good commerce relationship with various races of the underground world, including the dark elves and lizardmen.

Through the business transactions with the underground world all those years, Trunks had reaped impressive profits. With Han Shuo's introduction, Trunks became the second best friend of the dwarfs. By gifting large quantities of goods and supplies, Trunks obtained large quantities of bladed weapons from the dwarfs in exchange.

With Gilbert's assistance, there existed a close cooperation between the Valley of Sunshine and the forest trolls. Trunks provided weapons, armor and foodstuff for the forest trolls. By making use of the strong network of intelligence he had in the Valley of Sunshine, he provided the forest trolls with the trade routes of caravans that were either disloyal or disobey him for the forest trolls to carry out lootings.

Having experienced a round of inhumane torment, Trunks, who was hardly a benevolent person to begin with, became even more ruthless and decisive. In the prior few years, with the help of Han Shuo, Brettel City, Phoebe, Emily and the others, Trunks had completely grasped power over Valley of Sunshine in his hand.

Banding together the Soul Destroyer Mercenary Band, forest trolls, the

dwarfs, lizardmen, and even Janet's bandit group, Trunks, with the Valley of Sunshine and the edges of Dark Forest at the center, has become a powerhouse that no country would belittle!

# Chapter 473: Long-Distance Battle

One day later: The forest trolls' village.

Han Shuo brought Elizabeth over. With his demonic blood essence implanted in Elizabeth's body, if Elizabeth were to make any action of betrayal, he could take Elizabeth's life with just a thought. Besides, the Church of Light had forced her to an impasse. With such a solid and dependable master to cling onto, so long as she had the slightest common sense, she should have understood that there was nothing to gain in betraying Han Shuo.

After arriving at the forest trolls' village, Han Shuo saw dark dragon Gilbert keeping watch over the dark dragons imprisoned in the Jedefrost Cage. Right beside Gilbert, the old forest troll priest was directing some forest troll warriors to pass on huge chunks of cured meat to Gilges inside the cage.

The dark dragons, having been tormented by Ice Celestial Corey of the Shrine of Ice, ravenously devoured the chunks of meat in their hands. They must have been starving.

When Han Shuo arrived, a group of forest trolls, with the old priest taking the lead, bored down at Han Shuo, yelling the name 'Datara'.

With regards to the race of forest trolls, although Han Shuo's original intention was purely to exploit them, over time, he had grown somewhat sentimental toward them. Except for their innate tendency to plunder and loot, generally speaking, they mostly suited Han Shuo's taste. No matter how cruel they treated others, because of the little skeleton, these forest trolls would treat them with incomparable dedication and good faith.

"Get up." Han Shuo gestured with his hand. After the old priest and his party stood up, Han Shuo said smilingly, "In the future, make sure to be in frequent contact with Trunks. He shall provide you all with wise instruction."

"Rest assured, liaison. Under Lord Trunks' guidance, we have reaped great harvests these several years." A gratified smile blossomed on the

ugly face of the old priest.

Han Shuo nodded. Then, he shot a glance at Elizabeth, encouraging her. “Give it a try, see if you can absorb the divine energy of the Ice Goddess from the Jedefrost Cage.”

“Understood, master!” Elizabeth replied respectfully, wearing an excited look on her face.

Elizabeth, who had been on the run for countless years, deeply realized the importance of her own strength. She understood that if she wanted to better protect herself and ensure her own survival, she had to possess great power. This command of Han Shuo’s directed at her was undoubtedly beneficial to her. With her bewildering body structure, if she could absorb the divine energy in the Jedefrost Cage, her strength would definitely advance one step further.

“Be careful. Inside are all my clan members,” Gilbert, unclear of Elizabeth’s strength, warned when he saw her approaching the cage with excitement.

Elizabeth nodded. When she got beside the Jedefrost Cage, without saying a word, she stretched her hands and grasped at the fences. She closed her eyes to start sensing the energy within the Jedefrost Cage with her Body of Divine Favor.

Han Shuo squinted slightly. What seemed to be lightning flashed through his eye slits as he locked his gaze on Elizabeth.

All of a sudden, Han Shuo saw that Elizabeth turned to a look of exultation. Streams of green smoke began to drift out from her seven orifices. The green smoke, resembling seven earthworms, wrung about at her nostrils, eyes, ears, and mouth. Her already ugly old face looked even more sinister as the green smoke pulsed at her seven orifices.

“Mas...Master, can she do it?” Gilbert took a shock at those bizarre things on Elizabeth’s face. As those imprisoned in the Jedefrost Cage were his grandfather and clansmen, he was terrified that Elizabeth might accidentally injure them.



Han Shuo made a hush gesture at Gilbert, and slowly approached Elizabeth. His immaterial and formless consciousness began probing for any sign of activity in Elizabeth and the Jadenfrost Cage.

Han Shuo could sense that Elizabeth's unique Body of Divine Favor had discovered the reservoir of the Ice Goddess' divine energy in the Jadenfrost Cage. That was also why Elizabeth was suddenly so excited. As the green smoke from her seven orifices curled up, the wrinkled skin on her two hands seemed to have turned severely shrunken and dried up, like two cyan iron hooks.

Her two wizened hands, much like the hands of a thousand year old mummy, glowed with faint green nefarious light. Strands of frigid energy like fine thread flowed gracefully along her two bony hands and into her body. The unique structure of her Body of Divine Favor allowed her to digest the divine energy.

The sinister looking Elizabeth displayed an excited and cheerful emotion in her eyes throughout the process. Strands of divine energy slowly flowed into her body through the conveying of her two hands. She could sense the benefits that the energy could offer her body.

Han Shuo let out a sigh of relief, assured that it was definitely the right decision to take Elizabeth as his slave. Being able to absorb this kind of divine energy, Elizabeth would definitely be of great use to him. While sensing the flowing streams of divine energy, Han Shuo mulled over if he should take away some of the energy she digested for himself after she was done absorbing it.

The frigid aura that constantly lingered around the Jadenfrost Cage was disappearing bit by bit along with Elizabeth's actions. Gilbert who had been observing from the side obviously also felt the changes to the Jadenfrost Cage and was pleasantly surprised. His mood turned much better. Now when he once more look at Elizabeth, that sinister face seemed much more pleasing to the eyes.

Just as Han Shuo and Gilbert both sighed in relief, Elizabeth's face suddenly turned frightened and her body shivered. Intense frosty aura

permeated the air. Elizabeth tried to take out her two hands grabbing at Jedefrost Cage with all her strength, but, as though her hands were attached to the cage with superglue, she couldn't part with the cage no matter how hard she tried.

At the same time, the columns of the Jedefrost Cage suddenly overflowed with bone-chilling white smoke. The temperature in the surroundings began to plummet all the way down. The originally warm village of the forest trolls had seemingly fallen into a world of ice and snow.

Starting at an unknown time, under the caress of chilly cold wind, the entire village of the forest trolls was shrouded in snowflakes. The forest trolls immediately trembled in the cold. One after another, they started to shriek and shout in fear, with absolutely no idea of what was happening.

Han Shuo was terrified. He could clearly sense that there seemed to be a few potent strands of energy being poured into the Jedefrost Cage. The energy came abruptly. Not only did they cause the entire region to all of a sudden become bone-chillingly cold, it even firmly held onto Elizabeth's hands, not letting them budge at the slightest.

It was the dark dragons trapped in the Jedefrost Cage that suffered the most in the arctic atmosphere. Gilges' teeth chattered, the warm air exhaled from his mouth froze instantly. As for the younger dark dragons, the looks on their faces gradually stiffened, as if in just a moment, they would be completely frozen.

"Damnit, what have you done? I will kill you!" Gilbert roared in wrath, his hand already slapping towards Elizabeth. With Gilbert's strength, if he really proceeded, Elizabeth would be dead without a doubt.

"Stop it! It wasn't her!" Han Shuo shouted and raised his hand to stop Gilbert.

Gilbert was jolted by that shout of Han Shuo's. When he once more looked at Elizabeth's face, and saw her frightened and in pain, he returned to his senses. However, as the dark dragons in the cage were gradually turning rigid, Gilbert sank into a state of irascible restlessness. He shouted

anxiously, “What should we do? What should we do?”

“Get everyone to evacuate!” Han Shuo shouted at the trembling old priest, and immediately summoned fire elite zombie. After issuing a command, he arrived behind Elizabeth in a split second and pressed his hand against her back at lightning speed.

Meanwhile, far far away, in the territory of Kasi Empire, at the summit of a frozen mountain encrusted with ice and snow...

On the top of the frozen mountain sat countless palaces made of ice crystals. Among them was a conical shrine that reached through the blue dome of heaven. At the center of that structure were a few Shrine of Ice experts headed by Ice Celestial Corey. They sat cross-legged in a semi-circle at the center of a huge magical array. Their bodies were frozen in ice, causing them to look like ice sculptures with no clear sign of life.

Each of them, Ice Celestial Corey and a few others, wore a solemn, respectful expression as they sat directly facing a huge ice sculpture of their Ice Goddess. Frozen still in ice, they maintained their posture and deployed magic from great distances. Strong and intense cold air filled the entire temple.

“He stepped in!” Suddenly, a shout came from Corey, now an ice sculpture.

“Frost the air, freeze the earth.....”

Except for Corey, the other ice sculptures started to chant in a deep, synchronized chorus. Cold air radiated all around from the main hall, with a solemn aura emanating.

Thousands of miles away, Han Shuo was pressing his two hands on Elizabeth’s shoulders. Demonic yuan surged in from her shoulders to her hands, mixing together with the bone-chilling cold.

Clouds of flames blossomed from the Fire Lotus held in fire elite zombie’s hand and wafted far and near. After the blazes flew out from the Fire Lotus, the interaction between the blazing hot temperatures and the wintry cold air produced thick white vapor that suddenly covered this

world of ice and snow.

After the Fire Lotus was brought out and the clouds of flames fluttered about, the temperature in the entire village finally halted its rapid fall. The forest trolls, whose movements were slowed down by the coldness, gradually grew somewhat faster in their escape.

The entire family of dark dragons, whose bodies just froze in the Jadenfrost cage, with the help of the flames from fire elite zombie's Fire Lotus, the ice rapidly melted into water. Only then, did the chattering noise of Gilges' teeth continue to sound.

With Han Shuo's two hands pressed on Elizabeth's shoulders, demonic yuan rapidly surged into her palm. Han Shuo deployed the Mystical Glacial Spellfire to the fullest, producing a scorching temperature in order to help her withstand the assault of cold air coming from the columns.

Through the cold air erupting at Elizabeth's palm, Han Shuo sensed the divine energy activated by Ice Celestial Corey. He could be absolutely certain that the sudden changes happening to the Jadenfrost Cage must have had something to do with Ice Celestial Corey.

Han Shuo also understood that this Jadenfrost Cage, blessed by the Ice Goddess, must have had some sort of fantastical ability that allowed direct linkage to Ice Celestial Corey and the others. It seems that this time Han Shuo had fallen into Corey's ruse. Perhaps, the reason Corey so rapidly departed the dark dragons' canyon, unconcerned with the disappearance of the Jadenfrost Cage, was that he had planned to scheme against Han Shuo with it all along.

While he cursed at Corey's viciousness and ruthlessness in his heart, a steady flow of demonic yuan in his body wildly transformed into scorching red hot flames by means of the Mystical Glacial Spellfire, helping Elizabeth to resist the assail of the cold air coming from the Jadenfrost Cage at all costs.

It wasn't that Han Shuo cared if Elizabeth lived or died. It's just that even if Elizabeth died at this moment, the frigid aura in the Jadenfrost Cage would not disappear. In addition, having Elizabeth standing in between

was definitely safer than having Han Shuo himself be in direct contact with the cage to contain the cold air.

“Cold, so cold!” Elizabeth could finally speak despite her chattering chompers after Han Shuo poured in his demonic yuan.

“Hang in there!” Han Shuo groaned coldly. He cast away all distracting thoughts and strenuously persisted with furrowed brows.

Under the effects of the rapidly plummeting temperatures, certain older and younger forest trolls, before the flames from fire elite zombie could warm them up, froze to death in the bone-chilling cold. The entire village of forest trolls were shrouded in fear. With the old priest roaring, every forest troll still alive fled in panic towards the outside of the village.

The fire elite zombie was still tirelessly releasing blazes with the Fire Lotus in his hand, strenuously persevering just like Han Shuo was. Although Gilbert’s duty was the least tedious, he was also the most terrified and restless of them all. Standing beside the fire elite zombie, although Gilbert was shivering in the cold, he still managed to hang on.

Looking at the gloomy faces of his clansmen trapped in the Jedefrost Cage, Gilbert understood that once fire elite zombie and Han Shuo could no longer hang on, his people would face the fate of being frozen to death. This made Gilbert very anxious, but unfortunately there was nothing that he could do to help. All he could do was to firmly observe the Jedefrost Cage by the side, and hate the Shrine of Ice with a burning passion.

“Father, it won’t do if we stay like this!” Suddenly, the fire elite zombie transmitted.

The cold air coming from the Jedefrost Cage grew more and more vigorous. Han Shuo also gradually felt he was losing strength, and realized that the fire elite zombie was right. Just as Han Shuo was clueless as to what to do, the fire elite zombie continued, “Father, let’s take the battle to my birthplace, then I will have a way to deal with this!”

The place of extreme fire! Han Shuo’s eyes beamed when he heard fire elite zombie’s words.

# Chapter 474: A Cruel Decision

As both of them were located in the Dark Forest, the distance between the forest trolls' village and the place of extreme fire wasn't too long. Han Shuo immediately took action to implement fire elite zombie's suggestion.

"Gilbert, transform into dragon form!" Han Shuo instructed the anxious dark dragon.

Without the slightest hesitation, Gilbert let out a roar and soared into the sky. His body extended and expanded rapidly. In the blink of an eye, his humanoid body transformed into a humongous thirty-meter-long dark dragon.

With Elizabeth's two hands stuck to the Jadenfrost Cage, Han Shuo grabbed Elizabeth by her shoulders and soared to the sky along with the Jadenfrost Cage. Gilbert's meandering body dived downward, just in time to catch Han Shuo on his back.

"Wooo.....Cold! So cold!" When the Jadenfrost Cage subsequently made contact with Gilbert's back, the freezing cold energy automatically flowed into his body, causing his dragon body to lightly shiver.

Han Shuo creased his brows. Then, he flexed his muscles and lifted Elizabeth to the air, along with the Jadenfrost Cage. Although doing so meant that Han Shuo would have to spend some more demonic yuan, he could ensure that the Jadenfrost Cage wasn't in direct contact with Gilbert's body.

"Fly low and let fire elite zombie up. Then immediately fly towards the region where we came across the Lord of the Flames!" Han Shuo instructed Gilbert as he held Elizabeth and the Jadenfrost Cage high up.

"Understood!" The dark dragon made a loop and shot down, causing a turbulence of chilling wind and the snowflakes that layered the ground.

Fire elite zombie, who had been on standby, suddenly launched himself to the sky after a sprint, and landed steadily on the back of dark dragon Gilbert. He took another two steps to the Jadenfrost Cage and continued

releasing blazes into the cage, warming up the dark dragons whose bodies were again beginning to freeze.

With everything in place, dark dragon Gilbert identified the directions, and flew towards the place of extreme fire at the fastest he could.

Standing on Gilbert, Han Shuo watched the ground below him as the forest trolls' village filled with arctic atmosphere. The small ponds, which were their water source, froze into ice before their eyes. All the forest trolls were terrified, trembling as they fled this world of ice and snow with all their might.

Many forest troll warriors carried their frozen children along, crying and mourning. Some of the older forest trolls lay sprawled on the ground, their frail bodies now popsicles and without a trace of life. Before the fire elite zombie could come to their rescue, they had left the world for the rest of eternity.

Looking at the hundreds of dead forest trolls, Han Shuo's heart was filled with remorse. He realized that this catastrophe that struck the forest trolls was his fault. Of these faithful, true forest trolls who had served him over the years, a tragic portion of the old, young, sick and disabled lost their lives to the icy cold.

Shrine of Ice! There will be no reconciliation between us!

Han Shuo roared in his mind. The demonic yuan in his body unceasingly flowed towards Elizabeth's arm and transformed into heat energy to resist the onslaught of the cold.

Although the distance from the forest troll village to the place of extreme fire wasn't too large, Han Shuo and the fire elite zombie felt as though the journey was endless. As Han Shuo had tremendous reserves of demonic yuan, he could still struggle on.

The fire elite zombie, however, started to reveal obvious symptoms of weariness and fatigue. Han Shuo could tell that from the flickering red light of the Fire Lotus.

The Fire Lotus, a treasure of fire attribute nurtured from the place of

extreme fire, contained an incomparably enormous energy of fire. So long as the fire elite zombie could support it with his strength, in theory, he could always make use of the energy stored in the Fire Lotus. However, it hadn't been long since fire elite zombie was born. It was already rather difficult for him to sustain until then given his current strength.

Most significantly, it was the energy of extreme cold that the fire elite zombie was resisting this time! As the saying goes, fire and ice don't mix. Therefore, when resisting the icy energy, the antithesis of fire, the fire elite zombie needed to expend more energy than usual. To add to that, some of the Shrine of Ice experts jointly assaulted the Jadenfrost Cage with cold air so that the fire elite zombie would more quickly reveal signs of weariness.

Thousands of miles away in the Shrine of Ice...

Meanwhile, a group of Shrine of Ice experts lead by Ice Celestial Corey appeared calm and unruffled. Corey the Ice Celestial, in particular, even revealed a cold smile as though victory was within grasp. He seemed absolutely contented with his operation this time.

Humph! Merely a puny city lord. How dare he came head to head with us Shrine of Ice! Corey sneered in his heart while frozen in ice. He had already found out of Han Shuo's identity. Soon afterwards, with extreme confidence, he said, "In just a short while, we will freeze them all to death. Everyone keep it up!"

"Rest assured Lord Corey. With our cooperation, they are certainly doomed!" said a sacred grade magus.

"Lord Corey is truly insightful. This time, that Bryan won't be able to escape the calamity. When he dies an ice sculpture, I'm certain the Church of Light will be very grateful for our assistance!" Another sacred grade magus also found free time to speak and took the opportunity to praise Ice Celestial Corey.

"We don't want Church of Light's gratitude. Humph, we Shrine of Ice shall be the number one religion on the continent! By killing this Bryan, who they couldn't do anything about, we can incidentally prove them so!" Corey proclaimed.



“Lord Corey is right. We Shrine of Ice, as the messenger for the Ice Goddess on Profound Continent, should not be forever pressed under the Church of Light!” the magus immediately corrected his previous remark.

“Alright. Let us push harder, and freeze them all to death in one spurt of energy!” Corey softly shouted and did not continue to give more superfluous words.

The other few who did not talk simultaneously responded in agreement. Soon after, cold air pervaded their bodies. Strands of exceedingly cold aura passed through a mysterious magical array, which were then transmitted to the Dark Forest thousands of miles away.

“Father, I, I can’t hang on much longer!” fire elite zombie, who had been continuously sending out flames from the Fire Lotus, suddenly transmitted to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo could feel the sudden surge of cold air emanating from the Jedefrost Cage. He also felt that it was becoming harder to resist as he ceaselessly infused demonic yuan to Elizabeth’s two hands.

At that moment, the flames in the Fire Lotus were no longer bright and radiant. With the yuan energy of fire in fire elite zombie being consumed bit by bit, over time, it was drained to the brink of complete exhaustion. Elizabeth’s two hands turned purple in the cold. Her Body of Divine Favor couldn’t withstand the assault of such an enormous amount of cold energy. The few cyclones in her body gradually halted their conversion of energy.

However, they had, at that point, only made it halfway to their destination. At dark dragon Gilbert’s speed, they still needed over ten minutes to reach the place of extreme fire. If the circumstances continued, Han Shuo reckoned that before reaching the place of extreme fire, the fire elite zombie would succumb and be seriously injured, while Elizabeth and all the dark dragons in the cage would be frozen to death.

Han Shuo grew extremely anxious. What a pity that he himself already found it exceptionally hard to soldier on, and absolutely did not have an extra hand to assist in any aspect. If Han Shuo were to deploy the Art of

the Demonic Ninth Heavens to the fullest, he could have been much faster than dark dragon Gilbert. Unfortunately, at present, he needed to hold the Jedefrost Cage up high while unceasingly withstanding the assault of cold air with demonic yuan, so his hands were all tied.

The innermost part of his heart was crammed with a dispirited emotion. Han Shuo racked every inch of his brain but couldn't find a way.

"Gilbert, speed up! If you don't get us to the place of extreme fire in five minutes, your grandpa and all your clansmen will perish because of you!" Han Shuo was at his wit's end, and could only tell Gilbert the circumstances as they were.

Han Shuo had made up his mind in secret that, by the time it all went south, he would cut off Elizabeth's two hands, and give up on the race of dark dragons. Although he was unwilling to abandon them, he really couldn't find a better alternative.

When Han Shuo finished those words, Gilbert let out a miserable howl. As his wretched howl sounded, the veins and arteries on his dragon body suddenly ruptured, causing fresh blood to burst out from his body, which fell like fine rain droplets.

At the same time, Gilbert's already lightning fast airspeed, suddenly doubled. Like black lightning streaking across the sky, he flew directly towards the place of extreme fire.

"No!" patriarch of dark dragons Gilbert bellows himself hoarse. He made a great effort to move his shivering body, with his two hands grabbing at the arctic cold columns, and yelled, "Little scoundrel, stop it now! Stop it! We are already hopeless. You are the only hope of the dark dragons, you must not die!"

As Gilbert's master, Han Shuo could clearly sense Gilbert's life force slowly draining away. At Gilbert's grandfather's yell, he realized what Gilbert was doing – activating his fullest potential in exchange for his vitality, as to save the race of dark dragons!

"Gilbert! Stop it!" Han Shuo suddenly yelled.

Elizabeth and the race of dark dragons weren't nearly as close to Han Shuo as Gilbert was. Han Shuo could watch the dozen or so dark dragons freeze to death, or cut off Elizabeth's hands without the slightest hesitation, but he couldn't watch Gilbert die from overdrafting his vitality!

Yet, towards Gilges and Han Shuo's shouting their heads off, dark dragon Gilbert turned a deaf ear, and flew towards the place of extreme fire with all his strength. In Gilbert's lantern-sized pupils, only a resolution to save his kind that even death couldn't stop could be seen.

"Gilbert, if you don't stop, I will immediately step aside!" Han Shuo shouted sorrowfully and angrily stamped his feet on Gilbert back. He could feel Gilbert's vitality washing away.

Gilbert's enormous body trembled. "Master, I beg you, please grant me this!" Sensing Han Shuo's fury, Gilbert finally talked. His simple, honest voice no longer contained a trace of his sloppy attitude, but was solemn and serious.

After a short pause, he continued in a deep voice, "Master, I'm honored to have had the privilege of following you. For so many years, during my days with you, I was very happy! It's true! Goodbye master. Even in death, I will never forget all the joys and fun I had with you!"

As Gilbert flew rapidly, his vitality too was draining away rapidly.

Han Shuo understood that Gilbert was offering his life in exchange for saving the race of dark dragons.

Even though Han Shuo felt indescribable grief in his heart as he sensed Gilbert losing his vitality, wishing to immediately sever Elizabeth's hands and abandon the dark dragons, Gilbert's plead was incomparably staunch and resolute, with simply no room for Han Shuo to reject.

He knew that he could not refuse this wish of Gilbert's. Therefore, he did not stop Gilbert anymore.

As Gilbert's downcast tone of farewell sounded in his ears, scene after scene replayed in Han Shuo's mind...

"Don't hesitate, think about it. If I become your servant, I can help you

kill people, burn things, and fly everywhere and take out your enemies. As my master, you only need to give me treasure and beauties to enjoy. What a good business deal this is.”

“I can compromise if you don’t have treasure, but I must have beauties to sleep with, or I won’t do it!”

When he first met Gilbert, before becoming Han Shuo’s magical pet, Gilbert had some funny requests...

“Uh... my mighty, handsome, amazing, noble master, what... what do you want to do? Are you planning on hitting your cutest, most loyal, most honest, and most humble Gilbert? Um...”

“No! Absolutely not! I can’t fight my master with you guys! Not even if I die!”

In the forbidden ground, facing against Han Shuo who had entered demonic stupor, Gilbert stood foolishly, not knowing what to do, and stared blankly at Han Shuo, and waited for Han Shuo’s hundred-meter-long sword radiance to hammer down on him like a fool...

As those dribs and drabs of scenes of his past interactions with Gilbert replayed in the back of his mind over and over, tears began to inadvertently overflow from the rims of Han Shuo’s eyes.

“Nooo!!” Gilges made a long bawl and collapsed from the grief.

Beside Gilges, each and every one of the remaining dark dragons stared at Gilbert below them in disbelief. They recalled that naughty little dragon that never ceased to stir trouble in the valley, always breaking the tranquility, and always nagged about leaving home. When they again looked at this Gilbert, who offered his life in exchange for theirs, they couldn’t associate the two together no matter how.

Finally, with the increased flying speed, the price being Gilbert’s own life, before the fire elite zombie completely exhausted all his energy, Gilbert’s huge body, drenched with blood, descended into the ravine where the place of extreme fire was located.

It was also at this moment, Han Shuo understood that Gilbert’s

condition had passed the point of no return. All his life force had been drained away in the process.

“Grandpa, take care of yourself! Master, thank you. I will always remember you!” Gilbert said those last words after falling into the ravine. His massive dragon head fell. Not a trace of life could be sensed in his body.

Han Shuo’s eyes were brimming with hot tears. Standing on his dragon body, Gilbert’s very last words echoed in his ears. His mind was filled with all the memories he had with Gilbert....

“Father, keep his soul!” At that moment, from the distant netherworld, little skeleton’s anxious message suddenly arrived.

# Chapter 475: CounterAttack

At little skeleton's reminder, Han Shuo immediately came to his senses and stabilized his frame of mind. He focused up his consciousness, and sensed Gilbert's yet-to-dissipate soul in an instance.

The Demonslayer Edge suddenly flew out from Han Shuo's body and generated an intensely strong suction power. Gilbert's unscattered soul was drawn to it. In a split second, he flowed into the Demonslayer Edge.

Although the Demonslayer Edge temporarily couldn't assist Han Shuo in battle, absorbing one soul wasn't a problem. As the master of Demonslayer Edge, Han Shuo could even establish a region within the Demonslayer Edge specially for Gilbert where he could take refuge.

Han Shuo dispelled his sorrow. He suddenly recalled that the demonic arts and necromancy magic, his forte, were sinister arts the righteous despised. Whether it was demonic arts or necromancy magic, they provided the practitioner with extreme proficiency towards souls.

Han Shuo only thought to himself for the shortest moment before realizing that, regardless of whether he utilized demonic arts or necromancy magic, by making use of Gilbert's mighty soul, he could rebuild his physical body and have him revived. As long as Gilbert's soul remained, he wasn't completely gone.

With that in mind, the grief which Gilbert brought to Han Shuo weakened a great deal. After the Demonslayer Edge returned into Han Shuo's body, Han Shuo took one look at fire elite zombie and found fire elite zombie almost at the point of complete exhaustion. He immediately knew that he could not hesitate a moment longer.

The cold air in the Jedefrost Cage was as chilling as usual. At the moment, the demonic yuan that once filled Han Shuo's body from top to toe was drained to his knees. Yet, the energy being unleashed from the Jedefrost Cage still seemed infinite and everlasting. This left Han Shuo with the realization that the opponent had definitely surpassed them in terms of endurance.

“Move!” Han Shuo shouted and descended straight towards a narrow slit in the lavafall.

Before Han Shuo made it near the lava chink, the whole ravine suddenly started to tremble. Blazing high temperatures soared ever higher and higher. Fierce magma shot out like geysers.

All of a sudden, a strong feeling of longing filled the entire ravine, like a grief-stricken mother bitterly awaiting her long lost child’s return and finally finding him at the doorsteps.

“She, she knows I’m back!” fire elite zombie was pleasantly surprised and transmitted to Han Shuo. He too seemed overjoyed.

Han Shuo finally arrived at the gap in the lavafall. He deployed a protection shield, enveloping Elizabeth and the cage, and descended further down.

While climbing down, as the refiner of the fire elite zombie, Han Shuo could clearly feel that fire elite zombie was communicating with the Lord of the Flames down below. Upon arriving in this region, along with the climbing temperatures, the exhausted fire elite zombie started to restore bit by bit.

Fierce blazes violently roared all around them. Fiery bubbles popped up from the place of extreme fire. Terrifyingly high temperatures filled the area surrounding them.

Suddenly, a thunderous roar came from the place of extreme fire. When Han Shuo looked down, he discovered that the enormous body of the Lord of the Flames was slowly emerging from there. On the cliffs nearby, countless Scorching Demon Warriors were raised at an unknown time. Their eyes trailed Han Shuo and his party, who were gradually descending.

Upon sensing Han Shuo on the alert, fire elite zombie hastily transmitted to him, “Father, don’t be worried. She will help me!”

“Okay, it’s all up to you now!” Han Shuo trusted the fire elite zombie very much. When the fire elite zombie reassured him that there wouldn’t be a problem, he immediately let go of his worries.

Right after Han Shuo said those words, fire elite zombie, holding his Fire Lotus, landed on the body of the Lord of the Flames that just emerged from the place of extreme fire. Fire elite zombie then sat on the wide shoulders of the Lord of the Flames. Unending streams of energy were suddenly released from the Lord of the Flames. A dozen or so streams of magma even spewed from her mouth. Like fiery silk, they all wrapped around the Jedefrost Cage.

Simultaneously, the place of extreme fire, which had existed for who knew how long, and that even nurtured the treasure of fire attribute – the Fire Lotus – suddenly seemed to come alive. Thousands and thousands of strands of yuan energy of fire flowed into fire elite zombie's body. In no time, the fire elite zombie was restored with all the energy he previously exhausted.

The Fire Lotus suddenly exploded with magnificent rays. Under the manipulation of fire elite zombie, it mobilized the enormous yuan energy of fire in the place of extreme fire, sending out small clouds of flames that fluttered their way onto the Jedefrost Cage.

Han Shuo immediately felt the pressure on him greatly reduce. After such actions by fire elite zombie and the Lord of the Flames, the piercing cold of the Jedefrost Cage was all being used to resist the onslaught of the flames. Han Shuo no longer needed to continue resisting with excessive use of his demonic arts. Even Elizabeth and the dark dragons whose bodies were almost frozen stiff recovered in the heat of the place of extreme fire.

Thousands of miles away at the Shrine of Ice...

“Not good! There's an intense energy of fire pouring into it. What's going on?” that sacred grade magus that had been licking Ice Celestial Corey's ass, suddenly made a huge change in expression and cried out in surprise.

The previously calm, unruffled faces of the experts of the Shine of Ice were replaced with solemn expressions. Each and everyone of them casted their gazes on Ice Celestial Corey, their leader.



Even Ice Celestial Corey took a shock. Through some kind of mysterious connection, he also felt the changes to the Jedefrost Cage located in the Dark Forest. That energy which deepened all of a sudden revealed itself to be the most scorching energy of flames. As far as the Shrine of Ice was concerned, such fiery energy was what they most loathed, and also the most thorny energy to handle.

The sudden surge of this incomparably mighty energy completely disrupted Ice Celestial Corey's calmness. Under the attentive gazes of his subordinates, Corey pressingly turned over in his mind to come up with a countermeasure while trying to determine the source of the fiery energy that suddenly appeared.

After quite a while, Corey spoke again, "It must be them making a comeback at death's door. As long as we go all-out to withstand this wave of attack, they won't have any more energy to resist!"

"Lord Corey, if this turns out not to be their final push before they die, and we exert all our strength to resist this wave of attack, if, and this is completely hypothetical, by any chance, their strength exceeds our's combined, it would be very difficult for us to retreat by then," another sacred magus of the Shrine of Ice suddenly weighed in.

After letting out a cold groan, Ice Celestial Corey said, "There are no mistakes in my judgement. Even if another entity steps in, with so many experts from our Shrine of Ice cooperating, how many in the whole of Profound Continent can withstand us? Be at ease. This time I will be exerting all my strength, and undoubtedly will freeze them all to death in one go!"

Seeing that Ice Celestial Corey was somewhat displeased, the others did not raise any more objections. Corey's ego was infamous in the Shrine of Ice. He was a man who would never listen to others' opinions. Once he made his decision, all that one could do was wholeheartedly execute his plans with no questions asked about whether his decision was right or wrong.

Under Corey's command, the strongest few of the Shrine of Ice, using the

mysterious magical array, began to release the divine energy from their bodies with all their strengths, intending to get rid of Han Shuo and the others located far in the place of extreme fire once and for all through the Jedefrost Cage blessed by Ice Goddess.

Back at the Dark Forest, in the place of extreme fire...

“Master, what do we do? What should I do?” Elizabeth, who could finally talk, shouted frenetically.

“Maintain this state and hush. This time it won’t be us that will have headache!” Han Shuo insisted before ceasing to respond to Elizabeth.

The inexhaustible yuan energy of fire in the place of extreme fire, through the two existences of fire elite zombie and the Lord of the Flames, poured onto the Jedefrost Cage. Scorching heat filled the entire region. The patriarch of dark dragons, Gilges, finally awoke from his fainting due to the roasting heat.

“Foolish little one, where is Gilbert that silly thing? Where is my grandson?” After Gilges woke up, he anxiously looked everywhere for Gilbert.

“Patriarch, Gilbert is..... he’s dead!” a dark dragon sighed sorrowfully with teary eyes.

“Ahhh.....”

As grief attacked into his heart, Gilges let out a mournful bawl.

At this moment, the party from the distant Shrine of Ice launched a ferocious counterattack. Cold, frosty air increased three folds and overflowed from the columns of the Jedefrost Cage and made contact with the high temperatures of the place of extreme fire, which, in an instant, produced thick smoke that covered Gilges and the others.

The extreme frigidity, like water in a collapsed dam, violently gushed towards Elizabeth’s body through her two hands. Han Shuo was startled, and hastily concentrated all his attention, wildly sending his remaining demonic yuan into Elizabeth’s two hands.

“Arhhh... That hurts!”

Elizabeth let out an agonizing shriek that sounded like a pig being slaughtered. Red, white, and green lights radiated from her two hands. In a moment, it would be frigid cold, in another, it would be scorching hot. When these two opposing energy forces collided, she felt pain that she had never felt before.

Previously, as Elizabeth’s body was frozen stiff by the cold, the pain wasn’t as difficult to bear as her body was numbed. But now, with the ice thawed, the pain became much more distinct and tormenting.

At that moment, Han Shuo couldn’t attend to Elizabeth at all. As he unceasingly deployed his demonic yuan to congeal and form flames on Elizabeth’s two hands, his consciousness suddenly felt something faintly from the Jadenfrost Cage. When he concentrated, Han Shuo’s consciousness seemed to sense a few presences from an extremely distant place. It was as though some kind of miraculous connection bound together the Jadenfrost Cage with some sort of energy from that distance place.

Suddenly, it became clear to Han Shuo. The presences that his consciousness felt on the Jadenfrost Cage was a trace of the souls of Ice Celestial Corey and his party. If they were to transmit their energy onto the Jadenfrost Cage through this mysterious method, their mental strength had to be highly concentrated. Therefore, through this mysterious connection, Han Shuo’s mighty consciousness could faintly sense them.

Just as Han Shuo comprehended those thoughts, the Jadenfrost Cage again burst out with ten times the coldness. Thick smoke enveloped the air of the entire place of extreme fire. Even the fiery threads that the Lord of the Flames had spat out were rapidly solidifying.

The Lord of the Flames seemed to have never met with such a thorny problem. Suddenly, irritated, she raised her head and let out a roar. The entire ravine, including the place of extreme fire, seemed to reverberate with her roar.

All of a sudden, the magma in the place of extreme fire bubbled up. As a

counterattack from the angered Lord of the Flames, yuan energy of fire that were nurtured in this place of extreme fire over tens of thousands years converged and travelled along the fiery line shooting from the mouth of the Lord of the Flames to the Jedefrost Cage.

Fire elite zombie leapt head-on into the place of extreme fire. The Fire Lotus in his hand instantly mustered the terrifying energy within the place of extreme fire. The Fire Lotus no longer let out clouds of flames, but with fire elite zombie's hurling, carrying boundless energy of fire, bashed towards the Jedefrost Cage. "Father, be careful!" fire elite zombie's message arrived subsequently.

Han Shuo understood that the battle had now come to its most critical moment. He gathered all his attention. Even his mighty consciousness which had been meticulously hiding from the six-horned Soul Race tribal king, with no misgivings whatsoever, fully unfolded to firmly lock onto the souls attached to the Jedefrost Cage.

"Hang in there, they will be done for in no time!" within the Shine of Ice far far away, Ice Celestial Corey exclaimed.

Everyone there put forth their greatest strength. The divine energy which they obtained from the Ice Goddess for their piousness, like runaway horses, rushed into the Jedefrost Cage a great distance away.

Rumbles...

When the Fire Lotus bombarded on the Jedefrost Cage, a terrifying sound could be heard. Clouds of flames hopped out from the Fire Lotus and attached themselves onto the columns.

The dark dragons inside the Jedefrost Cage took a jolt. The young lady even spat out a mouthful of blood. She seemed to be injured by the sudden jerk.

When the Lord of the Flames unleashed all her strength, the fiery threads attached to Jedefrost Cage gushed forth with seemingly inexhaustible energy. Even more white smoke spread in every direction.

"They're too powerful! Lord Corey, I can't resist anymore!" the sacred

magus who had been praising Corey shouted, frightened.

With fire elite zombie and Lord of the Flames cooperating to harness the energy that had been in the place of extreme fire for millions and millions of years, they utterly crushed all those of the Shrine of Ice. The Jedefrost Cage began to gradually melt under the scorching heat.

Through Elizabeth's two hands, Han Shuo was able to see that Ice Celestial Corey and his party were incapable of enduring any longer. Han Shuo's consciousness even felt that the few presences that had shrouded the Jedefrost Cage all along were fading away by the second.

It was at this moment that Han Shuo, who had been waiting for the right moment, suddenly made a move. While they were all frantically resisting the counterattack of the flames, all of Han Shuo's mental strength, his consciousness included, pounded at that few souls like sharp sword.

"Pfff....."

The group of experts in the Shrine of Ice, including Ice Celestial Corey, oozed streams of blood from their mouths. They felt as though their souls were hacked into pieces and sustained heavy damages.

With that, they no longer had any energy to resist. The Jedefrost Cage shattered with a loud crash. Thereafter, not a trace of frigid energy could be sensed at this place of extreme fire.

Elizabeth's two hands were freed. Han Shuo arrested her fall without hassle. The entire race of dark dragons were just set free from their incarceration. Although they had yet to fully recover, they were still able to hover in mid air with minimal effort. Not one fell into the place of extreme fire beneath them.

Thousands of miles away at the Shine of Ice...

Corey and the others, who were still frozen like ice sculptures, exploded from the ice and shot out. Ice Celestial Corey's body even flung into a distance, dripping with fresh blood all over.

The Shrine of Ice, enveloped in arctic cold all year long, was suddenly assaulted with a puff of warm air. This lofty, majestic shrine constructed

out of ice crystals was being reduced to a lifeless body of water.

Disciples who were practicing martial arts and water magic in the Shine of Ice suddenly perceived high temperatures which they instinctively loathed and feared. Great frowns marred their faces as they tried to look for the source of the heat in alarm. Soon, they discovered that the largest shrine that housed the sculpture of their Ice Goddess for them to consecrate was also slowly thawing.

Such a thing had never taken place for the last millenniums. This phenomenon, to those in the Shine of Ice, was seen as more threatening than even demons ascending from the gates of hell. They were panic-stricken and terrified with no clue of what happened.

Could it be that the Ice Goddess had abandoned them?

While the Shrine of Ice fell into tumult it had never seen for thousands of years, Han Shuo let out a sigh of relief. But he soon took a shock, gazing at the Lord of the Flames in the place of extreme fire underneath him with an unimaginable expression.

All he saw was that the gargantuan Lord of the Flames, whose body was cast with magma, iron, and stones, was undergoing a shocking transformation. Chunk after chunk of stone as red as branding iron eroded from it in the thunderous roar of the Lord of the Flames. An insurmountable amount of energy was erupting from her body.

Gradually, as the titanic body of the Lord of the Flames swayed, her body grew in size. The lava from all over the place of extreme fire flooded into her like river rapids, seemingly supplying her with tremendous amounts of energy nourished by the place of extreme fire since the beginning of time.

Right before Han Shuo's eyes, the Lord of the Flames first grew wildly huge, her body almost filled the place of extreme fire. But after a while, the rocks on her body were shaken out rapidly. While lava watered down, her body then started to shrink bit by bit.

Han Shuo looked towards the Lord of the Flames without blinking. He sensed that as her body became smaller, the energy inside her grew even more powerful. Soon after, strands of fiery rays burst out from her body.

She was like a miniature sun, radiating light so glaring that one would be convinced their eyelids were transparent.

“Hahaha, I have finally evolved! Finally evolved!” With Han Shuo watching attentively, the Lord of the Flames, dazzling with red light, released a belly laugh. Gradually, the red light faded, revealing a plump middle-aged woman with red skin before Han Shuo.

# Chapter 476: Not Born by Me and You!

Looking at that plump woman dancing and gesticulating for her joy, Han Shuo was momentarily dazed.

In his eyes, no matter how he tried, he couldn't find a way to associate this ordinary looking, rotund, middle-aged woman with thoroughly rosy skin, with that tremendously bulky Lord of the Flames. But having witnessed the whole transformational process with his very own eyes, Han Shuo knew that this woman was indeed the Lord of the Flames.

Most often than not, super-ranked magical beasts had the capability to transform into human forms. For mighty races like the dragons, they would already possess such transformation ability at just rank one. However, a subset of super-ranked creatures would be subjected to certain natural limitations for their rather unique body structures. For those creatures, In order to possess such morphing ability, they needed to evolve to an extremely high ranking.

The Lord of the Flames was one such magical creature. Her body was mainly composed of magma and volcanic rocks instead of flesh and bones, entirely different from what a regular magical beast would have. Therefore, to transform into human form, for their kind, they needed to be of extremely high level.

From the moment the Lord of the Flames transformed into that fat woman, Han Shuo knew that she had broken through her shackles, and evolved to the fifth stage to be the Emperor of the Flames. A fifth-stage Emperor of the Flames is the same as a human demigod existence, a mighty existence that would surely cause anyone on the Profound Continent to be terror-stricken at just the mention of their name.

After the Emperor of the Flames morphed, she seemed to be quite intrigued with this new ability she just gained. She would pat on her chest in one moment, and rub her shoulders in another, all while laughing heartily.

“Little scoundrel, this was all thanks to you!” the Emperor of the Flames



chuckled and pointed at the fire elite zombie swimming inside the place of extreme fire. By rolling the lava to induce a current, she propelled the fire elite zombie in front of her, and grabbed him while chuckling heartily. With great delight, she then moved and danced with the fire elite zombie as though he were a toy.

Han Shuo was shocked. He stared blankly at the Emperor of the Flames ravaging the fire elite zombie, not knowing what would be the best course of action.

After a long while, the fat lady seemed to have had enough of playing, and finally put down the fire elite zombie. Chucklingly, she said, "Always looking for trouble for me. But luckily thanks to this trouble, I could break through this thousand-year shackle, and reach the level five realm!"

Without the fat lady also known as the Emperor of the Flames's violating, the fire elite zombie stood well on the magma of the place of extreme fire. With his two hands gesticulating, he used the energy of his soul to communicate with the Emperor of the Flames, "Mother, that's awesome! You are now just as good-looking as I am!"

Mother? Han Shuo was stupefied. With his jaw on the floor, he stared foolishly at the fire elite zombie and the fat lady communicating. For a moment, his heart felt incomparably sullen.

As early as the moment fire elite zombie was first planted at the place of extreme fire, Han Shuo was aware that the Emperor of the Flames treated fire elite zombie as her very own children. Because of the presence of yuan energy of fire, the fire elite zombie acknowledged the Emperor of the Flames as his mother, and certainly regarded her as his mother.

However, at the time, Han Shuo had yet to consider the fire elite zombie as his own son, and the fire elite zombie had yet to start addressing Han Shuo as father. But starting some time ago, unconsciously, Han Shuo did begin to regard fire elite zombie as his own son. He even grew accustomed to the fire elite zombie calling him father.

However, now that the fire elite zombie addressed the Emperor of the Flames as mother, and Han Shuo as father, looking at the obese middle

aged woman before him, he suddenly felt a chill that made his hair to stand on end.

Han Shuo's scalp went numb. Listening to their conversation, the fire elite zombie flatly calling the Emperor of the Flames his 'Mother', and referring to Han Shuo as 'Father', he couldn't help but visualize certain rather terrifying scenes in his mind.

Too... too awful!! Han Shuo seemed to have thought of something, his expression turned incredibly ugly.

"Oi, young man over there, are you the father to my son?" Just as Han Shuo's imagination ran wild, the fat middle aged woman yelled at Han Shuo.

"Are you the father to my son?" Those words sent shivers down Han Shuo's spine. Putting on a smile even more unsightly than crying, he hastily replied, "Not, not born by me and you!"

When Han Shuo said those words, he really wished to slap himself across his face. The more he panicked, the more incoherent his speech got. His look grew even uglier. He had never faced such an embarrassing situation for years.

"Nonsense, of course I know you and I did not give birth to him!" the Emperor of the Flames carefreely berated Han Shuo. She seemed like a rather shrew woman, with no shame whatsoever. She then added, "Moreover, I cannot give birth! Yah, and needless to say, you can't either no, can ya!"

"Father, my mother can now transform into human form. She wants to leave this place and experience the outside world!" fire elite zombie transmitted to Han Shuo. Afterwards, fire elite zombie felt that Han Shuo's mind was in disorderly. Concerned, he asked, "Father, what's wrong? Why are you so frenetic?"

"Noth-nothing!" Han Shuo replied hurriedly.

"Ever since I learned of this good place, I have always remained here to accumulate more energy and evolve. It has been such a long time that I've

lost count of how many years have passed. And now, finally, I can transform into human form, good time to see and experience the outside world,” the fat lady cut in as she looked at Han Shuo.

“Oh... That’s good. The human world is indeed fascinating. With your appearance now, ordinary persons will definitely not look upon you as a non-human. Given your valiant strength, you can travel anywhere on this Profound Continent,” Han Shuo replied to the Emperor of the Flames.

All of a sudden, Han Shuo was startled. It was only now that the Emperor of the Flames’ formidable demigod strength crossed his mind. Notwithstanding the chills he got from fire elite zombie’s addressing them as father and mother, this Emperor of the Flames of demigod strength would not turn against him owing to fire elite zombie. If he could make use of Emperor of the Flames’ strength to assist himself, this would undoubtedly be an invaluable boost to him.

Thus, right after he spoke those words, and before the Emperor of the Flames could respond, Han Shuo hastily invited her, “I’m familiar with the human world. Why not come over and visit our Lancelot Empire, and observe the differences between the world of mankind and the world of magical beasts.”

“Ah sure, I don’t have any specific destination anyway. I was planning to wander around and go wherever that takes me,” the fat lady straightforwardly agreed to Han Shuo’s proposal, much to Han Shuo’s surprise. After thinking for a moment, she grabbed the fire elite zombie before saying to Han Shuo, “Let’s go up first.”

“Oh, Okay!” Han Shuo replied. He then turned his gaze to the dark dragons, who were also dumbstruck staring at the Emperor of the Flames below them, and said, “Let’s go. Get to the top of the ravine first. We’ll discuss everything later.”

“Bryan, is Gilbert, is that naughty little one, is he dead?” Gilges, patriarch of dark dragons, recovered his energy little by little after escaping from the cage. At level four of the evolutionary ladder, he could completely adapt to the high temperature over there without the slightest discomfort.

However, from his face, it was obvious that he was in deep pain, pain that seemingly could never be unknotted.

When Gilbert was mentioned, Han Shuo couldn't help but again feel sorrow in his heart. But in contrast to before, as he had found means to resolve this, the sadness was no longer as intense. With some difficulty, Han Shuo forced a smile, and consoled Gilges, "Be at ease. Although Gilbert is dead, I have kept his soul. Give me some time, and I shall have him reborn and again stand before you."

After a short pause, with cold sparks flashing in his eyes, in a deep voice he added, "Plus, Gilbert's sacrifice will not be in vain. I will make the Shrine of Ice pay a hundred times for what they've done!"

"Rea... really? You can resurrect Gilbert?" the patriarch of dark dragons said with a slightly trembling voice as he looked at Han Shuo in disbelief.

Han Shuo nodded. Right when he intended to give him a complete guarantee, he had a second thought. It did not matter if he used demonic arts or necromancy magic, the resurrected Gilbert would never truly be the same as the one who had just perished. At his realization, he felt once again deeply saddened. He sighed, "I can pledge that Gilbert will revive. However, there will be some changes to his new body."

Gilges was no ordinary being. He understood exactly what Han Shuo meant. He sighed and replied, "As long as he can be resurrected, nothing else matters."

"Let's go, let's go. For someone of several thousand years old, you are as long-winded as a woman." While Han Shuo and Gilges continued to sigh with sorrow, the Emperor of the Flames couldn't help but hasten them. She had never yet taken a tour of the continent with the identity of a human. Now that she had finally evolved with great difficulty to the fifth stage, the Emperor grade, she became rather impatient.

Without any more words, Han Shuo nodded at Gilges before flying out through the opening in the lavafall. One by one, they all evacuated.

Upon arriving at the ravine, Han Shuo gazed at the crowd of non-human living creatures. For a moment, he couldn't figure out where to put them.

“We wish to avenge Gilbert! From today onwards, the Shine of Ice will be the sworn enemy of us dark dragons!” A robust yet boorish-looking dark dragon, immediately let out a bellow of rage when he saw Gilbert’s corpse on the ravine, bathing in his own blood.

During the thrilling great battle in the valley, magma from the place of extreme fire violently shot about everywhere, causing yet another volcanic eruption in the small ravine. Among them, the magma, enriched with a huge amount of yuan energy of fire, submerged Gilbert’s dead body. Gilbert’s once lifeless carcass, after boiling in the magma, was now reduced to a pitiful mass, his skin and flesh all vaporized. All that remained were a colossal skeleton, a magical beast crystal core, and two eyeballs.

Looking at Gilbert’s skeletal remains, even with the means to resurrect Gilbert, Han Shuo could not hold back his anger, and roared at the sky in burning fury, “That’s right! We must take revenge!”

At this moment, dark dragon patriarch Gilges flew to Gilbert’s remains and very carefully collected Gilbert’s crystal core and his two eyes, stowing them away like treasure.

After that furious cry, Han Shuo summoned the earth elite zombie. Using the earth elite zombie’s gift, dark dragon Gilbert’s colossal skeletal remains were buried deep underground so that someday in the future, it could be used to reconstruct Gilbert’s physical body.

“I want to go the human society!” the Emperor of the Flames said resolutely as she looked at Han Shuo.

When Han Shuo was just about to agree, his consciousness suddenly felt an endless hatred coming from Tarrag Canyon. He took a shock in his heart and immediately came to his senses. When he completely released his consciousness to deal with the Shrine of Ice earlier, the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race had discovered his trails.

Feeling apprehensive, Han Shuo quickly concealed his consciousness.

Abruptly, an idea crossed Han Shuo’s mind and his eyes glittered. After a short while, the corners of Han Shuo’s lips curved and revealed a most

sinister grin. He found a way to deal with the Shrine of Ice.

“Oi, you, young man, didn’t you say you would bring me to the human world?” the fat lady again hastened Han Shuo without the slightest scruple.

“Elizabeth!” Han Shuo lightly yelled.

“Yes master, any commands?” Elizabeth’s body had now recovered. After suffering a bout of unforgettable pain, Elizabeth’s body was now abundant with divine energy that came from Ice Celestial Corey and the others. The divine energy, without Corey and the others interfering, could be slowly absorbed by Elizabeth’s Body of Divine Favor.

As the saying goes, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. This time, not only did the fat woman evolve from Lord of the Flames to become the Emperor of the Flames, Elizabeth obtained a lot of gains as well. Once her body completely absorbed the divine energy, Elizabeth’s strength was sure to be enhanced one step further.

“Show her around the Lancelot Empire. Erm, if she gets bored, just bring her to Brettel City. Do you understand?” Han Shuo instructed Elizabeth with his eyes squinted.

Elizabeth understood Han Shuo’s wishes. She respectfully nodded and replied, “Rest assured, master. I will make her enjoy herself to the fullest.”

“Alright alright, let’s go,” the fat woman said impatiently, wanting to depart and take fire elite zombie along.

“Hold on!” When Han Shuo saw that the Emperor of the Flames was grabbing to fire elite zombie’s hand and not letting go, he hastily shouted, “He cannot leave with you!”

“Why not? This is my kid, why can’t he leave with me?” The fat lady was somewhat displeased and groaned with her eyes glaring at Han Shuo.

“He is also my kid!” Han Shuo hurriedly answered.

Gilges included, the entire race of dark dragons, and Elizabeth, all had a strange look on their faces after Han Shuo said those words.

After another shudder, Han Shuo forced a smile and said, "It's better if he follows me." That manner of expression, sounded just the same as a divorced couple fighting over custody rights of their children.

The Emperor of the Flames was angered. Just as she was about to say something, the fire elite zombie tugged on the corner of her clothes, and communicated with her telepathically.

The emotion on her face was indefinite, but turned relieved after a short while. She glared at Han Shuo and said, "Take good care of our kid for me!" She then immediately grabbed Elizabeth up and flew away from the Dark Forest.

Han Shuo was speechless.

# Chapter 477: Six-Horned Tribal King's Abnormality

The Emperor of the Flames left immediately, leaving behind Han Shuo who was speechlessly looking at fire elite zombie. In his heart, Han Shuo was astounded, not knowing what fire elite zombie told the Emperor of the Flames. Han Shuo transmitted, "What did you tell her?"

"Nothing much. I only said that the netherworld is my real hometown, and I still have a lot of business to do there!" fire elite zombie answered honestly, he would never lie to Han Shuo.

Han Shuo knew that the Emperor of the Flames had long realized fire elite zombie's origins. But because the two bore astonishingly similar auras, as they both had absorbed enormous amounts of fire yuan energy in the place of extreme fire, she regarded fire elite zombie as her own son. Perhaps only fire elite zombie alone could communicate with and placate the Emperor of the Flames when she was overstimulated.

"Alright then, let me send you back!" After thinking for a moment, considering that fire elite zombie did not have anything else to do in that realm for the moment, and that he would certainly improve faster in the netherworld, Han Shuo sang an incantation and sent fire elite zombie off.

Upon completing his incantation, a brief connection was formed between Han Shuo and the netherworld. Han Shuo sensed a message from little skeleton from the region where the fire elite zombie landed his feet.

From the message he transmitted, Han Shuo understood that little skeleton was currently still fusing with the Origin Crystal of Death. This process seemed to have persisted for a really long time. The reason little skeleton previously transmitted a reminder to Han Shuo all of a sudden was because little skeleton could feel his boundless sadness. Therefore, he took a pause to remind Han Shuo.

Han Shuo replied to little skeleton, telling him that he could be at ease while he continued fusing with the energy. After that, he took a deep



breath and turned his sight to the crowd of dark dragons. He said in a deep voice, "What do you all plan to do next?"

"After we recover our strength, we dark dragons must exact revenge for our clansmen!" Gilges asserted. He seemed to have made a firm resolution to take retribution on the Shrine of Ice for Gilbert.

However, even though Ice Celestial Corey and the others in the Shrine of Ice suffered serious injuries, merely with the race of dark dragon now, to contend against the Shrine of Ice would be like riding for a fall. At first, Han Shuo wanted to impart a few words of advice, but upon reconsideration that his words might bring down their spirits, Han Shuo only stammered before shutting his mouth.

But the old and experienced Gilges understood Han Shuo's concerns from Han Shuo's expression of wanting to say something and hesitating. In a deep voice, he said, "Worry not, nothing will happen to us. Besides, this time it was because we did not take any precaution that we could suddenly be captured. We dark dragons, having lived so many years, will not allow some lowlives to bully us."

When Han Shuo looked at Gilges, he felt as though Gilges still had a few tricks up his sleeves. This dark dragon who had lived for countless years ought to have better insights and foresight than Han Shuo. Therefore, Han Shuo nodded and said, "Then you all be careful!"

"I hope to be able to see Gilbert again!" Gilges said with his eyes looking deep into Han Shuo's. His tone carried some pathos and a bit of pleading.

"That day will come, don't worry. Oh, right. This time those few from the Shrine of Ice received some rather heavy injuries. I believe that in this short period of time, those from the Shrine of Ice wouldn't dare visit your canyon," said Han Shuo.

"Thank you, Bryan! We, the race of dark dragons, will forever be your friend!" Gilges thanked him sincerely.

"You're welcome. Erm, goodbye!" Han Shuo did not continue exchanging words of courtesy with Gilges, but replied simply in a smile before deploying the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens and departed.

In the snowland Far North of Kasi Empire were unbroken chains of dove-white mountains. It is a world shrouded in harsh arctic climate throughout the year. No matter which direction or how far one looked, they would only see the monotonous white colour of snow.

Located on the summits of these cloud-piercing mountains were glorious, serene shrines made of ice crystal piles. The frozen mountain in the center was particularly outstanding and towering. The headquarters of the Shrine of Ice was located at the summit of that mountain.

The wind was bone chilling. The sky was covered with ice and snow. In this white, icy world lived numerous disciples of the Shrine of Ice. Majority of them are of Kasi Empire nationality. They were here to offer their most sincere conviction to the Ice Goddess.

For many years, the main peak located in the center of the mountain range had always been a restricted area. Except for during certain special festivals and for some followers of the Shrine of Ice of grandeur status, an average person would never be allowed to step foot into the main peak.

However, in the past two days, an unimaginable major event occurred, forcing them to loosen up this rule. Numerous disciples on the surrounding mountain peaks ascended to the main peak. In fear and trepidation, they exerted the meager divine energy they had to re-solidify the largest shrine of ice on the main peak.

Just two days prior, in this exact snowland that blew bone chilling wind, situated on the main peak which had the lowest temperature in the region, this shrine of ice all of a sudden started melting. The few elders in the Shrine of Ice, and even Ice Celestial Corey – one of their highest ranking leaders, all sustained injuries and had to recuperate. This grievous news spread throughout the entire religious organization like wildfire.

Could it have been that the Ice Goddess was angered at their incompetence? Or perhaps demons were on the verge of invading the Shrine of Ice? Many of those disciples conjured to themselves as they were horrified of the changes happening to the Shrine of Ice, no idea of what was actually going on.

Such a bewildering phenomenon which had previously not once occurred for hundreds of thousands of years caused an incalculable negative impact on the Shrine of Ice. Gradually, fear started to spread among those followers of the Shrine of Ice in the snowland. Even followers located in other regions learned of the tragic events at the headquarters of the Shrine of Ice.

Far North of Kasi Empire, Icicle City.

Icicle City was one of many cities around the snowland of the Far North. An ordinary adventurer team would need only ten days to travel from Icicle City to the Shrine of Ice located in the depths of the snowland.

On this day, after a long and tiresome trek, Han Shuo finally arrived at Icicle City, and set to carry out his plan of retaliating against the Shrine of Ice.

Han Shuo's plan was very simple. Just like how they dealt with the Church of Light, he would open up his consciousness, and draw the six-horned Soul Race tribal king to come and kill him. The only difference now was that Han Shuo could effortlessly conceal his consciousness. Therefore, when the six-horned tribal king came over, Han Shuo would need only to conceal his consciousness, and he would vanish from the senses of the six-horned tribal king.

In addition, Han Shuo could be certain that in the Shrine of Ice, there were no godly existences like the Saintess from the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light. Otherwise, during the battle days before through the Jedefrost Cage, they would have all frozen to death long before they could get to the place of extreme fire.

From the fact that Snow Celestial Tiana needed to escape to the Church of Light in order to take shelter from the six-horned Soul Race tribal king, Han Shuo reckoned that there were no characters in the Shrine of Ice who could rival the six-horned tribal king. Otherwise, Tiana would have returned straight to the Shrine of Ice instead of going to the Church of Light.

Given the strength of the six-horned tribal king, once he arrived at the

Shrine of Ice, by which Han Shuo had already concealed his consciousness, this six-horned tribal king would not hesitate to turn up every rock on this frozen mountain to search for Han Shuo. The Shrine of Ice, just like the Church of Light, was accustomed to being arrogant. Therefore, with almost no thinking required, one could safely assume that there would be a great battle between the two.

Han Shuo was somewhat looking forward to counting the losses the six-horned tribal king would cause the Shrine of Ice as there would be no one of equal strength to stop him once the six-horned tribal king, a godly existence, arrived at the Shrine of Ice,

Han Shuo fully let go of his consciousness. When the six-horned tribal king locked onto Han Shuo, he felt an unbounded, ice-cold intention to ruthlessly kill him. However, outside of Han Shuo's expectations, the six horned tribal king seemed not to have taken any immediate action!

Han Shuo was somewhat amazed. He stayed an entire morning in Icicle City, but did not sense the six-horned tribal king approaching. This indicated that the six-horned tribal king still remained at Tarrag Canyon as before.

This obviously ruined Han Shuo's scheme. Han Shuo spewed execrations in his heart. His consciousness could still sense the boundless desire to murder him coming from the distant Tarrag Canyon. However, the six-horned tribal king's inaction left Han Shuo's plan insurmountable.

The last time Han Shuo escaped from Tarrag Canyon, the six-horned Soul Race tribal king brought along four of his generals, and ascended to the top of the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light almost immediately, exhibiting a ferocious demeanor of killing anyone who stood in his way. Who knew that after just such a short time had passed, when the six-horned tribal king sensed Han Shuo's presence, he would actually do nothing. This somewhat baffled Han Shuo.

Could it be that the Soul Race had changed its temperament? Han Shuo immediately rejected that possibility as soon as it arose. From the first time Han Shuo met this race, he understood their heartless nature from

their cold pitiless eyes. Besides, the tremendous desire to kill coming from the six-horned tribal king was still present. This proved that they definitely did not turn kind towards Han Shuo.

There must have been some other reason, Han Shuo pressingly racked his head.

Could it be that the six-horned tribal king was injured on the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light the last time? Han Shuo felt that this was more likely to be the case. It was only possible that the six-horned tribal king was injured in the battle with the Saintess, and was currently recuperating from his injuries, that he would temporarily let him and Stratholme the old monster off.

When Han Shuo thought so, he couldn't help but feel glad for Stratholme. Thinking that as long as Stratholme took advantage of this period to merge his soul with the Crystal of Fighting Aura, he would not need to worry about the menace of this six-horned tribal king.

Since the six-horned tribal king wasn't coming for the time being, Han Shuo had no choice but to devise another plan. Seeing that the snowy mountain was almost within reach, Han Shuo prepared to check out the headquarters of the Shrine of Ice. Without the presence of any godly expert, Han Shuo believed that he could freely enter and exit the Shrine of Ice, not at all concerned about his own safety.

After he made up his mind, Han Shuo immediately set out on his own towards the snowland where the Shrine of Ice was located. Wishing that the six-horned tribal king would come looking for him, Han Shuo completely unleashed his consciousness. Not a grain of sand within a huge perimeter in his surrounding could escape his surveillance. He had an unimpeded journey all the way to the Shrine of Ice.

# Chapter 478: A Strange Sight

This was a world of ice and snow. The coldest place on Profound Continent was right here. All along the way, cold wind whizzed. Snow covered every nook and cranny. It was a vast expanse of whiteness as far as the eyes could see. Trees, stones, rivers, all were encrusted in a layer of ice. It was as though the world had lost its colour.

However, within the coverage of Han Shuo's consciousness, he sensed a trace of the presence of ice bears, snow wolves and frost eagles in this bone-numbingly cold region. These magical creatures, who preferred cold regions as their natural dwellings, roamed about in this remote, deserted world of ice and snow, adding a hint of vitality to this world.

Of the numerous mountain summits, Han Shuo had one specific target. His heart was as cold as ice, sterner to massacre as he flew at lightning speed.

The most formidable characters in the Shrine of Ice were the duo of Ice Celestial Corey and Snow Celestial Tiana. The two were the true backbones of the Shrine of Ice. Of the two, Snow Celestial Tiana once schemed against Han Shuo on the Sacred Mountain, with Han Shuo nearly being captured alive by the Church of Light. On the other hand, there was Ice Celestial Corey. Not only did he abuse the entire race of dark dragon, his actions even resulted in Gilbert's death.

On top of that, the Shrine of Ice and the Church of Light were the of best allies. Han Shuo couldn't find any reason not to retaliate against them.

Before he got close to the frozen mountain in the center, Han Shuo slowed down his flying speed. While his consciousness was still fully unfolded, he concealed the presence coming from his body. Carefully observing each and every movement on the main peak, he sought a way to intrude without being detected.

Gathering up his attention, Han Shuo's consciousness immediately sensed the existence of a frost and cold boundary all around the summit. The boundary enveloped the entire main peak of the mountain range with

vigorously cold wind and ice. Within that cold wind and ice, Han Shuo sensed the presence of divine energy of the Ice Goddess.

This discovery made Han Shuo even more cautious in his approach. He further slowed down his advance towards the shrine of ice on the main peak. In his heart, he rapidly turned over in his mind how to deal with the situation he was presented with.

One after another, disciples of the Shrine of Ice entered and exited the frozen mountain. Yet, the huge boundary made no warning signals nor defensive responses.

Han Shuo carefully examined for a moment, and found out that among these disciples that entered the main peak of the Shrine of Ice were in fact ones upon whom the Ice Goddess did not even bestow divine energy. However, their bodies were all ice-cold without exception. Much lower than the normal human body temperature.

With a mere once-over, Han Shuo figured out a solution. Hovering in the sky at a height hard to catch sight of with the naked eye, Han Shuo slowly adjusted his body temperature. He even deployed the Mystical Glacial Spellfire to generate cold air in his body, at a finely-controlled intensity. In a heartbeat, Han Shuo's body temperature plunged to match the disciples of the Shrine of Ice down below.

On Profound Continent, there were existences with greater strength than Han Shuo. However, Han Shuo was convinced that no one else surpassed him in terms of the ability to exercise control over physical body. This self-confidence came from the demonic arts' perverted forging of his physical body!

After properly adjusting his body temperature, Han Shuo again surveyed the area for another while to be absolutely certain that in this way he would not trigger the boundary surrounding the frozen mountain. Only then did he begin searching for an opportunity to enter this main peak.

Watching for a while, Han Shuo discovered that halfway up the frozen mountain there was a protruding steep cliff. There wasn't a single disciple of the Shrine of Ice manning the region. Having found a vulnerable spot,

Han Shuo made use of a window of opportunity and noiselessly descended to that cliff from high altitude.

His consciousness firmly locked onto the entire frozen mountain. While meticulously concealing the presence on his body, he had long discovered Ice Celestial Corey's exact location – in a conical building on the mountain top.

At this point in time, Ice Celestial Corey ought to have still been in recovery period. Han Shuo could sense that his aura was smooth and steady, without any fluctuation of emotions. There was not a single person stationed around the conical building. As long as Han Shuo could stealthily get to that building and mount a sneak attack, Han Shuo was confident of succeeding.

However, to reach that structure from the precipice where Han Shuo was, and not be detected by anyone midway, would be quite the impossible feat.

This was because, on the entire frozen mountain, other than steep mountain roads, there were no trees nor rocks that could provide concealment. In this place where every inch of every surface was blanketed with ice and snow, any slightest movement could cause others to catch one in sight.

Moreover, from a magical tower on the apex of the mountain, Han Shuo sensed some kind of magical wave undulation similar that of Sky's Eye. This magic released by the magical tower seemed to be able to catch every movement on the mountain.

Han Shuo thought for a moment with creased brows, and suddenly called to mind metal elite zombie. After thinking briefly, he felt that this method was feasible.

Although a solid layer of ice covered the mountain, the inside was fundamentally still supported by hard rock. The thick layer of ice above it was naturally formed on one hand, while also deliberately thickened by the Shrine of Ice on the other hand. With metal elite zombie's abilities, Han Shuo could entirely bore through rocks and reach right to the bottom



of the building that Corey was in.

This is indeed feasible! Han Shuo immediately spread open his two hands. His fingernails suddenly grew madly long to form the incredibly incisive Demonic Blades that glimmered cold light. With his demonic skill, Han Shuo began to dig into the ice. After boring three meters deep into the ice, Han Shuo finally saw the foundational support of the frozen mountain – rocks.

Han Shuo issued his command to metal elite zombie. Once he understood the command, golden lights radiated from his palm. Metal yuan energy steeped into the rocks like flowing water. Afterwards, under Han Shuo's attentive gaze, the hard, solid rock split open, creating a pathway.

As Han Shuo gazed at the tunnel produced, he couldn't help but lament in his heart how truly useful the five elite zombies had been to him, even without taking their strengths into consideration.

Following his sense of Corey's location, with the assistance of metal elite zombie, from halfway up the mountain, Han Shuo unhurriedly headed towards the mountain summit where Ice Celestial Corey was located.

The metal elite zombie himself could freely go in and out in rocks, as though he were swimming in water. But now, having to take Han Shuo along, metal elite zombie had no choice but to open up a tunnel. Using some methods that Han Shuo could not understand, while metal elite zombie's palms discharged brilliant golden rays, the hard rock was split up, recombined, and tamped to build a path growing upwards.

As metal elite zombie's palms glowed golden, the tunnel didn't seem in the slightest bit dark. While he followed behind metal elite zombie up an inclined pathway, he considered the particulars on mounting a sneak attack on Ice Celestial Corey.

All of a sudden, the metal elite zombie stopped. Caught off guard, Han Shuo almost bumped into metal elite zombie.

They had walked just a few hundred meters. There was still a long way up the frozen mountain summit where Corey was. Why would metal elite

zombie suddenly stop?

Han Shuo was puzzled. Looking at the back of metal elite zombie, Han Shuo didn't hesitate to transmit, "Why did you stop?"

"Father, look!" metal elite zombie leaned to one side. The rocks around him pulled back a little, making enough space for Han Shuo and metal elite zombie to stand shoulder to shoulder.

Han Shuo strode over to the empty spot that metal elite zombie specifically let out, and cast his sight following the upward direction that metal elite zombie pointed to with his right hand. He was immediately dumbstruck by what he saw.

In front of Han Shuo was a big chamber made by hollowing out the mountain rocks. There stood a magnificent, approximately sixty meter tall statue of the Ice Goddess, within the emptied insides of the mountain.

This grand, gargantuan statue of the Ice Goddess was made of ice as polished as perfect crystals. The carving was vivid and lifelike. She wore an expression as cold as ice, with her left hand holding firmly onto a crystal staff also carved from ice, appearing as though she was fighting against some wicked demon. Her look was solemn and dignified, giving off a sacred feeling of inviolability.

The Ice Goddess statue was dressed in a unusual striped robe. But as the entire graven image was made of the same block of solid ice, Han Shuo could clearly see her body interiors.

Inside the body of the carving, there were no internal organs, but a mixture of iced water and some peculiar substances was circulating within. It glistened like diamond as it slowly flowed through her body in some kind of strange pattern.

However, in the lower abdomen of the statue of the Ice Goddess where the uterus should have been, stood a fully-naked, beautiful young lady with jade-like skin. Her eyes were serenely shut, and emanated not an iota of the presence of life. She possessed such beauty that could give the Saintess of the Church of Light a run for her money – so perfect it seemed impossible that it could exist in this world!

Han Shuo stood below the statue. When he raised his head to look at this majestic carving of the Ice Goddess, a feeling of insignificance surfaced from the bottom of his heart. He was momentarily awestruck by this Ice Goddess statue in the center of the mountain that appeared out of nowhere.

The only certainty was that this statue had been carved from just one massive chunk of ice. There must have been a justification for the Shrine of Ice to hollow out the insides of the mountain and place in it such an enormous statue of the Ice Goddess. After Han Shuo came to his senses, he was shocked to the core, his eyes glittering.

The naked young lady situated in the womb of the Ice Goddess statue was ice cold and without any trace of life. Han Shuo's consciousness also could not detect any soul fluctuation. No matter how, he could not understand why there would be such an odd scene in the interior of this mountain.

While Han Shuo was still perplexed and pondering, rasping sounds suddenly came from the rock wall above the statue. With Han Shuo watching attentively, a huge platform slowly protruded from the wall. A few disciples of the Shrine of Ice stood on the platform.

At the first rasping noise that sounded, Han Shuo instinctively stepped backward and hastily sent a command to metal elite zombie. Metal elite zombie made one sweep with his hand. The passageway opening in front of him rapidly shrunk. By the time the rock platform above the statue fully extended, the passageway before Han Shuo and metal elite zombie had shrunk to just one small fissure remaining.

# Chapter 479: Project God Making

Through that narrow fissure, Han Shuo's glittering eyes stared fixedly at the few standing on the platform above the Ice Goddess statue, cautiously eavesdropping on their conversation.

"When will the project really be complete. It's been more than a hundred years," a disciple of the Shrine of Ice sighed.

"Ever since the start of Project God Making and up until now, our shrine has consumed incalculable labor and physical resources. And it has now come to the most critical moment. We must, under no circumstances, be careless. The reason our Shrine of Ice has always been pushed under the Church of Light and Calamity Church is all because our Shrine of Ice does not have our own true God on Profound Continent, without which miracles could never be performed in this world. That is why we couldn't even recruit more followers. Once Project God Making succeeds, our Shrine of Ice will be able to change the current situation once and for all, and become a shrine that the entire continent will look up at. No more acting in accordance with the will of others," another disciple came over and explained in a cold voice.

Project God Making?

Han Shuo was stunned by what he heard.

By now, Han Shuo had long accepted that there were indeed gods in this world. Evil goddess Rose, who previously attacked Han Shuo's consciousness from across a few planes of existences; the Saintess that hid deep within the Sacred Mountain of the Church of Light; the six-horned tribal king of the Soul Race with unmatched might. All these were attestations to Han Shuo that Gods were, without a doubt, real.

However, from what Han Shuo knew, even the weakest God went through tens of millions of years of cultivation, and little by little came to comprehend the elements in the world or the true essence of nature's laws. Only then, with some good fortune, could they break through their own shackles and become a God.

This really was the very first time Han Shuo had ever heard the term “God-making”. That remark was the most egotistical, most shocking thing he had heard in years. At this point, the Shrine of Ice was, in essence, wrecking his most basic understanding about gods.

Was a god really something that could be manufactured?

“This project is already in its final stages. In due time, we will be able to complete this venture, achieving the magnificent feat of directly evolving a Divinely Favored into a God in the span of only hundreds of years. What a grandeur endeavor this is! During this period, we cannot afford any slip-up,” one of the men said in a deep voice. His tone carried an inexplicable arrogance.

A Divinely Favored? Han Shuo was again bewildered. After processing it for another while, he became fully convinced of the validity of this project.

Those who possessed a Body of Divine Favor had body structures that were different to that of an average person and usually had special abilities. They could possess extraordinary strength like Janet did, or be like Elizabeth who had the ability to absorb divine energy.

There were also many of those Divinely Favoured who could easily form connections with certain elements in the world. Once they began practicing in that line of magic, they would make astonishing, unimaginable progress. They could achieve what an ordinary person achieved, but in perhaps just a tenth or even a hundredth of the time.

For what seemed an eternity, Han Shuo had been fascinated with those who possessed a Body of Divine Favor, and baffled by the special abilities that their unique bodies bestowed on them. After listening to the conversation between the few people above him, Han Shuo arrived at a simple realization.

Could it have been that those Divinely Favoured were descendants of the Gods?

“That’s enough. Let’s hurry up. Pour those energy crystals and leave!” one of them was somewhat impatient and urged.

After he finished his words, Han Shuo immediately started paying even closer attention to the platform above the statue. He saw that from their space rings, they took out crystal fragments containing intense water element, which they carefully held using magic, and then insert them into a small chink on the skull of the Ice Goddess statue.

Once the crystal fragments containing water element fell into the statue, they rapidly dissolved with the iced water composite within. Through the mixture, threads of water element gradually flowed into the naked young lady located at the womb of the statue.

In just a short amount of time, the men had deposited heaps energy crystals into the statue of the Ice Goddess. They carefully observed for a while and after making sure that the Ice Goddess statue was operating nominally, they finally retracted the platform that split open from the wall, disappearing from Han Shuo's sight.

After the few had left, Han Shuo immediately turned all his attention back to this Ice Goddess statue. Gazing at this gigantic statue which the Shrine of Ice squandered for a hundred years to make, in his heart, he exclaimed in astonishment.

That young lady with cold, jade-like skin located inside the Ice Goddess statue showed no perceivable presence of life. She was like a unique receptacle, accumulating enormous amounts of energy from the iced water mixture in her body.

After pondering for a moment while staring at this Ice Goddess statue, Han Shuo made up his mind right away. He had to destroy this Ice Goddess statue, including what was within it that might produce a "true God". Between the Shrine of Ice and Han Shuo, there existed only an absolutely irreconcilable bad blood. It was because the Shrine of Ice currently possessed no godly existences that Han Shuo could be on the offensive in his war against the Shrine of Ice.

However, once this god-grade expert was produced, Han Shuo believed that the Shrine of Ice would never let go of him, and when that moment arrived, this godly expert would be on his trail indefinitely. Therefore, Han

Shuo decided to leave Ice Celestial Corey aside for the time being, and take advantage of the fact that the God making project had yet to be completed to eradicate this enemy which could potentially pose the greatest threat to him.

All around the Ice Goddess statue, intense water element was present. Han Shuo had discovered their enigmatic magical boundaries and traps deployed right when he entered the chamber. It was rather easy for Han Shuo to reach under the building where Ice Celestial Corey was by utilizing metal elite zombie's energy. But to arrive at the Ice Goddess statue without touching any magical boundaries or traps, that wasn't nearly as simple.

His eyes sparkled. Han Shuo decided to break through the boundaries and traps, and to destroy this Ice Goddess statue by savage means. In his mind, he started to consider the procedures of his operation, weighing what would be the fastest way to destroy this possible threat in the future.

At this moment, a light bulb went on over his head. He recalled water elite zombie. Water elite zombie, refined with the yuan energy of water, possessed the proficient ability to manipulate ice and water. In this region, the boundaries and traps around the Ice Goddess statue were actually made with ice or water. With water elite zombie, perhaps he could get straight to the Ice Goddess statue without alerting anyone.

When this idea floated into Han Shuo's mind, he immediately put it to action. After reciting an incantation, water elite zombie appeared beside Han Shuo. Metal elite zombie took the initiative and stepped backwards, making space for water elite zombie to stand shoulder to shoulder with Han Shuo.

"Do you have any means of taking me to that goddess statue without alerting anyone?" Han Shuo transmitted.

Water elite zombie did not immediately reply. After some time had passed, water elite zombie still did not transmit any message. This left Han Shuo somewhat baffled.

Of the five elite zombies, although water elite zombie came relatively

late, and did not possess a treasure of water attribute, after evolving for such a long time, he should have had long possessed intelligence instead of being so sluggish!

The puzzled Han Shuo furrowed his brows. He couldn't help but turn his head to look at water elite zombie to see what was wrong with him.

Han Shuo was startled by what he saw.

The water elite zombie's eyes were glittering with brilliant light, and out of his body floated puffs of misty water vapor. Standing beside him, Han Shuo could feel the humidity in the surroundings increase. Moreover, the water elite zombie seemed to be emotional, as though he suddenly came across something that caused him to be extremely excited.

Following water elite zombie's gaze, Han Shuo discovered that he was staring blankly at the young lady inside the Ice Goddess statue. His eyes did not blink at all, as though he had turned into a fool.

Oh shoot! Han Shuo was alarmed. He thought to himself, Don't tell me he's actually fallen in love with that girl in there?

Han Shuo's heart turned into a mess, not knowing what was wrong with the rather sillylooking water elite zombie.

"What's the matter?" Han Shuo shouted very loudly. He deliberately did so in order to rouse water elite zombie from his daze.

Han Shuo's shouting was indeed effective. The water elite zombie jolted. He looked at Han Shuo somewhat at a loss but shortly after, rays of light glew magnificently in his eyes. He excitedly pointed at that young lady, and said to Han Shuo, "Father, I want!"

This rascal definitely went wrong in his evolution! He could never fuse his energy into the Penta-elemental Undead Formation. So it turns out he evolved sexual desires, and even his eyes have grown malicious. Damn it! Little rascal, how come you've evolved like this!

Han Shuo incessantly cursed in his heart as he looked at water elite zombie with his imagination running wild. For a while, he didn't know what to do. With regards to the five elite zombies, Han Shuo held genuine



feelings for them. Although this request of water elite zombie freaked Han Shuo out a little, looking at water elite zombie's excitement and impulsive urge, he couldn't bear to reject.

After stomping his feet, Han Shuo clenched his teeth and said, "Go ahead you little rascal. Do as you wish. But by all means, you must not alert anyone else. Damn it, even your brothers who came out much earlier than you aren't as early-maturing as you!"

After getting the nod of approval from Han Shuo, the water elite zombie suddenly jumped with excitement. He directly passed through the water magic traps and boundaries, and landed at the feet of the Ice Goddess statue in a flash, all without triggering any boundaries or traps.

While Han Shuo continued cursing in his heart, water elite zombie fused himself into the Ice Goddess statue. From within her lower leg, following the iced water mixtures, water elite zombie floated directly to where the young lady was, and excitedly embraced the lifeless young lady with perfect looks.

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# Chapter 480: I Want

Han Shuo couldn't bear to watch such a perfect looking young girl being defiled by water elite zombie just like that. However, just as Han Shuo was about to turn around and look the other way, he suddenly sensed an unusual transformation happening to the young lady inside the Ice Goddess statue.

Han Shuo's observed that the energy within that young girl with smooth and fair skin was rapidly flowing into water elite zombie. Water elite zombie pressed his body against this bare young lady not to perform some obscene act as Han Shuo had imagined, but to rapidly absorb the energy inside the young lady through skin contact.

Han Shuo stared blankly before he quickly came to his senses and became overjoyed. He ceased his silent profanities towards water elite zombie, and became just as excited at the water elite zombie.

The young lady was brimming with some sort of exotic icy water energy, but contained not the tiniest bit of divine energy conferred by the Ice Goddess. This was somewhat strange and contrary to what one might expect.

When he had earlier tried to break apart the Jedefrost Cage, Han Shuo attempted to have water elite zombie absorb the divine energy within the cage. However, as water elite zombie could not secure a connection with the divine energy in the Jedefrost Cage, the plan failed.

Consequently, this time when Han Shuo saw that there was a young lady inside the Ice Goddess statue, he did not think of sending water elite zombie to absorb the energy. But now it seemed that although water elite zombie could not absorb the divine energy that the Ice Goddess bestowed upon her believers, he nevertheless could absorb the water element and exotic energy from this icy water mixture.

In water elite zombie's embrace, the young lady was enveloped in a white cloud of water vapor. Energy within the body of the lifeless young girl, in tiny streams, flowed into water elite zombie's body.

Han Shuo could feel the excitement coming from water elite zombie, his eyes glowing with vigor. While he absorbed the energy from the young lady, he transmitted to Han Shuo, "Thank you father, thank you father!"

"Erm, you seem to be quite a lucky one!" Han Shuo remarked and felt somewhat embarrassed for his dirty thoughts.

"Father, I believe that after this, he will be able to fuse his energy into the formation!" transmitted metal elite zombie as he stood beside Han Shuo.

When metal elite zombie reminded him so, Han Shuo was delighted. Fire, metal and earth elite zombies had successfully fused their energies in the Penta-elemental Undead Formation. But as water elite zombie and wood elite zombie arose rather late, in addition to the fact that they did not possess treasures of their respective attributes, they had never been able to fuse their energies with the other three elite zombies.

Water elite zombie was now absorbing the energy meant for the Shrine of Ice to produce a god. Once water elite zombie completely absorbed the energy, Han Shuo had no idea what realm he would reach, although he was certain that he would make one giant leap in his evolution. To successfully fuse his energy into the Penta-elemental Undead Formation wouldn't be too challenging by then.

While Han Shuo's heart was greatly elated, he suddenly felt abnormal activity among those of the Shrine of Ice. A group of experts who were nursing their injuries, headed by Ice Celestial Corey, all of a sudden converged in a helter skelter.

The wall from which the disciples left again began to rasp and extend.

Han Shuo immediately realized that his plot had been exposed. This statue of Ice Goddess manufactured by the Shrine of Ice must have had some sort of connection with them unbeknownst to Han Shuo. As the energy inside the young lady rapidly drained away, the disciples had to have been alarmed.

Since it played out like this, Han Shuo knew that a bloodshed was unavoidable. A callous thought emerged in his heart. Immediately, he

headed a distance upwards with metal elite zombie creating the tunnel for him.

At that moment, the energy inside the young lady within the statue had yet to be fully absorbed by water elite zombie. Whether or not he would evolve to his fullest capacity was all up to Han Shuo now on how much time he could buy for water elite zombie.

“Father, I want, I want this energy!” Still hugging the young lady and rapidly absorbing the energy from her body, water elite zombie greedily transmitted to Han Shuo like a child demanding candy.

“You hurry up and make every second count. Quickly absorb that energy and forget about everything else!” Han Shuo urged. He understood what that energy meant for water elite zombie and was prepared to fight with all his might to buy ample time for him.

Finally, the platform completely extended. The party of Shrine of Ice disciples cast their gazes at the magnificent carving of the Ice Goddess in the center of the mountain.

Apart from the few Shrine of Ice disciples who were leaving, there was the troupe that Han Shuo had met the last time at the dark dragon’s canyon. With just one look at the few, Han Shuo was certain that they had been involved in the long distance battle over at the place of extreme fire the few days prior.

When this party was at last utterly crushed, Han Shuo seized the opportunity and attacked their souls using his consciousness and mental strength. Having been caught off guard by his attack, they sustained heavy injuries. When they had previously met, although their bodies were ice cold, they appeared completely normal. But now, their faces were as pale as the dead.

In contrast to their unruffled manner during the great battle at the dark dragon’s canyon, their bodies gave off incredible chaotic aura. This indicated that they had yet to fully recover from their injuries.

“Oh my Goddess! What, what is that thing?!” one of those disciples shrieked, trembling from head to toe, with one hand placed over his chest

and the other pointed at water elite zombie tightly hugging the young lady.

When this disciple's shriek sounded, other Shrine of Ice disciples on the platform also witnessed the situation down below. All of those disciples, Ice Celestial Corey included, instantly burst into rage, fury, and shock. Their cries and howls filled the entire chamber.

"How did that nasty thing enter the statue of the Goddess!" Ice Celestial Corey roared in wrath. A slap landed on the face of a disciple standing on the sides. He spat a mouth full of blood and fell off the platform.

Whoosh whoosh! Before the subordinate made contact with the ground below, the magical boundary around the Ice Goddess statue was suddenly triggered, sending out a few icicles which ran through his body. Before any blood could gush out from his wounds, his body was entirely frozen, and shattered into pieces when he fell on the ground.

"Lord Corey, please spare us. We really have no clue what happened. If you kill us all, it will be impossible to complete the God Making project!" one of the disciples cried out in fear, kneeling before Ice Celestial Corey.

The ashen and furious Ice Celestial Corey, who was prepared to kill all those disciples that previously came down to replenish energy crystals, already grabbed another disciple by the neck and was ready to kill him for his dereliction. But after he heard that loud pleading, for the sake of completing the project, he restrained his impulsive urge in the end.

"Immediately enter the Goddess' statue with divine energy and put that nasty thing to death. I want his soul to suffer!" Ice Celestial Corey said angrily after flinging off the man in his hand. He seemed to be very angry.

Of course he was. This God making project that the Shrine of Ice had been conducting for over a hundred years would have finally been complete soon, and Ice Celestial's cherished desire to surpass the Church of Light and Calamity Church was on the brink of being accomplished, and such misfortune had to arise at this pivotal moment. Having waited for years and years, he was as angry as anyone could imagine.

"Yes, yes my Lord!" Even those true experts who had strived to serve the

Shrine of Ice for many years trembled with fear under the violent fury of Ice Celestial Corey. They hurriedly agreed and began taking care of water elite zombie.

Whoosh Whoosh Whoosh!

Suddenly, loud whooshing sounds could be heard. Multiple sharp bone spears flew up into the sky. Like scattered bamboo splinters, rows of bone spears shot towards Ice Celestial Corey and the others.

“Damn it!” Corey bawled in a stern voice. He hastily took out his ice-cold longsword. After sword rays flashed through, sparking, translucent cold air solidified to form an ice wall, obstructing the bone spears.

“You useless fools, get lost!” after hastily blocking a wave of bone spears attack, Ice Celestial rained curses while kicking the disciple that knelt at his feet.

The disciples who previously entered the chamber, despite being priests for the Shrine of Ice, studied mainly alchemy, drugs, magical arrays, and all sorts of complicated, abstruse subjects. Only then could the God making project be realized. But they were not particularly strong.

Under the high coverage attack of Han Shuo's, it was very possible that one or two might have been so careless and gotten themselves killed. If he were to lose the people who had meticulously studied the God making project for many years, it was very likely that the project would be doomed to fail. Thus, although Ice Celestial Corey yearned to kill them all at once, for the sake of the God making project, he had no other option but to put their safety on a podium.

Ice Celestial Corey yelled abuse at them while pushing and kicking with his hands and legs, forcibly squeezing these disciples who possessed true expertise in their domains of study into the tunnel they came from. After that, like a lunatic, he loudly roared, “Come out, Bryan. I know it's you, you filthy, wretched necromancer!”

Full of rage, Ice Celestial Corey's usually calm and unruffled mannerisms were. In this moment, nearly resembled Han Shuo in his demonic stupor, no different from a lunatic. Even his few subordinates

around him were flabbergasted at his wildness.

“Go after those few who are escaping. Kill them all!” Han Shuo calmly transmitted an order to metal elite zombie to kill all those researches. After that, in a calm and collected manner, he walked out through a tunnel that was split open.

# Chapter 481: Ad hoc Approach

With the intention of buying more time for water elite zombie, after leaving metal elite zombie with instructions, Han Shuo emerged at an unhurried pace, and stood proudly next to the Ice Goddess statue.

“It sure enough was you!” Ice Celestial Corey shrieked in great fury. The icy cold longsword in his hand pointed towards Han Shuo as he charged downwards.

Frosty aura overflowed from the longsword in his hand. Shapeless and formless fighting aura spurred up the cold air. Sharp icicles that could split space itself came down from the air with deadly force.

When Corey made a move, the few experts also whooshed behind him. Possessing strengths of sacred swordmasters, those few were not to be belittled either. Their tremendous power firmly locked onto Han Shuo, causing the pressure on him to be multiplied.

Another two remained motionless and stood tall on the platform at the top. Both wielded crystal staffs. As they rapidly chanted magical spells, the water element in this chamber which was already rich and intense to its fullest suddenly came alive. The entire region started to cool off. Multiple streams of hazy white cold air converged towards Han Shuo.

Han Shuo realized that these people, headed by Ice Celestial Corey, intended to finish him in the shortest time possible, then put all their energy on water elite zombie, who was wrecking inside the Ice Goddess statue. Eventhough they had sustained some injuries, they were certainly still a formidable force when making moves simultaneously.

This chamber in the center of the mountain, operated for hundreds of years by the Shrine of Ice, was not only filled with intense element of water. Owing to Project God Making, they had put up layers upon layers of magical boundaries and traps. To combat in such a region was extremely unfavorable to Han Shuo.

Therefore, under no circumstances could he confront them directly! If they were to lead Han Shuo by the nose, not only would he not be able to



stall for water elite zombie, but escaping from this chamber would be a problem.

Seeing that Ice Celestial Corey and his party were charging over, Han Shuo suddenly pulled back into the tunnel he walked out from. The rocky wall that was split open was well coordinated with Han Shuo. As Ice Celestial swooped down, the opening rapidly healed and restored to its smooth surface. It was so well performed that even Ice Celestial Corey doubted if the Han Shuo he saw was just an illusion.

“Damn it! What’s going on!” Corey furiously shouted.

“Abra! Watch out!”

A sacred swordmaster who was rapidly flying downwards behind Corey was overcome with fear by the warning from those above him, and looked in all directions at a complete loss.

Suddenly, this sacred swordmaster called Abra felt a frightening change to the wall beside him. Crack! Halfway down his fall, the rocky wall beside him suddenly shattered. From the opening, a fierce-looking ghostly face ferociously rushed out, biting at him.

Abra froze his downward fall. Golden rays erupted from his chilling crystal sword. In a split second, hundreds of golden lights bombarded the ghoulish face attacking him.

Under Abra’s attentive watch, that sinister ghostly face was riddled with holes by the bombardment of golden lights. He let out a sigh of relief in his heart, but remained very cautious and stared fixedly at it.

Having honed his martial skills to such a stage, he was not the kind to let his guard down during combat. It was no easy task becoming a sacred knight, and Abra was evidently not an exception. With battle experiences aplenty he had grown accustomed to staying alert and responsive and not underestimating any enemy.

It was precisely such qualities that saved his life. Watching with all his attention, he saw that the malevolent ghostly face, although riddled with holes from the bombardment of his golden fighting aura, had yet to

disappear. Even the speed at which it came biting at him did not slow down one bit, still charging at him with a loud hiss.

Abra's expression turned frightened. His body, which was frozen still in midair, rapidly moved backwards all of a sudden. His chilling crystal sword was brandished in a criss-cross motion across his chest. Within the golden fighting aura, frosty cold divine energy was subsequently released. The divine energy conferred by the Ice Goddess interweaved with his fighting aura, forming layer upon layer of defensive shield.

The sinister ghostly face advanced another three meters, but in the end dissipated into smoke and vanished. At this moment, after the ghostly face melted into thin air, an iron fist slowly enlarged in front of Abra. The unstoppable demeanor it carried caused him to be overwhelmed with shock.

Whoosh Whoosh Whoosh

One after another, the Shine of Ice experts above and below Abra brandished their swords, sending icicles and cold winds towards Han Shuo who had revealed himself.

Letting out a cold grunt, Han Shuo's right fist pounding towards Abra remained unwavering. Demonic light burst out from his left hand wielding the Demonic Blades. Without even looking, the demonic lights accurately pulverized any icicle shooting towards him.

However, several streams of cold air randomly drifted about under the cover of the shattered icicles and suddenly attached onto Han Shuo's body.

Once the streams of cold air deployed by sacred magi by congealing the enormous amount of water element found within the chamber latched on to Han Shuo, bone-chilling coldness seeped into his consciousness and physical body in an instant. Han Shuo's body suddenly turned stiff with his lightning speed abruptly slowed down.

However, Abra still could not evade in time!

Dong! Han Shuo's fist came pounding right in the center of the sword hilt of the icy crystal sword that Abra thrust out.

Energy which seemingly could topple mountains and overturn seas rushed towards sacred swordmaster Abra. All the fighting aura he used to resist was washed away in a split second. Only the frosty divine energy that came from the Ice Goddess barely withstood this vigorous force, which was wildly wrecking within his body as though a sword was stirring within.

A bleak, miserable howl, paired with a big mouthful of blood, forced their way out of Abra's mouth. He lost his balance. Just as he raised his head to look up at the sky, his body tilted to the back and started falling. He crashed against the rocky wall.

"Stop!" Ice Celestial Corey screamed as he charged over from below.

After the cold air currents entered his body, Han Shuo's speed continued to grow sluggish. But as Abra was very near to him, he still managed to land his attack.

Paying no mind to Ice Celestial Corey's shouting and charging, Han Shuo's right hand turned from a fist to a flat and straight palm, ruthlessly smacking Abra's heart.

"Abra! Run!" the two magi, who caught sight of the ordeal, again reminded him in a flurry.

Perhaps only Abra himself could see that there was no escape for him. Seeing the palm slamming towards his chest as fast as lightning, he exerted all his strength for a counterattack. He thrust his sword at Han Shuo's empty left hand, and clenched a fist with his left hand to throw at Han Shuo's palm that was slamming down.

Pow!

Like a peacock spreading its feathers, as Han Shuo's palm was about to make contact with Abra's punch, his fingernails dramatically grew to take the shape of Demonic Blades.

Before Abra could react, the Demonic Blades pierced through his fist with no difficulty, and continued their path through Abra's arm, finally piercing through his heart. Killed in one strike!

Drawing out his right hand drenched with blood, Han Shuo put on a callous grin. His smile was composed of three parts arrogance, one part calmness, and six parts ruthlessness.

Abra, whose heart was shattered, with his dread-filled eyes wide open, fresh blood spurting from his chest, collapsed to the ground.

It was only now that Ice Celestial Corey made over to him. Looking at the unfeeling grin on Han Shuo's face, Corey's heart sank and began to pound. However, he knew that if Han Shuo wasn't dead by today, the Shrine of Ice would never have another peaceful day. The shrine's prestige and solemnity would be destroyed sooner or later.

"Kill him! He must die!" Ice Celestial Corey demanded. He would spare no effort in making Han Shuo remain there forever.

Suddenly, Han Shuo who had just killed Abra, smilingly turned to Corey. With full composure, he moved towards the wall that Abra had been leaning against. Under Corey's gaze, the stone wall again inconceivably opened to reveal a tunnel, and Han Shuo calmly receded back into it.

Then, Han Shuo stood straight and tall in the tunnel inside the stone wall. Even as he directly faced Ice Celestial Corey who was about to mow him down, the smile on his face was as callous as before.

Ice Celestial Corey's injuries had yet to recover, his subordinates had yet to arrive at his side, and the two magi at the top were hardly prepared. The frightened Ice Celestial Corey suddenly slowed down his charging. Surprisingly, he dared not to directly confront Han Shuo.

In just two seconds, popping noises sounded from Han Shuo's body, and all the cold air currents that intruded his body was forced out using demonic arts.

"Hah, coward. Those cold streams were still in my body. You had your chance to kill me!" Han Shuo's body was no longer stiff. He grinned at Ice Celestial Corey and gave him a spiteful taunt.

When Han Shuo finished those words, Ice Celestial Corey's assistants arrived in successions, and the two magi at the top were finally fully ready.

Ice Celestial Corey's expression was ashen. Gnashing his teeth and shouting the word 'Kill', he finally took the lead and charged at Han Shuo.

It was exactly at this moment that Han Shuo took a step backward, and the wall in front of him again miraculously closed up. When Ice Celestial Corey closed the distance, all that was in front of him was a stone wall as smooth as a mirror, and Han Shuo was nowhere to be seen.

"Lord, my Lord, it won't do if we stay this way! If we continue exhausting time like this, the energy in the Ice Goddess' statue will all be gone!" when Ice Celestial Corey was again angrily cursing Han Shuo, one of the disciples finally voiced out to warn him.

Ice Celestial Corey suddenly felt enlightened as he recalled that within the statue of the Ice Goddess, that ugly creature was still hugging his test subject and sucking on its energy.

"Forget that filthy necromancer, finish that ugly thing first!" Ice Celestial Corey was shivering as he commanded his subordinates around him.

Ice Celestial Corey realized that he really had been driven mad by Han Shuo. It was only so that he would do something so unsensible. With his subordinate's reminder, Ice Celestial Corey was finally clear that he was being played by Han Shuo.

"As you wish, my Lord!" The disciples immediately put their hands to dealing with water elite zombie who was joyously absorbing energy inside the Ice Goddess statue.

# Chapter 482: What in the World Are You?

Just as Ice Celestial Corey and his party turned a blind eye to Han Shuo and instead turned their attentions to getting rid of water elite zombie, Han Shuo, who had just hidden himself within the stone wall using metal elite zombie's energy, suddenly shot out like a sharp sword.

"Watch out!" This time it was Ice Celestial Corey that shouted.

The two magi who had been staying on the platform above the Ice Goddess statue suddenly felt an intense air of bloodlust assaulting their noses. A nauseating mist of vaporized blood instantly enveloped Han Shuo.

Knowing that Ice Celestial Corey finally saw the situation clearly after being reminded, Han Shuo realized that his evasive hit-and-run tactic had become useless. However, Han Shuo still wanted to buy more time for water elite zombie to absorb the energy. He wanted to intercept them at this crucial moment, even if that meant the risk of sustaining injuries.

Of the party, the two magi that stood motionless at the top were the weakest, and yet could pose the greatest threat to Han Shuo. Now that Han Shuo decided to confront them directly, the only target he could kill in the shortest amount of time was none other than these two magi.

Therefore, Han Shuo carried not the slightest hesitation. He suddenly shot out from within the stone wall, and deliberately displayed an imposing demeanor so that Ice Celestial Corey would know what he planned to do, and that he had better temporarily give up on attacking water elite zombie.

However, this time, Ice Celestial Corey paid no heed to Han Shuo. After loudly shouting a reminder, he continued on charging towards the Ice Goddess statue. It looked as if he had actually sobered up from his insanity, and realized that having one godly existence is much more important than having two sacred magi.

This went against Han Shuo's expectations. When the two magi hastily evacuated in fear, Han Shuo gave up on chasing after the two. His body,

high up in the air, suddenly changed course. Carrying a cloud of blood formed by raging killing intent, he charged downwards at Ice Celestial Corey and the others.

As matters stood, Han Shuo had no choice but to fight head-on. He could no longer play hit-and-run guerrilla tactics or hide behind the stone walls.

When Corey raised his head and saw the blood cloud arriving from above, he immediately understood that it contained energy within it that could lay waste to all things. His look changed. The situation became clear to him at once. He suddenly brandished his sword at the blood cloud and shrieked, “Frost Nova!”

As though it had long been premeditated, right after Ice Celestial Corey’s shout of ‘Frost Nova’ sounded, cold lights shone magnificently in the eyes of the four sacred swordmasters beside him, and they brandished their swords to face the blood cloud’s attack. Ice Celestial Corey’s included, a total of five energies made of the mixture of fighting aura and divine energy granted by the Ice Goddess suddenly began converging at the blood cloud.

These five energies collided with each other within the blood cloud, which instantly produced a terrifying explosion of ice within the blood cloud. The ice explosion formed by the five energies was extremely violent, and completely covered the lump of blood cloud. It was simply too late for Han Shuo to escape. He sustained serious damage in the Ice Nova.

“Hahahah...” Corey howled with laughter, full of complacent.

‘Ice Nova’ was a secret technique of the Shrine of Ice. It was composed of a mixture of divine energy bestowed by the Ice Goddess and fighting aura. By colliding multiple of them together, it formed a large surface area ice blast. Those shrouded by the Ice Nova would be afflicted by terrifying icicles that possessed an unstoppable force.

After repeated rounds of defeat, Ice Celestial finally redeemed himself by using this secret technique. He was visibly delighted.

“Filthy necromancer. I want to see how you will escape this time,” Ice Celestial Corey cackled as he fixed his attention on the gradually

dissipating blood cloud along with the four sacred swordmasters beside him.

The bombardment of Ice Nova had dissipated the killing intent in the blood cloud. Han Shuo's body slowly revealed itself from the blood cloud.

All they could see was that Han Shuo's body was riddled with thousands of holes. His body looked as though he had been stabbed with hundreds of thousands incorporeal arrows, big and small. His chest was split open into a big hole, and his internal organs were all out in the open.

Han Shuo's appearance now was even more unsightly than a malicious spirit, with not a patch of intact skin on his body. The shelling of 'Ice Nova' left his body in desolation, the most dire state it had ever been in.

Without a doubt, Han Shuo was heavily injured by the 'Ice Nova'. This secret technique of the Shrine of Ice, jointly deployed by one demigod expert and four sacred swordmasters, had injured Han Shuo gravely!

Soon, Han Shuo's body was completely exposed. All of a sudden, Ice Celestial Corey, who had been laughing his heart out, ceased to laugh anymore. The complacency on his face was replaced with shock and inconceivability as he stared at the morbid, mangled Han Shuo.

Han Shuo's body was riddled with holes. His internal organs were visible through the massive wounds. Yet, not a drop of blood flowed from them!

What was even more unimaginable to Corey was that the badly mangled flesh on Han Shuo's body was slowly wiggling, with each of the wounds healing at a speed visible to the naked eye!

The sight was surreal!

In all likelihood, anyone that had seen such an unearthly scene would have been just as appalled as Ice Celestial Corey and his men, stupefied and at a complete loss.

This reaction originated in the instinctive fear of the unknown!

"What, what in the world are you?" Ice Celestial Corey, who had long subconsciously harbored an intense wariness towards Han Shuo, finally



could not constrain the fear in his heart, and cried out, his voice trembling. He looked anxiously at Han Shuo who was standing in midair with thousands of wounds from head to toe that were strangely free of any blood, but instead rapidly healing up.

Han Shuo forced a smile. He indeed suffered serious injuries from that Ice Nova. However, during the split second those icicles shot into his body, the extreme cold temporarily froze up his blood. This allowed Han Shuo, who possessed an abnormally valiant physical body, to contain his injuries within an extremely short amount of time.

With the circulation of demonic yuan, his muscle fibers absorbed and held onto all his blood. Therefore, after the frosty aura dispersed, not an ounce of blood left his system. Making use of his tenacious body, he rapidly healed up his wounds.

However, Han Shuo really had been injured! And his injuries were not insubstantial!

As his body had suffered such considerable damage, the whole restoration process of his physical body was going to consume an enormous amount of blood essence and demonic yuan. The rapid recovery process of Han Shuo's body, although inconceivably grotesque in Ice Celestial Corey's eyes, lost Han Shuo a lot of his firepower in battle.

However, this bitter smile on Han Shuo's sinister, hideous face that was still riddled with bloody cavities appeared to be a truly wicked smile that could make anyone numb to the scalp. In the eyes of Ice Celestial Corey and his party, that was absolutely the most terrifying scene they had ever seen in their lives.

Han Shuo noticed the trembling in Ice Celestial Corey's voice. The smile on Han Shuo's face left Corey and his party scared witless. Looking at the inconceivable Han Shuo, no matter how hard they tried, Ice Celestial Corey and his men couldn't make any mental association between Han Shuo and a human being.

Han Shuo seized the opportunity to rapidly heal the heavy wounds his body suffered and let out a laugh that oozes ruthlessness and savagery. He

even took advantage of the situation and interpolated his laughter with Demonic Siren, a demonic skill that could cause one's heart to be misled.

As expected, the already gutless Ice Celestial Corey, under the effect of Han Shuo's Demonic Siren, grew more and more terrified. When he again looked at Han Shuo's hideous appearance, Han Shuo seemingly transformed into a demonic existence of ancient times, which unintentionally took a hit from him, ripping apart his everyday disguise, and revealing his demonic nomenon.

"Which, which plane of existence did you come from? The Shrine of Ice is a religion of the Ice Goddess. What, what do you want?" one of the four sacred swordmasters suddenly cried out in fear, frantically taking a step backwards. This was partially due to the effect of the Demonic Siren, while on the other it was also because they truly dreaded Han Shuo.

"Who, who the hell are you?" When he shouted, it seemed to serve as a reminder to the others, causing another sacred swordmaster to also cry out in fear.

Ice Celestial Corey, looking at Han Shuo, who was still seriously injured, seemed to have come to a sudden realization. Thinking back on the brilliant skills of Han Shuo's that he had never seen before, he seriously thought that Han Shuo was not an existence originating from Profound Continent at all. With that, the fear in his heart flourished even more. His eyes already started flickering, rapidly considering his escape routes.

"We, we are the messengers of the Ice Goddess. You, don't you mess around!" Finally, under the effect of the Demonic Siren, on top of Han Shuo's strange behavior, Ice Celestial Corey began babbling nonsense with a shiver in his voice.

At this moment, water elite zombie suddenly transmitted, "Father, I am done!"

Han Shuo, who was howling with laughter, turned his head down and saw that the naked young lady had dried out to a mummified state without any water content, and its former beauty was nowhere to be seen. The enormous statue of the Ice Goddess abruptly collapsed as water elite

zombie communicated telepathically. Starting at its head, it crumbled and fell to ground.

“Hahaha... Hahaha...” Ice Celestial Corey and the others’ foolishness left Han Shuo unable to stop himself from laughing his head off. This time, the Demonic Siren wasn’t admixed.

“Boom!”

Above Han Shuo, metal elite zombie appeared out of nowhere and smashed his golden cudgel on the two birdbrained sacred magi, also scared witless by Han Shuo. They were reduced to meat patties.

“Screw it! Whichever plane of existence he came from, we will fight him to death!” When the Ice Goddess statue collapsed, Ice Celestial Corey once again went insane and charged recklessly into Han Shuo.

But at this moment, Han Shuo, his body inflicted with heavy damage, did not tangle any longer with the desperate Ice Celestial Corey. While still loudly laughing as before, he entered a tunnel that suddenly split open in the stonewall with water elite zombie, and calmly left the Shrine of Ice.

# Chapter 483: I Just Want to Be Stronger

With metal elite zombie paving the way, splitting up solid rock to make a long and narrow tunnel, those tight security measures of the Shrine of Ice were rendered useless. Han Shuo and water elite zombie followed behind metal elite zombie, quickly escaping.

The statue of the Ice Goddess was key to Project God Making. Developed by numerous great masters of alchemy and chemistry, the Ice Goddess statue was where Ice Celestial Corey entrusted all his hopes and dreams. Her collapse was like the stab of a sharp sword right through Corey's heart, causing him unbearable pain.

Metal elite zombie transmitted a report to Han Shuo, informing him that the great masters who erected the statue of the Ice Goddess were all killed by him. After losing these great masters who had intensively studied the subject for many years, Ice Celestial Corey's God making project could no longer be reinstated.

Although Han Shuo's body was heavily damaged by 'Ice Nova', he managed to successfully intimidate Ice Celestial Corey and the others by exploiting their fears of him with the help of Demonic Siren. However, when Han Shuo saw that Ice Celestial Corey once again sank into madness because of the Ice Goddess statue's collapse, knowing that the maddened Corey would not be easy to handle, he had no better option but to leave.

Only after walking quite some distance in the tunnel away from the chamber did Han Shuo turn around to look at water elite zombie who had absorbed a tremendous amount of energy. When he looked, he was shocked albeit happy for water elite zombie's transformation.

He saw that the water elite zombie, after absorbing the icy water energy within the Ice Goddess statue, underwent an earth-shattering transformation from his ordinary appearance. His thick brows turned slender and curved, his nose bridge raised, and his rough, dry skin became moist and as smooth as water. Even his dry hair turned glossy. The

ordinary-looking water elite zombie, after absorbing that energy, now seemed an elegant, handsome young man. And because of the energy in his body, this handsome young man even exuded a kind of beautifully bewitching quality!

A cloud of mist lingered around water elite zombie. Compared to his former self, the current water elite zombie was a world of difference in every way; appearance or demeanor.

What particularly shocked Han Shuo was – this transformation was still going on!

Han Shuo understood that the energy absorbed by water elite zombie was enormous, and the digestion process was not a short one. However, Han Shuo believed that once water elite zombie completely digested all that energy, he would bring Han Shuo even greater surprises.

“I shall send you back first. You need to quietly digest this energy!” After sensing the condition inside water elite zombie’s body, Han Shuo softly sang an incantation and sent water elite zombie back to the netherworld.

Soon after water elite zombie left, with metal elite zombie opening the path, they went back to the cliff they entered from located halfway up the mountain.

Standing outside the tunnel at the cliff, Han Shuo raised his head to gaze at the main peak covered with ice and snow. He said to himself, “Shrine of Ice, this is only the beginning of my vengeance!”

When he finished those words, Han Shuo sent metal elite zombie back to the netherworld. Given the injuries on his body, it was not wise for Han Shuo to stay there any longer. He found a suitable opportunity and flew away, turning into a streak of light as he beamed away from the snowfield of the Shrine of Ice.

Icicle City. Han Shuo lodged in a small and ordinary hotel.

For days, Han Shuo had locked himself up in his room night and day. During this time, he managed to stabilize the injuries on his physical body that he sustained at the Shrine of Ice.

This damage to Han Shuo's physical body required blood essence and demonic yuan to recover. This recovery process would not take much time at all. However, it would consume much of Han Shuo's blood essence and demonic yuan, which both required long periods of cultivation to accumulate to a sufficient amount. If too significant an amount was depleted, Han Shuo's strength would be harshly affected.

In just a short few days of time, Han Shuo's internals that were riddled with holes had all healed. Unfortunately, it also cost him quite a lot of blood essence and demonic yuan. After meditating for a few days, he somewhat regained his demonic yuan. But he had to take care not to use up too much blood essence in such short bursts.

It was only when Han Shuo's own injuries were stabilized that he recalled how Gilbert's soul was yet inside the Demonslayer Edge. The insides of the Demonslayer Edge was remotely a good place to be in. Any soul that entered the Demonslayer Edge would be corroded by it. Even though Han Shuo had specially vacated an area for Gilbert's soul, he still could not be kept inside for extended periods.

Han Shuo made use of certain materials currently available in his space ring. After spending another couple of days, he refined a Soul Depository Ring out of a translucent, shiny thumb ring. The main functionality of this Soul Depository Ring was to store souls.

In his room, he deployed a soundproofing magical boundary, and summoned a few wraths to guard outside the door. Only then did he withdraw the Demonslayer Edge.

With the Soul Depository Ring on his palm, Han Shuo slowly entered the Demonslayer Edge with his consciousness. The first thing he sensed was the main soul within the Demonslayer Edge fusing with the Crystal of Destruction. After that, based on his understanding of the interior of the Demonslayer Edge, he wandered about in the massive vault of souls within the Demonslayer Edge, seeking for Gilbert's aura that he was familiar with.

When sucking in Gilbert's soul into the Demonslayer Edge, Han Shuo

spaced out a region within the Demonslayer Edge specifically to place Gilbert's soul. After Han Shuo's consciousness entered the Demonslayer Edge, he quickly found that region based on his familiarity with Gilbert.

Within the Demonslayer Edge, there were all kinds of souls in addition to a ton of negative energy. Some of this energy was strong and some was weak, but they all possessed extremely corrosive powers. Even if it was dark dragon Gilbert, if Han Shuo had not specially divides a region for him, his soul would have been subjected to the corrosion of this energy, and might have even fuse with them, turning into a mighty force aiding in Demonslayer Edge's evolution.

When he found Gilbert's soul, Han Shuo relaxed a little. He hastily wrapped up Gilbert's soul with his consciousness, so that Gilbert wouldn't receive any influence from all kinds of corrosive energy within the Demonslayer Edge, and carried Gilbert out from the Demonslayer Edge little by little.

Han Shuo's consciousness could clearly sense the delight from Gilbert's soul. Gilbert sensed the aura of his master, and was therefore so obedient. Without making the slightest resistance, he followed Han Shuo's consciousness and left the Demonslayer Edge.

A wisp of dim ghostly light suddenly drifted out from the sword hilt of the Demonslayer Edge. When that wisp light completely parted from the Demonslayer Edge, Han Shuo casted two spells, one on the Soul Depository Ring, and another on Gilbert's soul.

Suddenly, the ghostly light turned into a fine thread and entered the Soul Depository Ring. The thumb ring was suddenly flowing with a faint green and lush light. That fine thread constantly twisted and wrapped into itself within the thumb ring. After a short period of time, a hazy, indistinct shadow was formed.

"Master, master is that you?" a very soft sound like an ant talking came from the thumb ring. The Soul Depository Ring could not only hold onto souls, with Han Shuo's refining, it could even transmit the thoughts of those souls.

“Gilbert you scoundrel! How can you be so disobedient!” When the familiar voice of Gilbert’s sounded, Han Shuo’s heart filled with sorrow.

“Master! My great master! I’m so happy! I can see you again! This is incredible! Haha...” When he heard Han Shuo speaking, Gilbert shouted incoherently from the Soul Depository Ring. But as only his soul was present, even though his shouting was amplified by the ring, it still sounded as soft as an ant speaking.

The familiar voice of Gilbert’s immediately made Han Shuo once more recall those years they previously spent together. But at present, Han Shuo had a complete body and soul, Gilbert, however, possessed only his soul. If it weren’t for Han Shuo using extraordinary means to keep Gilbert’s soul, it would have slowly obscured between heaven and earth with time.

“Idiot! Enough, now shut up!” Han Shuo scolded him smilingly, his heart was nevertheless filled with warmth. Afterwards, when Gilbert stopped babbling in the thumb ring, Han Shuo sternly said, “Gilbert, in theory, you are dead. But I’ve used some special methods to preserve your soul.”

“Master, I understand,” Gilbert said after keeping silent for a while.

Suddenly, Gilbert seemed to have recalled something. The shadow in the thumb ring was rapidly moving. Gilbert anxiously asked, “Oh right master, what happened to my grandpa and the family of dark dragons? Did they manage to escape the vicious attack from the Shrine of Ice?”

“Be at ease. You grandpa and the dark dragons all broke free from the Jedefrost Cage. They should currently be in the dark dragon’s canyon. Besides, ...” Han Shuo knew what Gilbert was worried about. Therefore, he explained once through what happened after his soul entered the Demonslayer Edge.

“Wahaha... nice one, master! Kill everyone from the Shrine of Ice for me! Humph, if it weren’t for the fact that I’m now dead, I would have made them pay the price, and killed each and everyone in the Shrine of Ice!” dark dragon Gilbert shouted.

“Gilbert, the reason I put you in this Soul Depository Ring and communicate with you is to give you a choice. With your soul now, I have



two ways of making you reappear in this world. One is to use necromancy magic and turn you into a bone dragon. Another is to use demonic arts and refine you into a demon general. I'm now letting you make your own choice!" explained Han Shuo.

"What's the difference?" Gilbert asked.

"If you choose bone dragon, you will only have a skeleton, but can still be considered as a dragon. But if you choose demon general, you won't be a dragon anymore," Han Shuo continued.

"Erm... Which one is stronger?" Gilbert asked once again.

"I think, demon general might be stronger!" Han Shuo replied.

"Demon general then. I just want to be stronger!" Gilbert answered resolutely.

# Chapter 484: Running into Sophie

Kasi Empire, Ciro City.

Ciro was the capital city of Kasi Empire, with a population size ranging in the millions. It was a big city that enjoyed a great reputation. Ciro City possessed beautiful landscapes and represented the unique cultures of Kasi Empire. At the same time, it was a city that promoted martial spirit.

Every three years, a large-scale auction sale would be held at Ciro city center. Over at the auction sale, one could buy truly rare and precious treasures. Everytime it was held, it never failed to attract all of the city bigwigs. So much so that even certain wealthy figures from surrounding countries would travel long distances to attend the sale.

During past auctions at Ciro City, not only did all sorts of treasures frequently make appearances, even divine weapons showed up twice. Divine weapon 'Starry Sky', which was currently in Phoebe's possession after it was obtained from Celt, had previously appeared at such an auction. It was repeatedly resold before Celt managed to acquire it.

This festival was a true spectacle. Other than just auction sales, there would also be all kinds of unusual items up for sale. Those who knew what was what could always be sure to walk away with whatever goods they desired.

Everytime such a large-scale auction sale was held, it attracted people from all walks of life, and this time was no exception. Even when Han Shuo heard about the grand occasion of the auction from Icicle City, he spent three thousands gold coins, and, through some illicit methods, managed to use the magical transportation array there to travel to Ciro City.

Han Shuo, whose injuries had yet to fully recover, on one hand, needed not only some materials to forge Gilbert's body, but also to ask about the recent situation over at Lancelot Empire. That was why he came to the capital city of Kasi Empire, Ciro City.

Compared to Ciro City, Icicle City was just a small town along the

borders of Kasi Empire. Dark Mantle footholds had yet to extend to this area. Therefore, in order to get accurate information about the Lancelot Empire, Han Shuo had to make a trip to a city of great significance to the empire, such as Ciro City.

The previous day, soon after Han Shuo arrived at Ciro City, he managed to get in touch with Dark Mantle members in Ciro City, and through their messages, he found out about the current situation in Lancelot Empire.

Just as Jack the little fatty said it would, Brettel City operated as usual then even without his presence. During this period, the army of Brettel City commanded by Dorcas, in addition to elite troops dispatched by King Lawrence of Lancelot Empire, officially launched military operations against the seven grand duchies.

Dorcas' outstanding talent, alongside the full backing of the empire, was a deadly combination.

In just the short span of a little more than a month, under Dorcas' command of an incomparably valiant army, and the seven grand duchies in the dark, they easily occupied the Bavenden Duchy. Then, with Bavenden Duchy as their military base, they successfully crushed the hastily united army of Bonton Duchy and Etman Duchy.

As Bavenden Duchy was located far from Brettel City, and Dorcas gave no warning before attacking, Bavenden Duchy had never expected that the Lancelot Empire would first go after the further duchy instead of the closer ones, and go far afield to take them down first. Caught off guard, they were in no condition to organize any effective resistance. In just one week's time, the military force of Bavenden Duchy was swept away, with Grand Duke Alec Ambridge killed in action.

Bonton Duchy and Etman Duchy in the surrounding areas, upon learning of the situation, immediately formed an alliance to resist, but nevertheless suffered a big defeat in their very first battle. And now, while the two duchies held fast to their city gates, they began making contact with the other few duchies at all costs, intending to join forces to deal with Lancelot Empire's ferocious invasion.

Of the remaining four duchies, Helen's Helon Duchy and Burt Zili's Boulet Duchy were effectively allied with Han Shuo. After Nehem Beige was killed by Han Shuo, Bisli Duchy sank into a great mess, and suffered disastrous damages under Burt Zili's attack. They wouldn't be able to put up any measurable resistance.

All that remained was Benedict Sackville's Narsen Duchy, which could be considered as having some military capability. However, with Helen and Burt Zili causing mischief in the dark, Han Shuo could be almost certain that this time, Benedict Sackville would not be able to escape from misfortune.

After Han Shuo learned of the circumstances and progress made in the assault against the seven grand duchies, he truly put down the rock in his heart. With the full support of Lancelot Empire, without Stratholme the old monster's hinderance, and with Helon Duchy and Boulet Duchy secretly assisting, this time, there would be no escape for the seven grand duchies.

Everything remained unchanged in Brettel City, and it became the supplier of weapons and foodstuffs to fuel Dorcas' war machine. When Dorcas prevailed over the enemy, he would utilize the powers in Brettel City to seize that country's resources and regime, simultaneously containing the situation and effectively administering the territory.

The situation was absolutely fantastic. This was the moment that Lancelot Empire would begin soaring.

While Lancelot Empire was carefreely invading, the Brut Merchant Alliance, however, was very much in a headache. As for lightning sacred magus Reynold, the late protector of Brut Merchant Alliance, his death brought the union losses beyond measure. What caused even greater headache for the Brut Merchant Alliance were the magical beasts flooding in from Tarrag Canyon. These beasts caused havoc in the cities surrounding Tarrag Canyon, destroying everything in their paths and attacking every human in sight.

The Brut Merchant Alliance was a nation constituted of multiple major

merchant guilds. Visiting and returning from all sorts of regions and countries, conducting commerce activities with them, those were the channels through which they reaped huge amount of profits. However, as magical beasts roamed throughout the land, all those merchants had no choice but to stay home. This caused insurmountable losses for the Brut Merchant Alliance, a country that relied mainly on trade.

Therefore, although the Brut Merchant Alliance was aware that the Lancelot Empire was infringing upon the seven grand duchies like wildfire and enjoying the spoils of war to the fullest, due to domestic disorder, they were fully occupied and had no time to deal with other matters. All they could do was to helplessly look on as Lancelot Empire constantly expanded its territory.

Han Shuo understood that the problems Brut Merchant Alliance would be confronted with weren't merely so. For the time being, those of the Soul Race inside Tarrag Canyon had yet to make a move. But this was likely because their six-horned tribal king was injured during the battle with the Saintess of the Church of Light. Once this six-horned tribal king recovered, the Brut Merchant Alliance would undoubtedly weep at least a few tears.

Standing on a harmonious street, Han Shuo stopped contemplating and carried on examining vendors' booths for goods that fit his needs.

It must be said that this so-called auction sale indeed owned a well-deserved reputation. Before the real auction sale had even started, among the various kinds of materials in the market, Han Shuo had procured two worthy items.

Weeping Wood. A close look at this wood revealed grain patterns that looked like tear stains. By grinding the wood into fine sawdust and then refining it with a few medicinal herbs, he could manufacture medicinal pellets that pacify the heart.

Vermiculite. When refining certain magical weapons that needed to be pliable but tough, Vermiculite could be utilized for constructing a weapon that possessed extreme toughness. In reforging Gilbert's body, this would

have the same effect as well. If Gilbert's bones were mixed with Vermiculite, his bones would become tougher and more durable.

Those were the two things Han Shuo got hold of in that morning. Vermiculite would prove especially useful for Gilbert.

If Gilbert had chosen bone dragon as the way to reborn, Han Shuo wouldn't have needed to spend as much time and effort. Placing Gilbert's soul into the netherworld and helping him reconstruct his skeleton with bones would suffice. However, since Gilbert had chosen to be a devil, Han Shuo had to spend a lot more energy. With his original skeleton as the foundation, he had to throw in all kinds of rare and precious materials to assemble him a new body.

As Han Shuo felt guilty for Gilbert, he made a firm resolution to make it up to Gilbert by forging his new body perfectly. That was why he went over there to gather these uncommon materials. He wanted to forge a body that would not only give him strength and energy, but also possess a demonic body with unlimited possibilities in his evolution.

"Huh? What's this? Can I have a look?" Walking down the street, Han Shuo constantly looked in all directions, seeking materials suitable for Gilbert. At that moment, he saw a deep black, unreflective stone the size of palm. From his consciousness, he felt faint traces of bizarre energy, and therefore inquired.

At the helm of the stand was an aged woman. She looked on dreamily at the traffic of people walking past. When she heard Han Shuo's inquiry, her attention immediately fell onto Han Shuo. From his outstanding physique, combined with his out of ordinary clothing, at first glance, she could tell that Han Shuo was liberal with his money. Especially seeing the space ring on his hand, which further testified to his wealth.

"Of course!" The old woman put on a fawning smile, and took the initiative to respectfully hand the stone to Han Shuo.

Holding onto the stone the size of a palm, his demonic yuan and consciousness entered the stone at the same time. After a round of analyzing with his eyes squinted, his eyes suddenly shone. Looking at the

old woman with all smiles, he asked, “Ma’am, how much is this?”

“That, my grandpa accidentally obtained that thing. It’s been quite a long time. Since you want it, five gold coins then,” the old woman answered after thinking for a while.

Pa! A bag of gold coins flung out from Han Shuo’s hand, and he bluntly said, “Here’s one hundred gold coins. I’m taking this!”

“Thank you, thank you!” The old woman was pleasantly surprised and quickly grabbed onto that bag of gold coins. Looking left and right, seeing that no one was watching, she hurriedly put away this bag of gold coins, closed up her stand, and left.

She had absolutely no idea of what use that stone was. The price of five gold coins was just a number she made up in her mind. One hundred gold coins was definitely a huge amount for her. It was for the fear that Han Shuo might renege on the deal that she so pressingly left.

Holding the Yuan Storage Stone, Han Shuo’s was rather satisfied. He carried on looking in all directions strolling randomly.

Suddenly, Han Shuo was startled, and looked ahead somewhat astonished.

He saw that a youthful, beautiful young lady, wearing a faint, tranquil smile, was looking around full of zest in front of a vendor’s booth. Shockingly, it was precisely the same beautiful young lady that went through the misfortune with him in Dark Forest – Sophie!

# Chapter 485: The Grand Disintegrator

A few years earlier at the Dark Forest, Han Shuo, Sophie, and fire grand magus Marceau of Brut Merchant Alliance joined forces to explore the place of extreme fire. However, when trouble came, Marceau blatantly abandoned them. But in the end, with Han Shuo and Sophie working as one, they managed to get away from the danger.

Sophie was of Kasi Empire nationality. Her father, Sulo, was a renowned sacred knight of Kasi Empire. Han Shuo had already known this from the start.

Who would have imagined that after so many years, Han Shuo would so coincidentally bump into Sophie the first time he visited Kasi Empire. Back then, before Han Shuo and Sophie parted ways at the Dark Forest, Sophie urged Han Shuo to look for her if he ever visited Kasi Empire.

Separated by seven or eight meters, staring at the beautiful Sophie, observing her as she picked out tiny, delicate ornaments full of zest, Han Shuo could not contain himself from laughing. All along this seemingly endless street, all sorts of items were up for sale. There was no lack of genuinely priceless trinkets. Regardless, Sophie was not in the least interested in exquisite war machines, but lingered over at a booth selling small ornaments.

It seemed that every woman had an innate desire to look beautiful. This sort of ornament that was garish and delicate but had no practical use whatsoever, unexpectedly, triggered tremendous temptation in Sophie.

A few years had gone by in the blink of an eye. The already beautiful and moving Sophie, like a bud blooming into a flower, looked more beautiful than ever.

Gazing at this beauty from a distance, Han Shuo did not advance forward to meet her although he desired to. Of this beautiful young lady, Han Shuo held a pretty good impression. Previously at the place of extreme fire, the grand fire magus wanted to entrap Han Shuo, but was stopped by this kind-hearted lass.



This time at Kasi Empire, the things Han Shuo had done at the Shrine of Ice would have made him a public enemy to the entire Kasi Empire. Once Han Shuo and Sophie intersected, it could very possibly spell trouble for Sophie. Although Sophie's father was a sacred knight of great influence on Kasi Empire, he was nowhere close when compared to the Shrine of Ice, whether in terms of strength or influence.

Therefore, Han Shuo only looked at Sophie for a short while before he silently left. He deliberately took a detour to make some distance with Sophie before carrying on his shopping at this harmonious street, continuing to seek material suitable for refining Gilbert's body.

That Yuan Storage Stone that Han Shuo previously obtained from the old woman was very useful for demonic arts cultivators. As the name implies, the Yuan Storage Stone could store yuan essence and demonic yuan. Among its uses was refining certain extraordinary magical weapons. It could improve a weapon's tolerance to demonic yuan, in addition to speeding up the circulation of demonic yuan inside the weapon.

When reforging Gilbert's body, as long as this Yuan Storage Stone completely integrated into the skeleton, it would be of great service to Gilbert in making rapid progress in the future. Exchanged with merely one hundred gold coins was simply a steal.

It was precisely because in just one morning Han Shuo had obtained three different uncommon goods that he was rather looking forward to this auction sale at Kasi Empire. With exuberant energy, Han Shuo did not pause to rest at all. After evading Sophie, he continued looking for things that suited him.

Possessing a consciousness with wonderful sensory power, on top of his discerning eyes, this time, Han Shuo really reaped a considerably plentiful harvest. In the afternoon, he successively obtained seven or eight exotic materials that could be mixed into the body and skeleton. It was not until dusk when the vendors began to close for the day that Han Shuo reluctantly left the area.

Tomorrow, the action sale would officially begin. Compared to goods

sold at those booths, the auction sale that went on three day in a row were the real deal. The items exhibited at the auction sale were, every last one of them, precious treasures that had been authenticated. Some invaluable and unique treasures would also make appearances rather frequently.

After returning to the small hotel where he currently stayed, Han Shuo closed the door, laid out a soundproofing and an early warning magical formation. He then took out the Soul Depository Ring and began communicating with Gilbert's soul.

Throughout the past several days, Han Shuo had become accustomed to talking nonsense with Gilbert. Inside the Soul Depository Ring, dark dragon Gilbert was extremely bored. All day long he would worry if his new physical body would cause him to lose certain capabilities and appetite for males. Even with Han Shuo assuring him in every way possible, his concerns remained undiminished.

Gilbert's physical body had been destroyed. But even with just his soul left, those vile practices of dark dragons nevertheless remained deeply-rooted. It seemed that as long as his soul didn't perish, dark dragon Gilbert's nature was unlikely to change much.

"Don't worry, I will look for the rarest and most precious materials, with your original skeleton as the foundation, and a human body structure as the standard, reconstruct you a body to your satisfaction. This body will be even mightier than the body of dark dragons, and possesses unlimited possibilities in evolving. Those desires and sexual ability you so worried about will only get stronger, and you definitely will not turn into a court eunuch," Han Shuo got a headache from Gilbert's clamoring and had to again reassure him.

"That truly is fantastic. Luckily I did not choose bone dragon. A dragon with only bones but without that organ, that would rid me a lot of pleasure!" dark dragon Gilbert was churning inside the Soul Depository Ring as he shouted in excitement.

"Alright. You better behave yourself. Thoroughly comprehend those memories I gave you. It is a martial skill to make your soul even stronger.

You better spend more effort on that,” Han Shuo exhorted.

There were all kinds of secret martial techniques in the school of demonic arts. There were even secret techniques that specifically tempered one’s soul. As long as dark dragon Gilbert cultivated in accordance to that secret technique, his soul would grow stronger and stronger. When he attained a certain amount of strength, he could appear in front of Han Shuo without using the Soul Depository Ring. Moreover, his soul would not gradually dissipate between heaven and earth as time passed.

Certain malicious spirits in the world, under some extraordinary circumstances, came to master similar techniques. It was only so that their souls didn’t disperse away with each day that passed but slowly strengthened instead. Then, up to a certain point, they could even wrest control of a human’s body, and be reborn into the world.

The technique that Han Shuo passed onto dark dragon Gilbert was precisely a technique found in demonic arts to refine ferocious spirits. Any ordinary soul, so long as they were willing to make painstaking efforts to cultivate, was capable of becoming a dreadful, ferocious spirit, and being free from the constraints of the laws of nature. Dark dragon Gilbert already possessed an exceedingly strong soul to begin with. As long as he practiced according to Han Shuo’s method, he would not need too much time before he could completely break away from the Soul Depository Ring. It would also continue to be extremely beneficial to him even after his soul had re-attached to his reforged physical body.

“Master, how you know so much about this random stuff? I have never ever heard of such martial arts for cultivating the soul. How did you come to learn of these?” After cultivating for a few days, Gilbert recognized just how effective the technique was as his soul grew more and more tenacious. In the beginning, after just few minutes of talking with Han Shuo, his soul would be drained of energy. But after cultivating this technique for a few days, he could persistently talk with Han Shuo for more than an hour.

“What for do you ask so much? Practice well. After some time, when you

have a new body, you will know what benefits it has!” Han Shuo lectured.

“Alright, alright! You are so annoying!” Gilbert replied in a petulant manner, and only then, he unwillingly stopped talking. He quieted down in the Soul Depository Ring, and slowly tempered his soul.

When Gilbert finally stopped talking, Han Shuo slowly sank into contemplation. During this period, Han Shuo did not continue to cultivate in demonic arts. Having reached Carnal Realm, Han Shuo did not deliberately compel himself to advance further into demonic arts, but let it go with the flow.

On the contrary, with regards to necromancy magic, Han Shuo did spend some effort. Of the three boundaries – fear, weakness, and aging – Han Shuo had mastered two, fear and weakness. In certain large-scale battles, these two boundaries could substantially weaken the enemy’s fighting strength, and could serve as a game-changer and situation reverser.

It was only the most mysterious and most miraculous Boundary of Aging that was truly beyond Han Shuo’s capacity for the time being. With no clue on how to set about and unable to grasp the solution, he did not continue on a wild goose chase, not squandering too much energy on studying this boundary. Rather, he spent time trying to master the last magic in the level of necromancy grand magus – the Grand Disintegrator.

This necromancy magic called Grand Disintegrator was the trademark magic of necromancers. It was also an extremely devastating magic. As the name implies, the Grand Disintegrator could disintegrate the enemy’s body. Any expert on the receiving end would split up into pieces and die in no time.

The only problem was that such terrifying magic was equally difficult to be executed. Even if successfully done, the Grand Disintegrator required a certain probability to unleash that kind of power. Even for necromancers exceedingly proficient in this magic, of five Grand Disintegrator spells released in a row, only one would be a success.

For some necromancers who did not have a deep understanding of the essence of necromancy, their probabilities were even lower. Some would

only pull off one in ten shots. There were also variations to the destructive power released in the Grand Disintegrator. On the high end, the receiver could be instantly killed. On the lower end, it would only leave cuts on the opponent's body like sharp weapons being traced across.

It was during the two previous days when Han Shuo was recuperating from his injuries that he truly figured out the magic, although he had yet to become extremely proficient in it. Now that Gilbert stopped being so wordy, Han Shuo continued on studying this trademark magic of necromancers, in addition to reckoning when he should experiment the spell on a living person.

Unwittingly, yet another night had passed. Starting early in the morning, boisterous clamoring came from outside of the hotel. Today was the first day of the auction sale. Han Shuo stopped his studying early on and hurried to the scene, hoping to obtain an even greater harvest today.

# Chapter 486: Being Pursued

Han Shuo started the day by loitering about a dazzling lineup of booths selling all kinds of odds and ends. Luck seemed to be on his side. In just a short stroll, he had gotten his hands on two chunks of clay rocks.

As the sun gradually rose high up above the sky, the nobles appeared more and more frequently along the street. They wore luxurious clothing and travelled on either tall horses or chariots. They did not stop over at the bustling street, but headed directly towards the auction place.

All thanks to the appearance of these characters, the originally congested street was cleared an empty path by a large body of knights specifically dispatched by the city defense troops of Kasi Empire. On Profound Continent, the nobilities always got to enjoy certain privileges. Those who could gain entrance into the auction place were definitely very wealthy and high-born. Naturally, Kasi Empire would treat these characters with special care.

Those commoners, abjected swordsmans, struggling merchants, poverty-stricken mages, they could only stand on the two sides of the street. While looking on with envy at those with their heads high and chests puffed as they headed towards the auction place under the protection of knights, they spontaneously stepped aside to make a clear path, lest they be an obstruct and make a rod for their own back.

One after another, sumptuous carriages passed by in the most pompous manner. There were even delicate drawings and coats of arms representing the passengers' identities on those carriages.

There were all too many pedestrians on the street. And now, having to make way for these nobilities, pedestrians were shoulder to shoulder with each other. With that, the unavoidable bumping into each other further added to the already clamorous noises.

Standing among the crowd, at this moment, Han Shuo couldn't help but furrow his brows. Stuck in the sardine can crowd, Han Shuo was unable to move an inch. At such a place as an outlander, as not to risk committing

taboos and offend the locals, Han Shuo did not take off to the air to get ahead, as he usually would. It was also discourteous to shove people aside with brute force. All Han Shuo could do was blend in and wait it out.

But the good thing was that Han Shuo was tall, with wide shoulders. Standing amongst the crowd, he naturally appeared way above the common, manifestly superior. When Han Shuo creased his brows, that imposing demeanor was inadvertently divulged. If it wasn't for the fact that they had no other ground to step on, those around Han Shuo would never draw so close to him.

"Eh? Miss Sophie! That's Miss Sophie!" a cry of surprise suddenly sounded from among the crowd.

"That can't be her. I've met that beautiful lady right here just the day before yesterday. She bought a pendant at my stall, and even haggled half a day with me for two gold coins! How could that be Miss Sophie? Are you mistaken?" a stall owner standing beside the first person exclaimed his disbelief.

"Don't be silly, this lady rides on a white pegasus, and looks like a damn angel, who else could it be other than Miss Sophie? Ha, you must have had her confused for someone else. A lady like that would never haggle half the day over two gold coins!" the other person replied disdainfully.

Rounds and rounds of discussions about Sophie sounded again and again. Many of the remarks about Sophie fell into Han Shuo's ears incidentally. From the discussions of those people surrounding him, Han Shuo discovered that Sophie had an enormous reputation in Kasi Empire. And it was not simply because her father was a sacred knight.

At such a young age, Sophie was already a sky rider, merely one rank below that of her father Sulo, a sacred knight. On top of that, Sophie was a summoner. Her strength was enigmatic and unpredictable to say the least. Other than being outstandingly gifted, what was most attractive about Sophie was her kind heart and amiable, approachable personality. There was no lack of hearsays about her helping those impoverished and in need.

In the hearts of the people of Kasi Empire, the pure and honest Sophie was simply the ideal woman. Especially in the hearts of many young ones, Sophie was without doubt their goddess.

Standing in the middle of all the clamor, Han Shuo passively received countless positive news about Sophie. Han Shuo, who already had a pretty good impression of Sophie in the first place, felt somewhat touched in his heart as he gazed afar at Sophie slowly moving forward on her spotlessly white pegasus.

Han Shuo had already seen Sophie yesterday along the congested street. Compared to her distanced style today, Han Shuo much preferred her amicable manner of yesterday.

Riding on a hercules, Sophie wore a faint smile on her face. However, when she recalled of the person inside the carriage beside her, she could not contain a sigh. Even thoughts grumbling about her father somehow crossed her mind.

The curtain was lifted open from the inside of the carriage moving alongside Sophie, revealing a handsome young face. When this young man foolishly looked at Sophie, the fervent heat in his gaze was hardly concealed. Although he did not utter a word, any fool could make out the intense desire to possess from his eyes.

“Fifi, the reason I’m going to the auction sale this time, is to look for a treasure that fits you,” the young man looking at Sophie with all smiles, leaning out from the carriage, said in the corniest manner.

Sophie reluctantly put on a smile and replied, “No, no need. You know, I’m not interested in those things!”

“How will that do! My House of Pillon is of royal blood. Your father has already agreed to our marriage. As the wife of I, Braque, you shall be the most beautiful, most graceful, and most magnificent woman. There must be treasure adorned on you!” Braque said decisively.

These words of Broque’s gave Sophie a great headache. Braque was the son of Prince Bradley Pillon, and the nephew of His Majesty the King, Brady Pillon. The Pillon royal family was the de facto ruler of Kasi Empire.



Sophie's father, Sulo, without first asking for her consent, formally agreed to the marriage. This put Sophie at her wit's end.

Braque, son of Prince Bradley Pillon, could still be considered a clean character in the nobility of Kasi Empire. There weren't too many negative rumors spreading around in recent years. The eloquent Braque was a rising star in the political arena of Kasi Empire. By means of his Pillon royal family and its influences, he rose higher and higher in his career. He was truly on a roll in Kasi Empire.

Sulo agreed to the marriage proposal. It did not matter if Sophie was willing or not. In this world where men made the rules, Sophie was already considered to be Braque's fiancée. Having been indoctrinated with etiquette since she was young, Sophie could not bring herself to display any behaviour that would be deemed impolite in formal settings. Even this time, unable to defy her father's instruction, she reluctantly agreed to appear in public with Braque.

Listening to Braque jabbering on and on about his unfettered imagination of their future, Sophie's heart sank deeper and deeper. As a sky rider with extraordinary strength, Sophie had not even a mildly favorable impression of Braque, an aristocrat who was no good at magic, and did not practice martial arts, but whom had a growing hunger for political power.

If it weren't for the Pillon royal family being extremely powerful, if not for her father's forcing, Sophie would still be happily shopping the booths on the bustling street, instead of serving as Braque's prop, accompanying him to that auction place where the elite gathered.

In her heart, Sophie was incredibly distressed. She simply closed her ears to Braque chattering beside her. Riding on her pegasus, she wore a peaceful, faint smile. Her gaze swept aimlessly across the packed crowd, trying to alleviate the loathing chatter in her ears by putting her attention on other things around her.

All of a sudden, a tall, upright silhouette fell into Sophie's line of sight. Among the crowd of people standing at roughly 1.7 meters tall, Han Shuo's

1.9 meter tall magnificent physique was a crane in a flock of chickens. Besides, in the overcrowded stream of people, it appeared rather spacious around him, which further attracted the attention of onlookers.

At first, Sophie only randomly shot a glance. From her point of view, she could only see Han Shuo's lateral side. However, the distinct outline of Han Shuo's half-face gave Sophie a familiar feeling. Her curiosity had gotten the better of her when she began to carefully observe Han Shuo, and the sense of familiarity only grew from there.

As she slowly strode forward on her pegasus, Sophie's view of Han Shuo gradually changed. By the time she could clearly see Han Shuo's face, Sophie could not help but cover her mouth and cry out in surprise. Her eyes overflowed with a look of fondness. At this moment, Han Shuo, who had been looking in all directions and using his consciousness to look for goods, suddenly felt a gaze firmly locked on him. Han Shuo creased his brows, and instinctively turned to look towards its source. He immediately saw Sophie's pleasantly surprised eyes and her beautiful appearance.

He took a shock and came to his senses. He recalled that because of his height, he would appear rather unusual in such a crowd of people. As not to bring about trouble for Sophie, Han Shuo gave up on searching this area for materials that could refine Gilbert, hurriedly turned around, forced others aside and left.

With a push of his shoulders, all those strangers leaning close to him were knocked off balance one after another. For a moment, profanities filled the air. However, when they saw that imposing silhouette, they shut their mouths at once.

Sophie, staring fixedly from a distance, when she saw Han Shuo hurriedly departing, immediately let out a cry. Her slender, lily-white hand gently patted the white pegasus atop which she sat before pointing in the direction Han Shuo was leaving.

The pure white pegasus which deliberately flew in low altitudes, sensing the eagerness of its master, immediately spread its wings and soared in accordance with the command received, searching for Han Shuo from

above the sky.

“Huh? Miss Sophie, What, what’s the matter?” a middle aged knight ahead of Braque queried.

Braque, who had been staring fixedly at Sophie, suddenly found that his target was becoming further and further from himself. He too spontaneously raised his head at Sophie and shouted, “Where are you going? What’s the matter with you?”

“I’m sorry, Braque. I suddenly met a friend I have not seen for many years!” Riding on a pegasus in the air, Sophie smiled apologetically at Braque before again extending her hand to pat the shoulder of her pegasus.

Whoosh! Under Sophie’s instructions, the pegasus had identified the direction and chased after Han Shuo a distance away.<

# Chapter 487: Mischievous Sophie

Han Shuo was very clear about the footing the Shrine of Ice had in Kasi Empire, and therefore he was most unwilling to bring Sophie any unnecessary troubles. Even though her father was a sacred knight, once implicated with Han Shuo, the probability of things ending well for her was slim.

The only thing that Han Shuo did not quite anticipate was that Sophie would actually chase after him in the eyes of the public. Seeing Sophie charge at him on her pegasus, Han Shuo was between laughter and tears.

“Hey! That’s Miss Sophie!” The people always loved noise and excitement. As onlookers raised their heads one after another and saw the beautiful Sophie soaring over their heads on a pegasus, a huge commotion erupted.

They looked ahead in the direction Sophie was flying. Han Shuo’s rapidly departing figure immediately gathered the attention of the crowd. The pleasant surprise on Sophie’s face made it apparent that Han Shuo was running away not because he had done something bad. The scene of Han Shuo, who was exceptionally well-dressed, escaping with a bitter smile, with Sophie happily pursuing, could definitely bring about countless wild and fanciful thoughts. Consequently, the crowd got perhaps the wrong impression.

Could it be that this man was, in fact, the one that the beautiful Sophie actually fancied?

Momentarily, such a conjecture somehow arose in the minds of many as the scene played out. They then turned to look at the son of the prince, Braque, and saw that he was anxiously reproaching from where he stood. Every commoner in sight seemed to take pleasure in Braque’s misfortune, and began discussing in whispers without the slightest scruple while exchanging meaningful glances.

“Ha. Interesting. It seems that Miss Sophie already had a sweetheart.”

“Yah yah. It appears that Braque is showering affection on an

uninterested party. I had long heard that it was a one-sided relationship. He made oldman Sulo agree to the marriage by exploiting his father's influences. Now it seems that this was indeed the case."

"That's right. Those amiable and approachable nobles like Miss Sophie are true nobles. Although Braque's family is wealthy, he pursues fame and profit a little too much to be a suitable match for Miss Sophie."

From time to time, such a conversation would ensue from among the crowd of people jam-packed on the clamorous street. One after another, these people who rejoiced in Braque's misfortune would cast looks of despise at Braque's luxurious carriage, as though mocking Braque for his inaptness.

"Damn it! What is the background of that asshole? Sophie is such a honorable character, how could she get acquainted with somebody muddled with those peasants?!" Braque saw Han Shuo's back distantly from inside his carriage. His ears unintentionally picked up a certain remarks that infuriated him, filling him with fury.

"Young master, never have I ever seen or heard of that man before. I believe that this was just an excuse Miss Sophie made up to keep away, young master. She wasn't willing to go to the auction sale with you and therefore did this on purpose!" a knight beside the carriage said in a low voice.

Suddenly, a cry of amazement sounded from afar, "Lift off! He lifted off! Damn, that's fast!"

Braque was shocked and immediately gazed into the distance. He saw Han Shuo's outstanding body take off to the sky, leaving behind a streak of fine thread as he rapidly flew away. Behind Han Shuo, Sophie tightly pursued him on her spotlessly white pegasus. Her silhouette transformed into a white dot, and finally faded away completely from sight.

"Now that was impressive! He must be a honorable magus. Perhaps even a grand magus! No wonder, no wonder Miss Sophie would do such a thing. Ha, only such a young, outstandingly talented magus would be deserving of Miss Sophie."

“That’s right. Definitely a talented but modest chap! Oh yes, he is definitely a amiable nobleman just like Miss Sophie. He even bought a rock from me just a moment ago. Ha, only such a character could match Miss Sophie.”

Sitting inside his carriage, Braque was, at first, only somewhat angry. But when Han Shuo streaked across the sky, Braque became truly furious. Immediately, in a deep voice, he said to the knight beside him, “Thuram, get to the bottom of who the hell this guy is!”

“Understood, young master!” Thuram knew what it meant for a person with the ability to fly. As a servant, he was well-versed with what he had to do next given the emergence of this character who could threaten Braque.

Han Shuo incessantly cried and laughed in his heart as he sped away using the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens. He was absolutely unwilling to let Sophie catch him and land herself in trouble. Otherwise, not only would Sophie be at stake, but her entire family could possibly be exterminated because of him. Who would have imagined that this woman would be so insistent. Even as she clearly saw Han Shuo avoiding her, she went as far as to actively chase after him. Han Shuo would have never expected such a thing.

With one running and another pursuing, very soon, the two came to a fairly remote block. Seeing that there was no one around, Han Shuo intended to deploy his demonic arts to the fullest to shake Sophie off. But all of a sudden, he heard a shout with pauses in between gasping for breath, saying, “Han! You stop right now!”

Han Shuo was bemused. Seeing that he could not shake Sophie off, he decided to explain the situation to her instead. Looking left and right, he weaved through the deserted streets at a moderate speed. After a short while, he lead Sophie, who was vigorously running after him, to a silent, spacious public square.

Han Shuo finally stopped, and stood still on a stone step in the square. He turned around to look at Sophie who had chased him all the way here, forced a smile and said, “It’s been a while!”

“You, why are you avoiding me?” Sophie’s pegasus gently touched down. She looked at Han Shuo, confused. Her tone exuded a sense of grief.

“I don’t want to cause you any trouble. You have been living fine and well here in Kasi Empire. But if you were to be implicated with me, you and your family will suffer.” For the fear that Sophie would persevere and continue her vigorous chasing, Han Shuo explained to her in a stern and deep voice.

When Han Shuo said those words, there was no hiding Sophie’s shock. The expression on her beautiful face immediately changed. After glancing around and seeing that no one else was around, she carefully asked in a very low voice, “Have you done something bad? Are you in trouble?”

Nodding, Han Shuo open-heartedly admitted, “That’s right. Something very bad!”

“Tell me about it. My father is rather powerful in Kasi Empire. Maybe I can help you!” Sophie was kind. She did not just want to stay and talk to Han Shuo, she wished to aid him however she could.

“Forget about it. Not even your father can help me,” Han Shuo flatly declined. Then, looking unflinchingly at Sophie, he continued, “I will stay in Kasi Empire for some days. You must not come in any form of contact with me. Just act as though you don’t know me.”

“How will that do!” Sophie wouldn’t let off easily, and in a most conscientious voice, she said, “Back in the Dark Forest, you once saved my life. And no matter what, we are friends. Now that you are in trouble, how could I pretend to not know? Besides, I promised you at that time that if you came to Kasi Empire, I would receive you well.”

“I’m not in trouble. It is you that will be in trouble if you so insist,” Han Shuo explained. The more Sophie acted this way, the more unwilling Han Shuo was to let her attract troubles.

But well, who knew that this woman was really quite the stubborn one. Sophie replied to Han Shuo in a righteous tone, “What trouble could I get into?! Calm down, nothing will ever happen to me. Haha. It’s such a rare occasion to have you in Kasi Empire. Therefore, no matter what, I, as the

host, must properly thank you for you saved my life.”

“Lady, the one I offended is the Shrine of Ice. Do you think you can handle them?” When Han Shuo saw that Sophie was being so persistent, for the lack of better option, he revealed the identity of his enemy, the Shrine of Ice.

As expected, when the three words ‘Shrine of Ice’ were uttered, Sophie gasped. She stared at Han Shuo in appall for a while, before gently and cautiously asking, “Han, what’s going on? Why would you offend the Shrine? I know that you are a citizen of Lancelot Empire, but I don’t know you particularly well. How did you get yourself into this?”

Listening to Sophie’s words, Han Shuo realized that Sophie likely hadn’t been informed of his actual identity. Back then during their encounter at the Dark Forest, Han Shuo called himself ‘Bryan Han’ without thinking the matter through. Sophie had never heard of this name and assumed that the name Han Shuo informed was a false name. She probably had yet to associate Han Shuo with that city lord of Brettel City in Lancelot Empire.

“As for how or why we became enemies, that’s none of your concern. In any case, the Shrine of Ice will never let me off. So you better not be associated with me,” Han Shuo replied.

“But as long as the Shrine doesn’t find you, there won’t be an issue, won’t there?” Against Han Shuo’s expectations, Sophie made a crafty smile and took out two round, brownish fruits from her space ring. She handed one of them to Han Shuo and confidently explained, “My friend gave me these. After kneading it for a while and applying it to your face, you can alter your appearance. No one will be able to make it out.”

As Sophie spoke, she demonstrated to Han Shuo. She slowly kneaded the round fruit between her hands until it formed a thick, sticky substance. Then, she pointed at her own charming face before slowly applying the substance to her face and massaging her cheek and edges in front of Han Shuo.

From the looks of things, this was certainly not the first time Sophie had done this. Without using any mirrors, but merely relying on her practiced



hands, after just a short moment, her face underwent an enormous transformation. Sophie's fair skin turned wheat-brown. Her cheeks and face contour transformed as well. From a beauty, she turned into a most ordinary-looking young lady. Even the skin on her neck and hands altered. Certain pharmacist possessed remarkable skills in formulating medicines. In fact, Han Shuo was also in possession of these drugs called Polyfruit, previously gifted by Cecilia. This time at Kasi Empire, as Han Shuo was emphatically not afraid of his identity being revealed, he did not use the Polyfruit.

"Ha! Magical isn't it? You definitely can't recognize me now!" Sophie proudly exclaimed after altering her appearance. Afterwards, she took out a small mirror and pointed it at Han Shuo. All smiles, she said, "Hurry, you just gotta change your looks a little with the fruit, and no one will recognize you. If the Shrine of Ice can't find you, I cannot be implicated."

Well, even the materials were all prepared. Han Shuo truly could not find another reason to decline. With no choice, he forced a smile and began kneading the Polyfruit. When the medicine liquefied into a sticky substance, following Sophie's instructions, he slowly applied it to his face.

But Han Shuo was obviously not skilled at this. More often than not, his unpolished hands would turn his appearance into something hideous and frightening. Even after fiddling for ages, Han Shuo could not shape a passable appearance. Considering that the effect would fade as time passed, Sophie hesitated for a moment before suggesting somewhat bashfully, "Let me do it for you!"

Without waiting for Han Shuo to answer, Sophie suddenly extended her slender jade-like hands and placed them on Han Shuo's cheeks. She began altering the outline of Han Shuo's face bit by bit in accordance with her familiarity and understanding of the Polyfruit.

Although the skin colour on Sophie's two hands had changed, they were still gentle and smooth as they rested on Han Shuo's cheeks. Especially when Sophie rubbed with her palms, which looked like two lovers flirting with each other, giving Han Shuo a kind of peculiar sensation.

Sophie was evidently also somewhat embarrassed. Although, due to the changes to her skin, her blushing was barely visible, Han Shuo nevertheless caught her uneasiness from her eyes.

“Done. What do you think?” As Han Shuo indulged in flights of fancy, Sophie suddenly stopped and said in a self-congratulatory manner.

In the mirror Sophie held up, an appearance unfamiliar to Han Shuo revealed itself. This person had a mellow chin and thick cheeks, a face only a morbidly obese man would have. Looking at the face in the mirror, Han Shuo involuntarily recalled Jack the little fatty.

“Hah! Exceptionally ordinary!” Han Shuo replied in a bitter smile as he looked into the mirror.

From the mirror, when he made a smile in the simple and honest face, he saw a guileless and honest look from every angle. And yet again, Jack the little fatty came to mind. This further intensified his forced smile.

“Let me tell you, a fatty is the least eye-catching! Hehe, it’s true. There are fatties all over the streets. No one will think of your original appearance,” Sophie explained with an air of professionalism before she giggled and added, “Moreover, the edges of your face are too prominent. Not the best material to disguise. It is only with chubby face that they could be concealed. Ha, I didn’t expect that after turning into a fatty, you would look quite so cute! Hehe!”

Seeing Sophie in giggly manner, Han Shuo felt as though Sophie intentionally turned him into a fatty. It was as if she would be happier the uglier he became. “Whatever. Do as you please,” Han Shuo said helplessly, not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

“Here, stuff this into your stomach!” Sophie took out a small pillow from her space ring and chuckingly handed it to Han Shuo. She clarified, “As you should know, a fatty should have a potbelly... Otherwise one can’t be called a fatty!”

When she said those words, a trace of mischievous glee flashed in Sophie’s eyes, which Han Shuo coincidentally caught sight of.

With that, Han Shuo could be absolutely certain that Sophie did so on purpose. But Han Shuo knew that Sophie did not have any intentions of malice. In any case, his face was already plump. Without voicing any opinions, he took the small pillow that Sophie handed him and stuffed it under his robes. With that, a slightly rotund tummy took shape.

“Ha, not bad! Not bad at all! You take a look!” Seeing Han Shuo with a bulging stomach, Sophie let out a somewhat malicious laughter. She took multiple looks at Han Shuo’s little belly with the mirror in her hand, and even complacently patted it. Convulsing with laughter, she said, “I shall pardon you this time. Let’s see if you dare turn on your heel and flee like a bat out of hell when you see me in the future!”

It was only now that Han Shuo became aware why Sophie did so. As it turned out, this was to retaliate Han Shuo’s evasion earlier. It seemed that women were indeed vengeful and unforgiving creatures. Even a lady as kind Sophie was no exception, stubbornly punishing Han Shuo with this practical joke.

Indeed, women must not be offended. Even beautiful, kind-hearted women are no exception! Han Shuo lamented as he forced a smile.

“Alright. Now you just need a change of clothes and to deliberately hunch your back. Then no one will recognize you for sure!” Sophie ceased her laughter and looked at Han Shuo satisfyingly, putting forward suggestions to further polish up her work of art.

Han Shuo grudgingly took out a new set of outer garments. Originally, he had planned to have Sophie look away but he immediately recalled her mischief. He decided to play tit-for-tat. Right before Sophie, as though she wasn’t there, he took off his clothes.

Han Shuo only had one item of sturdy, durable warrior’s gown on his upper body. When this outer layer of clothing was removed, the majestic bare body of his was completely revealed. His perfect physique, like the cutting edge of a sharp blade, gave off a most piercing impression, while brimming with an extraordinary charisma unique to men.

Sophie turned into a fool and stared blankly at Han Shuo’s magnificent

naked body. Other than amazement, there was even a thread of intoxication in her eyes. Perhaps she had never before seen a physique of such perfection, and therefore couldn't react momentarily.

Suddenly, Sophie roused from her daze. She anxiously turned around. Stomping and panting with rage, she said, "Hoodlum! How could you do that in front of me! You thug! How infuriating!"

Seeing Sophie so frenetic, Han Shuo felt incredibly light-hearted, as though his bad luck was completely washed away. He chucklingly said, "Hehe, I'm not concerned about it. Why are you concerned for my sake?"

"You, you wretch! I knew you weren't a good guy the first time I met you, and sure enough, I was right!" Sophie indignantly denounced Han Shuo. Shortly after, she softly talked to herself, "This chap, he's really well built!"

When Sophie said so, Han Shuo suddenly recalled the time back at Dark Forest, the two once had a good time together. Han Shuo's heart was inevitably swept away.

"Humph! Are you done yet? Hurry up, we are going back there!" Sophie angrily asked with her back facing Han Shuo.

"Done. Where to?" Han Shuo asked in astoundment.

Sophie turned around and said, "The auction place of course. Where else would it be more lively than the auction place today in Kasi Empire?"

"Sure!" Han Shuo gladly agreed. It was exactly what he was hoping for.

# Chapter 488: The Joys of Being Ordinary

The duo had only left for a while, but when they returned to the auction place, they had transformed into completely different persons. One was a big, tall, honest-looking fatty, and the other, an average-looking girl that seemingly came from rural area. Muddling along the bustling street, they looked very ordinary. No one could have thought that they were the center of attention just moments before.

With the city's defense troops clearing the way, nobilities that came from every city in Kasi Empire, and even from other nations, entered the auction center one after another.

"This thing is only worth three gold coins at most!" Sophie said resolutely to a vendor while holding up a crystal button in her hand.

The person manning the stand was a petite middle-aged man. Putting on a honest face, he replied in a professional manner, "Miss, this is a Blue Dream Crystal from the southern part of Brut Merchant Alliance. There is absolutely nowhere where you could buy this for less than five gold coins!"

"Ha. Ha. Open your eyes and see. Its colours aren't particularly clear, the workmanship of the button is so crude, and you actually dare claim that this is a Blue Dream Crystal from the southern area of Brut Merchant Alliance! You are truly daring in making such an unfounded claim! There, look, these crystal fragments on my chain are genuine Blue Dream Crystal. See just how different they are in terms of luster!" Sophie took out a crystal necklace from her pocket and swayed it in front of the vendor's face, forcing him to see what a genuine Blue Dream Crystal looked like.

Those wearing space rings did not usually appear in such places. Therefore, before re-entering the region, Sophie not only kept away her only space ring, but she also had Han Shuo put away his as well. With that, there would not be an item on them which would distinguish them from any ordinary person.

When the vendor realized that he couldn't deceive Sophie, his face sank and he said, "How about this, four gold coins. Take it or leave it!"

“Three gold coins! Only three gold coins! This button has coarse workmanship, and is only worth as much! Look here, the inlay site between the button and the crystal, there’s a fine scratch over here. Also, here...” Sophie was suddenly an expert and jabbered on and on, laying out each and every fault on this crystal button.

Han Shuo blankly stared at Sophie, dumbstruck. Listening to her absolutely unrestrained criticism of the crystal button for the price difference of one gold coin, he simply could not understand what the point was.

Finally, after a series of bombardments by Sophie, the vendor raised the white flag. He put on a forced smile as he passed the crystal button to Sophie, and said, “I will take three gold coins. But why would you insist on having it when everything is wrong with it as you mentioned?”

“Oh, its shape is nevertheless a little beautiful,” Sophie said a kind word for the very first time. After pleasingly attached the crystal button to the corner of her clothes, she turned to Han Shuo with a smile and asked, “What do you think? Looks nice, doesn’t it?”

“Not bad!” Han Shuo answered. After a short pause, he added, “Given your appearance now, it fits you well!”

This kind of forged jewel made of poor material and crude workmanship, other than the rather unique design, there really wasn’t anything appealing about it. However, Sophie appeared rather mediocre as well at the time. Putting on such an ordinary and coarse ornament, they actually complemented each other well.

Sophie obviously made out the meaning behind those words of Han Shuo’s. She glared at Han Shuo before turning to the vendor and said, “Shopkeeper, you may get the payment from him. Hmph, nobody asked for your cutting remarks on me!”

Three gold coins was peanuts to Han Shuo. It’s just that he found Sophie’s attitude to be somewhat funny and ridiculous. Without hesitation, he took out three gold coins and handed them to the vendor. He caught up to Sophie and asked, “It’s just a few gold coins. Given your

wealth, there is no need for you to waste time haggling, is there?"

Sophie was a sky rider, and her father was a renowned sacred knight in Kasi Empire. Whichever way one looked at it, Sophie was in no way lacking in the wealth department. For such a character to engage in a debate with a hawker over a few gold coins, Han Shuo found that to be truly absurd.

"What do you know? It is only at such moments that I truly feel like a normal person!" Sophie shot a glance before she answered without thinking.

Han Shuo stared blankly and thought for a moment. When he gave another look at Sophie and saw that the worries showing in her eyes were quickly vanishing, he immediately understood the meaning behind Sophie's words.

As the daughter of sacred knight Sulo, Sophie ought to have been treasured and cherished to the most since her birth. Everyone had probably treated Sophie like a little princess all her life. Money, jewelry, treasures, whatever Sophie wanted, she could possess it with little to no effort. It was precisely because Sophie had never experienced life as an average civilian that she wasted no interest for the auction sale where the affluent and gentry gathered, but instead fancied loitering around these booths belonging to small merchants and traders.

In his previous world, Han Shuo lived an ordinary life in an ordinary household. And when his soul first arrived at the Profound Continent, he went through even pettier, lower beginnings. He had long been used to such lifestyles, and therefore wouldn't be so passionate about such things. If it was not for the presence of certain unique items, Han Shuo wouldn't have derived much pleasure in this kind of place.

"Oh, right. What did you come here for?" Sophie suddenly recalled this question after walking some distance. Shortly after, somewhat surprised, she said, "You itch for fun in places like this too, don't you? Ha, I should have made it out earlier. From your clothing and space ring, you must come from a affluent family as well. It seems we have more in common

than I thought!”

After listening to Sophie’s opinionated explanation, Han Shuo smilingly shook his head and said, “Unlike you, I wasn’t born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I’ve tasted all kinds of hardship since I was young. The reason I came to such a place is that in such places, one who knows what’s what can obtain some real treasures!”

“What? That can’t be true. How could there be any good stuff in such a place?” Sophie obviously wasn’t too convinced. She came to such places purely for fun and games. Deep down in her heart, she most definitely did not feel that there would be anything truly valuable in such places.

“You don’t believe me?” Han Shuo looked at Sophie in all smiles, as though planning to prove it to her.

“I don’t!” Sophie could not resist doubling down on her words upon seeing Han Shuo’s assertiveness.

“Come with me!” Han Shuo gestured at Sophie to follow him, turned around, and headed for another area. It looked as if he was determined to prove Sophie wrong.

Sophie was rather skeptical and hurriedly followed behind Han Shuo. She thought to herself, Let’s see what tricks you will play this time!

After squeezing seventy or eighty meters through the unending stream of crowd, Han Shuo stopped in front of an unremarkable booth. He conveniently picked up a gray, average-looking rock, and smilingly asked the seller, “Sir, how many gold coins is this rock?”

“Oh, five gold coins. If you really want it, I can make it cheaper for you!” the seller replied without thinking the matter through.

“Five gold coins it is!” Han Shuo clearly did not share that unusual hobby of Sophie’s. He unreluctantly withdrew five gold coins from the space ring in his pocket and handed it to the seller.

As this point Sophie began to have some doubts in her heart, she did not ceaselessly haggle on the prices. Seeing Han Shuo leaving this vendor’s booth, she hastily followed after him. As this was a rather deserted region,



Han Shuo only walked a short distance before he reached a most secluded spot where he waited for Sophie to catch up.

Looking at the grey rock held in Han Shuo's hand, Sophie astoundedly asked, "This is the so-called good stuff you mentioned? You can go to any mine and there will be this kind of grey rock all over. Doesn't seem very valuable to me!"

Smilingly shaking his head, Han Shuo said, "Don't make up your mind so quickly. Give me your weapon!"

Sophie was clueless, and yet she still did as Han Shuo instructed, taking out a longsword from her space ring and handed it to Han Shuo. With one glance at this delicate longsword, one could tell that it must be a priceless artifact.

Han Shuo groped on the scabbard and touched the glossy smooth surface of gems embedded on it. He smiled at Sophie, "Indeed a wealthy one! No wonder you get a kick out of impersonating the poor!"

"Cut the talk. I want to see just how will you prove that this stone is a good stuff!" Sophie chuckingly said and crossed her arms in front of her chest, waiting for Han Shuo's demonstration.

Han Shuo smiled and did not say any more. Right before Sophie, he drew out the longsword from its sheath, and gently flicked the sharp end of the sword. Ding! A crisp and clear tone resonated from the longsword.

Under Sophie's attentive gaze, the grey rock in Han Shuo's palm was pulverized into grey dust when Han Shuo exerted force with his five fingers. With his hand moving back and forth, he gently sprinkled the fine powder. Layers of grey rock powder were evenly deposited on the edges of Sophie's longsword. Puff! A ball of bewitching flame kindled at Han Shuo's palm.

Sophie gasped. She stared at the flame in Han Shuo's palm in appal, and said, "You even dual cultivated in fire magic? Something's amiss, there's no presence of fire element. What is going on?"

Han Shuo shook his head at Sophie smilingly. He did not explain why he

could ignite a flame in his palm without using the fire element, but instead called attention, "Watch carefully!"

Sophie did not further question but focused, fixing her eyes on every movement Han Shuo made. Under the attentive gaze of Sophie's glistening eyes, Han Shuo directed the flame in his palm towards the blade edge of the longsword which was facing the ground. In the roasting of the flame from Han Shuo's palm, Sophie's longsword slowly turned scorching hot.

"Be careful! This was a gift from my dad when I became a sky rider. Don't leave a scratch!" Sophie cautioned Han Shuo as her heart began to ache watching Han Shuo cook her sword with fire.

Han Shuo signalled Sophie with his eyes, telling her to be at ease. Then, Han Shuo squinted, and his demonic yuan started operating in secret. Through his hand holding the sword hilt, demonic yuan flowed into the longsword. Under the double action of the blaze and demonic yuan, the grey powder deposited on the sword edge astonishingly melted into the blade.

"Wow!" Sophie was yet again shocked by the sight before her eyes. She exclaimed in disbelief, "You are an alchemist too! I really did not make that out!"

Han Shuo did not reply. He continued to focus on dissolving the Densinium into the sword, observing the layer of fine dust slowly vanishing into the sword edge.

Han Shuo had already spotted this Densinium rock the day before. This was an unusual ore that could increase weapon density and allow greater circulation of energy. In the canonical text of weapons refinery for demonic arts practitioners, Densinium was known to be a very useful rock. However, in this world, Han Shuo discovered that hardly anyone knew of its utility.

There was an awful lot of Densinium in the place of extreme metal at Mount Silk. Han Shuo had long mixed an appropriate amount of Densinium into the Demonslayer Edge. Therefore, when he saw the

Densinium rock there the previous day, although intrigued, he did not purchase it. But to prove to Sophie that such a place was truly a treasure trove, he specifically came back and bought a piece of it.

By the time all of the Densinium powder was dissolved into the blade, the sword edge had reached an extremely high temperature. It was at this moment that the flame in Han Shuo's palm that was roasting the sword edge turned from red to purple. Other than creaking noises, light puffs of smoke were released from the longsword. It was a natural phenomenon when matter in high temperature was suddenly cooled off.

"Be careful! Don't tell me you are taking advantage of my longsword for some metallurgy experiment?" Sophie was still very worried about her longsword. As she reminded Han Shuo to be careful, she questioned if Han Shuo actually had malicious intentions.

"Take it. Inject fighting aura into it and see what difference it has compared to usual." Han Shuo did not answer Sophie's question but tossed the longsword with its scabbard to Sophie.

Sophie hastily reached out to catch the sword. When she caught it in her hand, she let out a cry in surprise at once, "It grew a few kilograms heavier!"

Looking at the rock around the size of a clenched fist, which was crushed into dust in Han Shuo's hand before dissolving into her longsword, she couldn't figure out how some finely pulverized rock could actually increase the weight of her longsword by kilograms. It was a miracle.

"Try with fighting aura," Han Shuo reminded.

Still in amazement, Sophie immediately infused fighting aura into the longsword in her hand. When Sophie poured fighting aura, the longsword suddenly glowed with silvery light of fighting aura at a speed beyond her comprehension.

"Im... impossible!" Sophie cried out. Looking at Han Shuo with shock and bewilderment, she said, "The longsword has greatly increased responsiveness towards fighting aura!"

“That’s right. This is the function of the rock! I think you should know, during crucial moments in battles, what it would mean to be able to release the power upon injecting fighting aura into the longsword,” Han Shuo said grimly.

“I understand. This means one could seize the decisive opportunity, and perhaps even gain the upper hand in an evenly matched battle!” Sophie realized. Shortly after her sparkling eyes turned to Han Shuo, and she said, “This is incredible! How did you do that? That is truly unbelievable!”

# Chapter 489: Auction Place

“Hehe, this is why I say, those who know what’s what could obtain good stuff from a place like this!” Han Shuo said smilingly.

“Let’s go. Take me shopping with you. You seem like a person who does know what’s what!” Sophie said in high spirits. She grasped firmly onto the corner of Han Shuo’s shirt and pulled him towards an area bustling with activities.

Han Shuo helplessly followed along. He thought to himself, Wasn’t it you who first said that as the host, you must properly receive me? How did it become me that has to keep you company instead? It seems that words that come out of a woman’s mouth definitely cannot be trusted.

Seeing that Sophie was in high spirits, Han Shuo did not throw cold water on her. He accompanied her cramming through a congested crowd and visited various vendors’ booths. By utilizing his accurate senses for substances, Han Shuo found several worthy items suitable for her.

“Han, you are amazing! How do you know so much?” Sophie said excitedly to Han Shuo as she firmly held onto a jade bracelet of coarse workmanship.

The jade bracelet was also one of the things that Han Shuo helped Sophie select. After wearing this jade bracelet, she could sense the effect of the jade bracelet in relieving fatigueness. After listening to an entire lecture about the efficacy of jade bracelets from Han Shuo once through, Sophie truly felt utmost admiration for Han Shuo, almost prostrating herself before Han Shuo in adulation.

“It’s almost afternoon now. Let’s visit the auction sale as well,” Han Shuo suggested as he smilingly looked at Sophie.

“There’s nothing interesting about that place, might as well stay here and continue strolling around,” Sophie replied with her lips curled. She clearly had no good opinion of the auction place.

“Inside this auction which is held only once every three years in Kasi

Empire, there will certainly be many interesting people and objects. Since I have already come to Kasi Empire, it is inexcusable to not experience it. And you, as the hostess, perhaps it is time for you to do the honors?" Although the stalls outside on the streets definitely proved useful, there must be even more precious treasures at the auction. Not only that, those items put up for auction had been well appraised. It was for these reasons that Han Shuo made such a proposal.

"Fine. Since you are being so insisting, I shall go there with you," Sophie grudgingly agreed to Han Shuo's request. Following behind Han Shuo, they headed towards the auction place.

The auction was located in an enormous building with a squadron of knights in shining armour sturdily guarding the entrance. When Han Shuo and Sophie over, they witnessed these knights in the doorway standing refined and courteous. Although these knights could still be considered as friendly in attitude, they no doubt obstructed the two in their path.

"Lady, gentleman, no entrance without an invitation letter," one of the knights reminded smilingly.

Given Han Shuo and Sophie's current ordinary appearance, along with the very ordinary clothing on them, after putting away their space rings, there was not one exceptional feature on them. Obviously, characters in commoner's dressing should not be appearing in such a five-star premier venue where the privileged classes congregated.

Han Shuo let out a cold scoff, inwardly thinking that this kind of people could definitely be found in whichever region. Don't get fooled by this knight's urbane manner on the surface, the ridicule and despise showing in his eye were hardly concealed. Han Shuo could tell the disdain in his heart with just one look.

"There, this is the invitation letter. Can we go in now?" Sophie casually took out two invitation letters and handed them to the knight with a light groan. The knight was astonished. He clearly never expected that someone like Han Shuo and Sophie actually had the qualifications to receive the invitation. He foolishly stared at Sophie and Han Shuo, and briefly forgot

how to speak.

“Can we go in?” Sophie questioned once more in a slightly louder voice.

“Of course, of course!” the knight was suddenly roused and he hastily replied. He then stepped aside and executed a bow. In a courteous manner, he said, “Please come inside!”

“Humph!” Han Shuo shot a cold glance at this knight before marching inside in large strides along with Sophie.

As soon as they crossed the entrance, they saw a splendidly decorated beautiful scene with glorious lightings. Further inside was an incredibly spacious hall, with rows and rows of gorgeous, glittering crystal lanterns suspended high up above. The ground was overlaid with soft red carpet. The hall had tiered seating similar to that of a luxurious movie theater. Exquisite pastries and fruits were neatly laid out on each table.

Straight ahead, an auctioneer suited in evening dress was cheerfully giving a presentation about an item. Colourful stage lighting casted down on a delicate staff embedded with a rhombus-shaped gemstone water-blue in colour. Under the illumination of the lights, this staff appeared even more beautifully dazzling. For some water magi who took pleasure in beholding the beautiful, this magical staff possessed a deadly temptation.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, this delicate magical staff was assembled by Master Faler of the elf race. This reverie-blue magical staff can triple the power of water element magical spells, and allow for greater recovery speed of mental strength. As for its design, perhaps only the word ‘perfection’ could describe it. The pieces of Master Faler are all astonishingly refined with not one exception...” On stage, the presenter was promoting the magical staff in a most provocative manner.

Han Shuo carefully observed for a moment. He discovered that this magical staff was indeed not bad, but what a shame that it was somewhat overly ornate. Its extremely artistic design was in fact not especially suitable for a magus to grasp it well. That Master Faler clearly cut down on practicality in his pursuit for perfection.

Given Han Shuo’s temperament, there was no way he would select a

weapon like that. However, its beauty aroused the crazy pursuit of female magi. In Kasi Empire, thanks to the presence of the Shrine of Ice, most magi majored in water element magic. When the auctioneer finished his words, the crowd immediately started to flare up.

“Ladies, gentlemen, please come with me!” while Han Shuo and Sophie stared fixedly at the stage, a male waiter said to them smilingly.

“Is there any private room that is still available?” Sophie turned to this waiter and asked indifferently.

The waiter stared blankly and looked Sophie up and down. Only then did he smilingly reply, “I’m sorry. They were all fully booked long ago.”

Han Shuo understood that in this kind of high-class auction sale, there were rooms specially prepared for those true bigwigs a few stories upstairs, away from the grand hall with tiered seating. Those characters with great status would usually book ahead a private room for themselves.

If Sophie had come over together with Braque as originally planned, she would have been in one of those VIP rooms. But as she was currently with Han Shuo, all she could do was get over it.

“Nevermind then. Lead the way,” Sophie casually replied. With the waiter’s guidance, Han Shuo and Sophie arrived at their seating near the back row. A magical console was arranged in front of the delicate pastries. One could input an exact amount of gold coins on that console.



# Chapter 490: Turmoil

The auction sale wasn't at all affected by the arrival of Han Shuo and Sophie. Under the most bewitching voice of the host, the bidding price for that magical staff climbed higher and higher.

Clamorous noise and never-ending sounds of discussions filled the entire hall. Some beautiful women wearing magnificent magical gowns, not in the least concealed their strong interests in that magical staff. This directly caused the auction sale to sink into a small scale chaos.

"What's your opinion of that magical staff?" After the two sat down, Sophie could not help but ask Han Shuo.

"Nothing particularly great about it! Han Shuo's lips pursed to the side. He then added, "Flashy on the outside but hollow on the inside!"

Against Han Shuo's expectations, Sophie most agreed with Han Shuo's evaluation. She said, "Yep, this magical staff is overly ostentatious. If I were a magus, I would never choose this kind of overly flashy magical staff."

Looking at Sophie with a surprised expression, Han Shuo smilingly said, "I thought that you would be just like them, and only pursue beauty in all things."

Sophie pouted and gently groaned, "I bought those small jewels from those booths purely to enjoy that kind of pleasure of shopping, not because I really particularly liked them."

"Oh?" Han Shuo gave her a cheeky grin. He pointed at the crystal button on her chest, and mocked, "Well then, how do you explain yourself wearing this crystal button, and even acting as though it were very precious?"

Sophie dazed for a second before waving her small fist and somewhat wittily said, "That's because I'm giving you face! You bought this for me. If I were to conveniently throw this aside, how impolite would that be!"

Han Shuo laughed involuntarily. Although he understood that Sophie

was purely joking with those words, he nevertheless felt really happy in his heart. For Sophie would wear a coarsely made button which was worth only three gold coins, regardless of whether she really was being considerate, as the benefactor, Han Shuo definitely felt that he received the proper respect he deserved.

It had to be said that when chatting with Sophie, Han Shuo felt a most comfortable and relaxed sensation. It was just like conversing with a confidante with no restrictions whatsoever. This made Han Shuo feel very comfortable.

“Huh? Why is he here? Suddenly, Sophie let out a soft cry and immediately lowered her head. She even grabbed Han Shuo and made him do the same.

Han Shuo, being unexpectedly pulled by Sophie, nearly knocked his head against Sophie’s. Leaning closely together, an air of wonderful fragrance rushed into Han Shuo’s nose. The naturally refreshing fragrance caused Han Shuo to reminisce of a good time. Back then at the Dark Forest, the two had once leaned so closely together, encircled with the scent of each other’s.

A delegation walking at a steady pace gradually walked past Han Shuo and Sophie by the footpath on their left. With the servers respectfully welcoming them, they slowly ascended to the VIP room on the second floor.

One of the men leading the party had a cordial smile. He wore a pithy, clean warrior gown as white as snow. He had broad shoulders and thick hands, displaying an imposing demeanor. He was obviously an experienced swordsman or knight.

“Your father?” Han Shuo only took one glance, and through his consciousness, he sensed the energy contained in this person’s body. It was extremely difficult for one to sense this energy without first reaching a certain realm. “How, how did you know? You’ve seen my dad before?” Sophie was in slight disbelief.

Shaking his head, Han Shuo replied, “You two looked rather similar in

appearance and so I made a guess. I didn't think he would actually turn out to be your father."

Appearance was merely one aspect. The most significant thing was that the fighting aura that Sophie cultivated was homologous with that of this person. An ordinary person wouldn't have been able to sense it. But as Han Shuo possessed an extremely mighty consciousness, he could detect it after carefully probing it.

"He must have gone to the VIP room Braque is at. Humph! How could he, without asking for my consent, decide that on my behalf? I really hate him!" Sophie said furiously. It was apparent that Sophie held grievances towards Sulo.

Han Shuo wasn't aware of the matter between Braque and Sophie. Therefore when he heard Sophie grumble so, his curiosity pushed him to ask, "What's the matter about?"

"Not-nothing!" Sophie had turned somewhat flustered as she hastily replied.

Han Shuo could not make heads or tails of it, but he did not question any further. He pointed at the stage and said, "The next item is pretty good. I think it suits you quite well!"

After Han Shuo finished those words, Sophie sneakily took a glimpse ahead. When she found out that there was not a trace of his father Sulo within sight, she let out a sigh of relief, and gazed at the stage with great interest.

At this moment, with the auctioneer's guidance and light cast on it, an armour, deep green in colour, slowly descended from the dropped ceiling above. The deep green armour was glossy smooth and shiny. It sparkled brightly under the stage lighting.

"This piece of knight armour is a craftwork of a dwarf master artisan. Although there's no clue as to which dwarf artisan it actually came from, from the luster of the armour, "... after the armour was revealed, the auctioneer began his enthusiastic promotion again.

“This piece of armour is very beautiful indeed. But is really as sturdy as he makes it out to be?” Sophie was somewhat unconvinced, and said to Han Shuo while observing the armour from afar.

“It should be passable. There are a few kinds of rare ores mixed into it, which includes black iron, black gold, and mithril. Those forged by the dwarves shouldn’t be anything poor. You can consider getting this,” Han Shuo explained.

“Forget about it. My father is in the VIP room. Although we can’t see him from here, he could see us from high up above. I have once used this face to prank him, and even still he could recognize me. If by any chance he catches me red-handed, I’m done for!” Sophie adorably stuck out her tongue like a dead cow. But shortly after, as though she were afraid that Sulo would spot her from above, she lowered her head again.

“20 thousand gold coins! Young master Braque bids 20 thousand gold coins!” before the auctioneer even finished banging the drum for the armour, a loud voice called out from the crowd.

Sophie lightly groaned, and uttered in disdain, “Pff, scoundrel, I will not be grateful for that!”

Although Sophie lowered her voice, Han Shuo could still hear her words clearly. Raising his head to gaze upstairs, in a surprised tone Han Shuo said, “Who is this Braque? He threw out such a hefty price before the host even completed his speech!”

“He’s Braque Pillon. You are in Kasi Empire, don’t tell me that you don’t even know who he is?” Sophie was somewhat startled, and asked Han Shuo with a strange look.

Shrugging, Han Shuo frankly said, “I really don’t. Is he famous?”

Sophie made a defeated expression, and only then did she osternly explain, “In Kasi Empire, although the Shrine of Ice has great power, it is still the Pillon royal family that maintains absolute control of Kasi Empire. Braque is the son of Prince Bradley. He is not a benevolent type of person. It’s troublesome enough for you to offend the Shrine of Ice, so by all means, don’t offend this family clan.”

"Thanks for the reminder!" Though Han Shuo wore a smile on his face, he didn't exactly take the advice to heart. On the Profound Continent, there weren't many who could threaten Han Shuo's life. This so-called royal family was nothing in his eyes.

"Bradley? Bradley Pillon of Cesar City?" Suddenly, Han Shuo seemed to have recalled something and questioned further.

"Yep! In the whole of Kasi Empire, there is only one Bradley Pillon." Sophie creased her brows and added, "You are already in Kasi Empire, how could you still be so unfamiliar with it?"

The reason Trunks was currently painstakingly expanding and strengthening the Valley of Sunshine all that while was to get to this Bradley Pillon. Han Shuo realized that this was because Annie, a girl that Trunks regarded as her very own sister, had suffered an unthinkable tragedy, with one of the perpetrators being Bradley.

Florida and Gustav both died in Trunks' hand during the struggle for authority over the Valley of Sunshine. Now, all that was left in Trunks' hitlist was Bradley who was enjoying overwhelming power in Kasi Empire. When Sophie mentioned this Bradley, Han Shuo couldn't help but sneer.

Since Trunks had set his mind on this person, Han Shuo would rather not take matters into his own hands. However, if Bradley dared provoke Han Shuo, it would nonetheless still be an enjoyable thing for Han Shuo to teach him an unforgettable lifelong lesson.

"20 thousand! Can I get a 21 thousand, 21 thousand...?" the auctioneer continued, but the reaction below the stage was cold.

"In Kasi Empire, the House of Pillon wields the true power. No ordinary person would purposely make life difficult for any member of the family," Sophie explained to Han Shuo, sighing.

When Sophie uttered those words, she felt truly helpless about her own future. It was precisely because she clearly understood the influences of the House of Pillon in Kasi Empire that she would feel so powerless about her marriage to Bradley. Suddenly, a sense of dispiritment filled her heart. Sophie suddenly thought to herself that even though she possessed

extraordinary strength, she could hardly oppose those politically powerful. So what was the use?

“Going once! Going twice! Sold, to young master Bradley!” the auctioneer rapped his gavel.

With Sophie in a downcast mood, she paid no attention to what was going on in the auction. Another four pieces of precious items were bidden off separately at high prices. Of the four items, two were magical robes with unusual functionalities, one was a magical scroll that could release a forbidden spell, and the last was a necklace encrusted with a hundred diamonds once wore by the empress of the former Verdun dynasty.

Han Shuo was not interested in those four items. The first three items were separately acquired by three different magi. The last necklace was bought by Braque.

Han Shuo observed for a moment, and saw that the more high and mighty Braque appeared in the limelight, the more gloomy Sophie became. This baffled Han Shuo somewhat, not knowing why would Sophie suddenly be in such melancholy.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the next item for bidding is rather extraordinary, even our experts could not determine what it is! However, this thing possesses a miraculous ability. When it is stuck on the ground, all the plants within a few kilometers around it grow healthier and taller,” the auctioneer on stage introduced.

Along with this introduction, a sheet of tender green leaf the size of his palm, stored on a crystal tray, was presented on stage. This leaf had a shiny surface and looked as though it was made with fine dark green jade. As soon as it was displayed, the polluted air in the entire auction hall was immediately purified.

It was as though they had all been teleported into the middle of a lush forest in an instant. Everyone’s body and mind seemed to suddenly loosen up.

Han Shuo, who had not been paying much attention suddenly jolted. Dazzling lights too bright to be stared into directly erupted from his eyes.

Sophie, who was right beside Han Shuo, witnessed Han Shuo's eyes widen dramatically. Her gloomy mood seemed to have been diluted by her curiosity. Doubtfully looking at Han Shuo, she asked in a low voice, "You want to get this?"

"That's right!" Han Shuo replied in a deep voice. "What is this thing? I have never seen such a strange leaf before. Do you know what it is?" Sophie was somewhat surprised, and she questioned Han Shuo closely with her eyes fixed on him.

Nodding, Han Shuo explained, "It's hard to explain to you. In short, this thing is very useful to me!"

"Then go and bid it! If you don't have enough gold coins, I can lend you some, but you must repay me!" Sophie said gleamed at Han Shuo. Shortly after, she took a look at a VIP room above before saying to Han Shuo, "I'm going to keep my head down, lest I be noticed by my father when you are bidding."

"It is rather inconvenient to say much about the origins of this piece of leaf. But still, I believe that those who are knowledgeable can feel how extraordinary it is. Alright, starting price is 10 thousand gold coins. May the best bidder win. The bidding starts now!" the auctioneer shouted.

"20 thousand!" "25 thousand!" "27 thousand!"

It seemed there were many who could tell a good buy when they saw one. Right after the auctioneer finished his words, the bidding price soared higher and higher.

Han Shuo wasn't at all in a hurry to show his hand, but observed the few contesters with his cold eyes. After a round of shouting and quarrelling, slowly, the price had inflated to 40 thousand gold coins. At this moment, many nobilities who were genuinely curious about the functionality of this treasure gradually no longer continued to participate.

There remained three people who were truly interested in the item. Of them, one was a hysterically rotund chap, another was an upper-class lady in bright-coloured clothing, and the last was none other than Bradley of the Pillion family.

Among the three, Braque was the most excited. Perhaps it was because he discovered that there were people who actually dared compete against him, but he appeared very irritated. Han Shuo could even hear his constantly quickening heartbeat due to the excitement.

That big fatty seemed likely to be a wealthy, successful merchant based on his attire, perhaps hailing from Brut Merchant Alliance. No wonder he dared fight over an item against Braque. As for the graceful upper-class woman, although Han Shuo couldn't tell her origins, he could tell that her financial resources was probably the least sufficient of the three as her face gradually grew more and more displeased. Han Shuo reckoned that the price of the item had exceeded what she could bear.

After observing for a while, when Han Shuo saw that the price had reached 50 thousand, he suddenly made a move. A string of digits suddenly came into appearance.

"A hundred... 100 thousand! Who, who is it?" the auctioneer shrieked and scanned his eyes through the crowd for the identifier number.

The whole auction house sank into turmoil!



# Chapter 491: Wood Attribute Treasure

Throughout the years, by means of seizure and plundering, Han Shuo's pockets gradually grew deeper and deeper. So much so that by now, he had actually lost count of precisely how much wealth he had accumulated. In addition to the few million gold coins in Brettel City that he left under Jack's management, several million more were at Han Shuo's disposal in his crystal card alone.

'Viride Leaf' was a treasure of wood attribute. Others may not have known of it, but Han Shuo was very clear about its application. Not only could 'Viride Leaf' make barren lands thrive with life, it also possessed the miraculous ability to rejuvenate the undead. Most importantly, once this 'Viride Leaf' was in the hands of wood elite zombie, not only was he able to evolve faster, his strength was substantially increased as well.

At the moment, of the five elite zombies, water elite zombie and wood elite zombie were the weakest and of lowest intelligence. This was due in part to the fact that they were refined relatively later than the rest, but also because they had not acquired any treasures that could help them advance themselves.

During the trip to the Shrine of Ice days prior, water elite zombie had absorbed the enormous amount of energy in the Ice Goddess' statue. His appearance immediately underwent an earth-shattering transformation. Han Shuo could be certain that by the time water elite zombie had finished digesting all the energy he absorbed, he would surely be able to make a huge leap forward in his evolution. With that, the water elite zombie would be able to add his energy to the Penta-elemental Undead Formation.

Han Shuo was recently fretting for wood elite zombie, not knowing how to assist him. Who knew that he would find the treasure of wood attribute 'Viride Leaf' at this auction sale. Han Shuo was convinced that once wood elite zombie obtained the 'Viride Leaf', the Penta-elemental Undead Formation could definitely unleash its might to the fullest extent.

Therefore, Han Shuo was determined to take this wood attribute treasure home! In an attempt to rid the other rivals of any hope of winning the item, Han Shuo bid a correspondingly intimidating price of 100 thousand gold coins.

“Number 83! Number 83 put forth 100 thousand gold coins! Oh? Looks like number 83 is a friend in the hall!” the auctioneer finally found Han Shuo’s identifier number, and shrieked.

Following the auctioneer’s loud shout, the stage lighting swooshed and cast on Han Shuo. The crowd maintained their attention along with the lighting, and their eyes all landed on Han Shuo in an instant. Every last pair of eyes was filled with astonishment and curiosity.

The other three bidders for the wood attribute treasure ‘Viride Leaf’ were in VIP rooms on the second and third floors. Those on the second and third floors were the true wealthy merchants and powerful nobilities. Other than a few publicly acknowledged treasures, the high price of 100 thousand gold coins did not appear very often. This completely shocked the crowd. And when they then found out that the bidder was actually someone sitting in the grand hall, they were even more astonished.

This auction place also had its own division of social classes. Usually, those inside the grand hall were lesser nobilities. They were not usually the biggest spenders and wouldn’t compete for treasures that exceeded 50 thousand gold coins. It was only those in the second and third floors who would pursue any item they were keen on as though gold coins didn’t matter. Therefore, the highest bidders in the auction sale would usually be bigwigs from the second and third floors.

And now, an unprepossessing, honest-looking fatty, bid for an item with unknown functionality at a pricey 100 thousand gold coins. This obviously attracted the attention of everyone inside the room. Not just the guests in the grand hall, but even those bigwigs in the second and third floor craned their necks forward to see for themselves exactly who down below was being so grandiose.

“You goon, you are so damn rich!” Being at the center of attention of

every person in the room, Sophie had to stoop her head even lower and bend down at her waist. She angrily said, "If you cause my father to see me here, I will get even with you!"

As not to bring the onlookers' attention to Sophie, Han Shuo did not reply her. He lazily sat in his seat with his eyes narrowed and with a smile, seemingly most leisure and carefree.

"110 thousand gold coins. Number 9 bids 110 thousand gold coins!" Suddenly, the auctioneer shrieked yet again.

Han Shuo raised his head and shot a glance, and found that the bidder was that upper-class woman of unknown identity. He noticed that after this woman bid that exorbitant price, her face grew even more unsightly.

"120 thousand! Mister Zofi of Brut Merchant Alliance bids 120 thousand gold coins!" the auctioneer hollered again. He had gotten somewhat excited. 120 thousand was the highest bidding price in the auction sale so far. Seeing that the crowd was very enthusiastic, the auctioneer was obviously very happy about it.

So that big fatty is Zofi Han Shuo thought to himself. Han Shuo had heard of him before. He was an outstanding, well-known merchant in Brut Merchant Alliance. His core businesses were primarily selling magical crystal ores and some large-scale war equipment. The six magic crystal cannons that Helen bought the last time, those came from Zofi. Sometimes if he received big orders, he could make a few hundred thousand gold coins from just one transaction deal. It was no surprise that he would be so extravagant.

After Zofi's bid of 120 thousand gold coins was announced, the auction house turned somewhat silent. Everyone noticed that as the price of the item increased, it started counting in six digits. This obviously exceeded what most people could afford.

"150 thousand gold coins! Oh! It's young master Braque!" just as the crowd was silenced in amazement, Braque again showed his hand, and directly bid up the price to 150 thousand gold coins. This is truly an astronomic price! It seems that the House of Pillion indeed has deep

pockets!

Suddenly, a window to a VIP room on the third floor was opened. “My friends, this item, along with the two I previously bought, I intend to give them to my fiancée Sophie as presents. If all three of you would give me some face, I will be very grateful!” Braque said in an elegant manner with a smile on his face as he stood by the window.

The price tag of 150 thousand deemed to be somewhat excessive even for Braque. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have taken the initiative to say so. Given his Pillion royal family’s influences in Kasi Empire, when he opened his mouth, most people would never deliberately make things difficult for him.

“Since young master Braque said so, I naturally will not stand in his way!” Sure enough, even Zofi of Brut Merchant Alliance dared not to offend Braque. He stood up and bowed at Braque with all smiles.

“Thank you. If Mister Zofi found time to visit Cesar City, I will most certainly receive you well as a friend. I hope that at that time Mister Zofi will do me the honor,” Braque said invitingly.

“Certainly, certainly!” Zofi said as he smiled.

For such a big merchant like Zofi whose businesses covered every country, although he need not have been afraid of Braque, it would be enormously beneficial to his businesses if he could make such a friend. With Braque taking the initiative and throwing him an olive branch, Zofi naturally knew what to do.

After Braque yelled out that high price of 150 thousand gold coins, that upper-class woman who was also competing for it wore a face as ashen as the dead. She seemed to lack the financial capacity to continue bidding, and had to abandon this treasure which she very much wanted.

It was only at this moment that Han Shuo actually understood the relationship between Sophie and Braque. He thoughtfully took a look at Sophie who was burying her head down and in silence. From her grumbling, Han Shuo had a general idea of the situation.

With a faint smile, Han Shuo raised his head to look at Braque over at the third floor. He discovered that at this moment, it just so happened that Braque was looking back at him. Braque obviously had realized that that upper-class woman must have given up due to her limited financial ability. Zofi agreed to give him face, and not continue to compete against him. With that, the only rival left was Han Shuo who all of a sudden appeared in the grand hall.

His eyes meeting with Braque's, Han Shuo saw that Braque nodded with a smile on his face from a distance, and he seemed very friendly in attitude. However, in his eyes, there was a flavor of loftiness and threat.

Han Shuo made a naive smile and turned his head down to look at the number-displaying device in front of him. At this moment, the constantly silent and head lowered Sophie suddenly softly shouted, "Han, don't you remember what I said earlier? You already offended the Shrine of Ice. You must not offend the Pillon family altogether. If you really want that thing, I can pass it on to you after Braque gifts it to me. Don't fight with him over this thing."

Han Shuo stared blankly at Sophie before he put on a smile. Then, he reached out to the input device and entered a series of numbers. Afterwards, Han Shuo replied in a low voice, "A favor of a hundred thousand gold coins is too much. If you were to accept it, it would be extremely difficult for you to break away from the House of Pillion! Moreover, offending the Shrine of Ice is the same as offending the House of Pillon. The Shrine of Ice's Ice Celestial Corey is the oldest generation of the Pillion family, it's just you that didn't know!"

"200 thousand! Number 83 bid 200 thousand gold coins! Oh my! What a magical person!" the auctioneer suddenly yelled, his voice contained an inexplicable astonishment.

The whole audience turned into commotion once more. Their eyes again gathered on Han Shuo, trying to get a good glimpse of him.

"Who is that guy? He's got guts!"

"Hell yeah! He still won't let go even after young master Braque has

spoken. He is simply not giving face to the House of Pillon!"

"Ha, what a reckless fella. Even if you're rich you gotta be alive to use it man!"

After the sky-high price of 200 thousand gold coins was announced, everyone present was once again in an uproar! Han Shuo's sharp ears could hear all the things that they were discussing. However, he was rather apathetic in his heart. Merely a puny little good-for-nothing young man from a wealthy family, how would Han Shuo even feel worried about it?

"I applaud your boldness, my friend!" Braque over at the third floor did not spiral into a fit of rage out of humiliation, but on the contrary, he praised Han Shuo.

"This guy is infamous for his dagger hidden in his smiles. His expression now indicated that he is truly outraged! You, you really are, sigh, what for do you provoke him?" Sophie with her head lowered, explained softly to Han Shuo.

"Hm?" Suddenly, a soft cry sounded from beside Braque. Sacred knight Sulo had his vision focused on Sophie's earlobe.

Sophie, someone of extraordinary strength, was shocked and grew frightened. Even without raising her head she could sense Sulo's gaze from above. She frantically covered her left ear with her hands, like she was trying to conceal something.

When Sophie was covering it up, Han Shuo noticed a red birthmark the size of a grain of rice on her left earlobe. Seeing Sophie covering it in a flurry, he instantly understood in his heart why she wanted to cover the red birthmark.

"Shoot! I'm way too careless! I totally forgot that with my dad's strength, he can see the birthmark on my earlobe from this distance away. Damn it, he must have found me!" Sophie anxiously said with her head down.

"Yep, I believe that he definitely saw you," Han Shuo said calmly. Han Shuo noticed that after Sulo let out a gentle cry, his eyes started flickering,

obviously he had realized that the ordinary-looking young lady down there was precisely her treasured daughter in disguise.

“What should we do?” Sophie said frantically. She was rather out of her wits when it came to dealing with her own father.

“Just let it be. Your father did not tell Braque about what he discovered. Just continue burying your head,” Han Shuo said to Sophie. In his heart, he knew Sulo gave a lot of thought to Sophie. In any case, Sophie was the fiancée to Braque. If Braque were to find out that she disguised herself to be with Han Shuo, Braque would be furious. Therefore even though Sulo discovered this fact, he did not expose her.

“200 thousand gold coins going once!” while the audiences were in appal and Braque did not make a counterbid, the auctioneer’s piercing voice sounded loudly.

Perhaps the price tag of 200 thousand gold coins had exceeded Braque’s expectations, or perhaps Braque had other intentions, he only gazed at Han Shuo from high up with a strange smile on his face but did not compete. It seemed that he did not intend on continuing to battle it out with Han Shuo in the auction house.

“Going twice!” the auctioneer paused for a long while before he shouted, “If there is no higher bidder, if no one will raise the price, then this item belongs to this gentleman!”

Everyone had their eyes scanning back and forth between Han Shuo and Braque. It was as though they were waiting for a more brilliant follow-up. However, to their disappointment, this time Braque did not satisfy the delights of the audience.

“250 thousand gold coins! Goodness me! Mister Zofi has raised the price again! It is now 250 thousand gold coins!” Suddenly, a red sign was revealed on the second floor. The sum of 250 thousand gold coins was announced. The auctioneer was about to go crazy!

“Young master Braque would like to give treasures to a beauty, such a spoony devotion is so rarely seen! Hehe, I’m willing to use 250 thousand gold coins to help young master Braque accomplish this, and could

perhaps be considered as befriending young master Braque. Friend down there, do you mind giving some face? Consider it as helping to make a beautiful story!” Zofi the true big fatty, said in all smiles to Han Shuo the false fatty down below.

“Thank you Mister Zofi. Whether you win this item or not, I will definitely take you as a friend!” Braque sent his regards to Zofi with an unusual smile on his face.

With that, the crowd became hyped once again. Every one of them looked at Zofi and Braque with inexplicable excitement, cheering, for things had taken a new turn.

Old fox, so willing to part with your hard-earned capital! Han Shuo cursed in his heart. Then, his cold eyes turned to look at that big fatty Zofi who was beaming from ear to ear. He reckoned that the reason Zofi came over here was to seize an opportunity to build a relationship with Braque. It seems that he had accomplished that goal.

“My apologies, but I really need it!” Han Shuo said decisively. Without leaving any room for reply, Han Shuo pressed on his console and keyed in another string of numbers.

“300 thousand! Good gracious! Number 83 bids 300 thousand gold coins!” the auctioneer shouted at the top of his lungs. He was so excited he almost passed out.

Perhaps it was because Han Shuo bid a really high price, or maybe because Han Shuo wouldn’t give him the slightest bit of face at all, the big smile on Zofi face shrank. Awkwardly looking at Han Shuo, Zofi didn’t know what to do for a moment.

“Mister Zofi, let it be. It appears that this friend truly needs it. Let’s not seize what others favour. Oh right, if Mister Zofi has the time later, please come over to my manor at Cesar City to some wine tasting. Hehe, I have a few bottles of truly fine wine over there. I hope that Mister Zofi would do me the honor,” as the entire auction house was in suspense in a stifling atmosphere, Braque all of a sudden smilingly made an invitation to Zofi.

Zofi stared blankly for a while. After helplessly nodding, he delightedly



replied, "My pleasure!"

At this moment, Zofi no longer continued fighting over it. The auctioneer knew that there wouldn't be more drama. He crazily shouted a few times, seeing that no one else was bidding, he rapped the gavel and announced, "300 thousand gold coins. The item belongs to our friend at number 83!"

"Great, now you're in deep trouble. Let's leave quickly!" Sophie hastened.

"No worries, let's see if any more good stuff follows!" Han Shuo leisurely said to Sophie and brushed aside Sophie's concerns. He was not at all anxious.

After securing the treasure of wood attribute 'Viride Leaf' for 300 thousand gold coins, Han Shuo became much more at ease. However, with that, Han Shuo and Sophie became the focal point. When certain precious items appeared on stage later, everyone would cast their glances at Han Shuo from time to time.

After the wood attribute treasure 'Viride Leaf', another three invaluable items were revealed one after another. A bottled medicine that could restore eighty percent of mental strength in a very brief time, a delicate enchanted bow forged by a great alchemist, and the right of ownership over a small town in the southern part of Kasi Empire. As none of these were of Han Shuo's interests, he did not make a move.

Other than the 'Viride Leaf', Han Shuo did not bid for anything else until the end of the auction for the day. In his heart, he was weighing over whether or not he should attend the second day of the three-day auction sale.

After the auction on the first day had concluded, Han Shuo headed backstage. Under the admiring gazes of the crowd, he paid the 300 thousand gold coins, and received the treasure of wood attribute, 'Viride Leaf'.

However, when Han Shuo opened up the box containing 'Viride Leaf', his face immediately darkened, and he shouted, "Are you kidding me?"

# Chapter 492: An Unforeseen Incident

The 'Viride Leaf' in the box looked just the same as the one on the auction stage, but the kind of energy and vitality was nowhere to be found. Han Shuo felt it with his hand, and immediately found that this thing was definitely not the wood attribute treasure 'Viride Leaf', but a counterfeit carved from a block of fine, dark green jade.

Having spent 300 thousand gold coins, only to discover that what he received was just a counterfeit article carved from regular jade. No one would be in a very good mood, let alone Han Shuo.

"What's the matter?" seeing that there seemed to be some sort of dispute, a high-level personnel wearing a dinner suit hastily came over and asked.

"Lord Zarya, the gentleman says the item is amiss!" an attendant in charge of receiving Han Shuo hastily replied.

Zarya had carefully observed Han Shuo during the auction. Extravagant characters like Han Shuo tended to leave lasting impressions on him. In any case, Han Shuo spent 300 thousand gold coins in purchasing the item. It was a matter of course for him to treat Han Shuo as a VIP.

Zarya hurried over. After listening to the attendant's explanation, he anxiously said to Han Shuo, "May I have a look?"

Unimpressed, Han Shuo handed over the counterfeit Viride Leaf. In a deep voice, he said, "Your auction house is very reputable in the whole of Kasi Empire. I suppose that you guys aren't deliberately playing a joke on me right?"

"Of course not! Of course not!" Zarya could make out the wrath between Han Shuo's words. He took out the 'Viride Leaf' and felt it with his hands, and his face fell. He asked the attendant, "Who brought the item here earlier?" "It was Galia, Sir!" the attendant replied.

Zarya took a deep breath and respectfully executed a bow towards Han Shuo. He sternly said, "My apologies, there is indeed something wrong

with this item. Sir, we will first refund you the 300 thousand gold coins. Please give us some time, and we will quickly get the genuine item to you.”

“Han, it probably had nothing to do with the auction house. They wouldn’t purposely do such things that would damage their own reputation!” whispered Sophie, who has been right beside Han Shuo.

Han Shuo originally thought that the auction house was deliberately trying to dupe him. He was even prepared to give the auction house a bloodbath if they wouldn’t admit to it. But now, Zarya, the person in charge, immediately acknowledged the matter while also being very friendly in attitude. Hence, Han Shuo immediately realized that there was more to the situation than met the eyes.

“Alright then. I hope that your auction house will give me an appropriate explanation. In addition, it is I who won the item fairly and aboveboard, I hope that you will not sell it to someone else!” Han Shuo said in a deep voice as he stared coldly at Zarya.

Zarya looked at Han Shuo with fear and trepidation. He could suddenly feel this unprepossessing fatty become extremely frightening all of a sudden. From Han Shuo’s body, he felt killing intent that was as though material. That kind of stifling pressure petrified him and he knew that Han Shuo was not a man to make enemies with.

Zarya, being in the high position he was in, was no simple character. Just from that terrifying demeanor coming from Han Shuo he understood that he was not a force to be reckoned with. He agreed with him like a yes-man as he turned over in his mind how to appropriately resolve this issue.

“Please leave us a contact method. Once we find the item, we will immediately look for you to make a new transaction!” Zarya, who was scared witless, said respectfully after refunding 300 thousand gold coins to Han Shuo.

“No need for that. I will be here for the next two days. You guys better shape up!” Han Shuo coldly groaned before signalling Sophie with his eyes and striding out.

Sophie caught up to Han Shuo. When they were near the exit, seeing

that no one was around, Sophie conjectured, “I think the problem didn’t come from the auction house, it’s more likely to be Braque, that two-faced guy!”

Suddenly, Han Shuo firmly grasped onto Sophie’s small hand, and before she could react, Han Shuo abruptly increased his pace, and rapidly vanished among the streets outside the auction house as he dragged her along.

Just as the duo was rapidly leaving, sacred knight Sulo hurriedly approached from another passageway. All he saw was Han Shuo pulling Sophie by the hand as they disappeared into the bustling streets. On the busy street lined with vendor’s booths and swamped with people, Sulo soon lost track of the two.

Sulo wore a gloomy face. Gazing into the crowd as the duo disappeared from his sight, he softly mumbled, “Who is this guy?”

The silhouette of Han Shuo and Sophie holding hands was deeply imprinted in Sulo’s heart. When he suddenly called to mind the influences of the Pillion family in Kasi Empire, Sulo had an instant headache. Shaking his head with a bitter smile on his face, he sighed, “Fifi ah Fifi, you really know how to find troubles for dad!”

“Mister Sulo, what’s the matter?” As Sulo was talking to himself, Thuram, a minion of Braque’s, suddenly came over and asked.

“No, nothing!” Sulo replied succinctly. Seeing Braque walk out from behind Thuram, holding up all the treasures he gained from the auction sale with a glimmer in his eye, Sulo didn’t feel the slightest bit of joy, but on the contrary, began worrying for his entire family.

Sulo knew Braque even better than Sophie. Despite his rather good approval rating in Kasi Empire, his true temperament was not at all as good-natured as one could see on the outside. This person, once he had his eyes on something, would never let go. Once he settled on something, he would not stop until he got his way. As it happened, the House of Pillon was the royal family of Kasi Empire. Sulo realized that merely with him alone, he was incapable of helping Sophie find true happiness.

He sighed. Sulo had decided that no matter what, he had to get Sophie and Braque together. Otherwise, it wasn't just a matter of Sulo and Sophie. Their collateral relatives would not need to bother thinking about having a foothold in Kasi Empire.

"Father-in-law, Fifi really is a headstrong one. She didn't even tell us where she ran to. But still, I am sure that among these things, there will be a few that Sophie will like," Braque laughed as he walked over, expressing his affection for Sophie.

He must be truly in love with Fifi. Fifi ought to be even happier with him. It must be so! Sulo consoled himself before he smilingly said, "How considerate of you. I think Fifi will surely see how much you care about her!"

"Of course, she is my fiancée! How could I not treat her well!" Braque chuckled.

While Sulo and Braque were conversing, Han Shuo dragged Sophie to the middle of the unending sea of people. It was only when Han Shuo found out that Sulo had lost track of the two that he let go of Sophie's delicate hand. He then explained, "Your father was just looking for you."

"Oh," Sophie replied without much thought. Although she appeared nonchalant on the surface, her eyes were somewhat flickering. Han Shuo's subconsciously rubbing his left thumb on her forefinger left her somewhat absent-minded.

Han Shuo too was somewhat embarrassed. As he was about to say something, he suddenly sensed a natural aura of vitality from the southwest. Immediately, he knew that that energy must have originated from the 'Viride Leaf'. He hastily said, "I have some business to take care of, wait a moment."

As soon as he finished those words, Han Shuo weaved through the crowd. He followed his consciousness southwest to the 'Viride Leaf'. Sophie only stared blankly for a short while and before realizing that Han Shuo had made some distance with her. Sophie knew that the Shrine of Ice was Han Shuo's enemy in Kasi Empire. Fearing that something bad

would happen to Han Shuo, she chased up to him.

It was when Han Shuo had just left the crowd, before he took off to the air, that he found out that the energy of the 'Viride Leaf' had disappeared. Han Shuo was certain that the 'Viride Leaf' was being kept away by someone, which explained why that previously released energy disappeared again.

When that happened, Han Shuo grew even more anxious. He immediately deployed the Art of the Demonic Ninth Heavens and rapidly flew, continuing in that direction. He had to locate the 'Viride Leaf' before the thief left the area.

Han Shuo flew with all his strength. In just a few minutes, he made it to the region where he sensed the 'Viride Leaf'. It was exactly the same expansive public square at which Han Shuo and Sophie stopped over previously. He looked as far as his eyes could see, but discovered no one suspicious. When he concentrated his attention to sense with his consciousness, he could no longer feel the energy from the 'Viride Leaf'.

Han Shuo glanced all around him once more as he wracked his brain for another solution. Braque seemed the most obvious suspect of swapping Han Shuo's wood attribute treasure 'Viride Leaf'. But of course, Zofi and that upper-class woman were not to be ruled out.

Han Shuo was absolutely determined to obtain the wood attribute treasure. Unable to smoothly procure it with 300 thousand gold coins, Han Shuo had started to consider other means of taking possession of it. Although Zofi was rich and overbearing, he did not hold much power within Kasi Empire. As for that upper-class woman, she didn't seem to be a particularly politically powerful character either. Otherwise, she wouldn't have given up when the bidding price reached 250 thousand gold coins.

Having identified his objectives, Han Shuo was prepared to take the 'Viride Leaf' by force. In any case, he had already established a hostile relationship with the Shrine of Ice in Kasi Empire. Han Shuo was not about to be heedful of someone like Braque.

“Han, what’s wrong?” Han Shuo was still mulling in his head when Sophie hurried over to him, gasping for breath. As she did not summon her pegasus, this time, Sophie was even shorter on breath when she came over. Her chest was rising and falling, and seemed much bigger than usual.

“You! You hoodlum! What are you looking at!” Sophie immediately discovered that Han Shuo was looking in a strange direction, and yelled at him.

“I’m– nothing, not looking at anything!” Han Shuo replied in a flurry. After that, he explained, “I just sensed the Viride Leaf appearing here. But it seems that I’m still too late. Whoever took it probably hid it away and brought it to another region.”

“Stop thinking about it. Just leave it to the auction house. This auction house is one of the largest in Kasi Empire. Even His Majesty owns a share in it. They’ll settle it for you!” Sophie consoled Han Shuo.

“What if it was Braque who was behind it? Will they be able to handle it then?” Han Shuo raised a brow.

Sophie shrugged and somewhat helplessly said, “In that case, I don’t know,”

“Alright, alright, let’s stop worrying about that! Hmm, it’s getting late. How about we meet again tomorrow?” Han Shuo said as he raised his head to look at the sky. He intended to send Sophie away and look for people from the Dark Mantle to ask about the location of Braque’s manor. And afterwards, at night, he would make a trip there to snatch the ‘Viride Leaf’.

“It’s still early, what are you rushing for! Hahah, come. First, I will bring you around to taste some interesting food. Then when the night falls, we will have a look at the nightscape of the well-known Riverie City of Kasi Empire!” Sophie had no intention of letting Han Shuo off so easily. She grasped at the corner of Han Shuo’s robes and giggled as she pulled Han Shuo with her. She then continued, “I’m only tugging on the corner of your shirt, so this can’t be considered as taking advantage of you!”

Being hauled by Sophie as she headed to their destination, Han Shuo immediately understood the meaning behind those insinuating words. He could do nothing but force a smile and explain, "Miss, that was due to the special circumstances of that time. Must you really hold such grudges even until now?"

Sophie shot a glance at Han Shuo and replied, "It's true that the circumstances were special. But hasn't that someone been acting a little too indecent while holding my hand?"

Han Shuo's mind went blank for a moment, and only then did he recall that when he held Sophie's delicate hand before, he had been subconsciously rubbing his thumb against the back of it. He was used to such intimacy with Emily, Fanny, and Phoebe, and therefore he instinctively did the same to Sophie earlier.

At that time, when Han Shuo became aware of his indecency, he immediately stopped. He even surreptitiously glanced at Sophie. When he saw Sophie acting as though nothing happened, he assumed that she didn't mind it. But who knew that Sophie would so deliberately expose him at this time.

Han Shuo's thick-skinned face blushed, but it was not visible as his skin was concealed. He awkwardly smiled and said in embarrassment, "I did not notice it. Ha ha, sorry!"

"Humph! Don't think I will ever believe your barefaced lie!" Sophie pouted and shot a glare at Han Shuo. But then, she magnanimously said, "But I'm a benevolent gentlewoman. As long as you keep me company and entertain me, I shall pardon you!"

"Umm, but, if I remember correctly, it is me who is the guest right?" Han Shuo said with a forced smile.

"That's irrelevant. If I'm happy, then you will be happy too!" Sophie giggled playfully. She started running as she towed Han Shuo, as though she wanted to make Han Shuo stagger.

Han Shuo had experienced first-hand just how unforgiving Sophie was. Nevertheless, he didn't think that this kind of harmless, petty practical



joke of hers was excessive. He deliberately walked unsteadily, as though he really was staggering. However, in this situation, Han Shuo would suddenly lean closely to Sophie, and might 'accidentally' bump with her body.

Han Shuo mischievously laughed in his heart, awfully delighted in his exploit.

# Credits

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